

Supply—Public Works

istration, and find that this department's estimates are only 30 million dollars higher than in the preceding year, and also that most of the projects involved had been prepared by the Liberal government.

However I congratulate the Ministers of Public Works, of National Defence (Mr. Pearkes) and of Veterans' Affairs (Mr. Brooks) for awarding a contract for the construction of a hospital on the Smyth road and for actually starting the work on this site. It had been planned by the Liberal government. This hospital is necessary for the proper care of veterans, military personnel and members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Hon. members and all Canadians will admit, I am sure, that we are proud of the fact that no other country has a better organized and more respected police force than the R.C.M.P. In fact, during a trip I had the pleasure of making six years ago through fourteen European and Asiatic countries, I heard nothing but praise for our soldiers, sailors and airmen. I am happy to feel that no other country takes better care than we do of our veterans, men who devoted themselves selflessly to the defence of Canada and of all people who wish to remain free.

In my opinion, public works expenditures will have to be increased every year. Because of the increased population and growing prosperity up to June, 1957, new buildings of all kinds will be needed to keep pace with the expansion of our country. The only time when it is proper to reduce the expenditures of the Department of Public Works is in times of prosperity when labour and materials are so scarce that they are better left to private enterprise. However, now that more than 10 per cent of the labour force is unemployed, and that there is a better supply of materials, we had better double the estimates of that department, and provide jobs paying from \$50 to \$80 a week so that jobless people may enjoy a decent living with their family, rather than pay unemployment insurance benefits amounting to \$20 or \$25 a week to some of them for doing nothing while thousands of others have exhausted their benefits. The Unemployment Insurance Act, as it is, was passed and put in force under the Liberal administration to assist unemployed people in the winter months. Unfortunately, in Canada there will always be a few thousand unemployed workers during the cold season. I appreciate that but it is ridiculous to find about 400,000 of them in June.

[Mr. Gour.]

One project which in my opinion would provide work for the unemployed of the Ottawa area, which includes the constituencies of Russell, Ottawa East, Ottawa West, Carleton, Hull, Gatineau and Labelle, would be to build headquarters for the armed services in the area of the Rockcliffe airport. I am sorry that the Minister of National Defence is not in his seat because I meant to ask him to try to prevail upon his personnel, as well as upon the Prime Minister and his colleagues in the cabinet, to have this project undertaken at Rockcliffe, where everything is ready, rather than in the vicinity of the Pinecrest cemetery, on the Base Line road, or else at Bell's Corners, as was suggested by some interested people,—which is too far away for water and electric services and where, moreover, no site is owned by the government. This latter site would cost much more and would be very inconvenient for employees.

Mr. Chairman, I regret that such works were not started last year. If the Liberal government had been reelected on June 10, 1957, the projects I have mentioned, as well as the building for the general staff of our armed forces, the construction of a post office and many other public works on Riverside drive would have started last summer. It would have provided jobs for thousands of unemployed of the Ottawa area who are now receiving unemployment insurance benefits.

As I have just said, Mr. Chairman, if the Liberal government had been reelected, all these projects would have been carried out, including the construction of a post office at Eastview which is essential and had, moreover, been decided by the Liberal government. The pentagon would have been built on a lot located partly in the town of Eastview and partly in the city of Ottawa and owned by the Department of National Defence.

If this government does not decide to build immediately on its own site, this land, in my opinion, should be subdivided and each lot sold for about \$500 preferably to our veterans, to members of our armed forces and then to civilians. Not more than one lot should be sold to any buyer. The buyer should also be required to complete his construction work within six months. Moreover, I think that all necessary building materials I just mentioned should be manufactured in Canada on a 100 per cent basis. This would give work not only to construction workers, but also to those who manufacture the required material.