

Supply—Public Works

waiting for some improvement. When the estimates for 1956-57 come out you look carefully through the book and find that there is no mention of it. Your own people will say to you, "You did a nice job for that minister; he was a great fellow last year but he certainly forgot you when he was writing the book." I trust that the minister will take a look at these two projects. The amount of money is not great, but the benefits to that community, Mr. Minister, I can assure you, will more than pay for the slight expenditure that the government may have to make. I know that everything is earmarked, that there are always many places where money is earmarked and is not used that year. By a little juggling and a little switching, you might be able to find a little more in the estimates this year and you might be able to re-sort it and put it to use in a part of the country where it is very badly needed.

Mr. Winters: Perhaps I might say a word in reply to my hon. friend from Cape Breton South. I have exchanged a considerable amount of correspondence with him and with other citizens about both these projects. He knows, too, it is the policy of the department not to include provisions in the estimates for any one year unless we are reasonably certain we can spend the money in that year.

We have both these projects under consideration. They have not yet been planned to the point where we thought we could implement the plans this year, but I can again tell him that we are actively concerned in planning both these projects and, subject to the approval of the treasury board, next year I hope it will be possible to carry something in the estimates. I have told him that in correspondence, and so I am not telling him anything now that he has not known before.

Mr. Nowlan: I should like to say a word on the same matter to which my hon. friend from Cape Breton South referred a moment ago. I would not attempt to emulate the artistic description that he gave of the book that was written, but I can read a chapter that is exactly the same as he has said. Perhaps the minister will tell us about this before the item passes. I think there was an item in the estimates some years ago for the construction of a breakwater at Whale cove in Digby county; and that item appeared one year and then was dropped. I have had some correspondence with the minister since, and he said that there were borings to be made, and he suggested that they would be able to go ahead with the construction of this breakwater on obtaining

[Mr. Gillis.]

the results of these. I have heard nothing more about it and I thought that possibly the minister could tell us what the plans were with respect to that particular item, before this item 365 passes.

I was not here the other day when the minister's estimates were being discussed. I had an opportunity this morning of glancing briefly over the discussions that took place with respect to the expenditures on the works proposed at Port aux Basques, in Newfoundland, in connection with the ferry from North Sydney to Port aux Basques. When one reads that discussion, not having been here to get inflection of the voice or the human touch in that debate itself, the reading of it leaves a sort of atmosphere of unreality about the matter, which I think should be clarified before this item finally passes. I think that what the committee wants to know and should know is when the minister expects to have these public works completed at Port aux Basques so that the *William Carson* can operate on the schedule that was originally planned. I realize that may involve something of a crystal ball, and I think the Minister of Trade and Commerce is the only one who professes to have one.

Mr. Winters: He said he had loaned it.

Mr. Nowlan: It is possible that the Minister of Public Works can borrow it. There are obviously two stages in the Port aux Basques development at the moment. There is the construction of a breakwater which, as I read it, the minister says is about 35 per cent completed. I should like to know when that work will be done. That is a fair answer to give.

Then the crystal ball part comes into the fact that apparently some department, or a combination of transport or public works and the C.N.R., are not satisfied that this breakwater may serve the purpose and they have constructed a working model of the harbour which will be tried out this summer to ascertain whether further expenditures will be necessary. I think the minister should be able to tell us when this ferry can operate in that harbour. That is the pertinent question. Will the breakwater be done this summer and, if it proves satisfactory, will the *Carson* operate there immediately afterwards? When will that be? If, as a result of the working of the model, it is found that the breakwater is not sufficient, will steps be taken immediately to go ahead and carry out such other constructions as may be necessary at Port aux Basques, or will that project be abandoned and possibly *Argentia* or some other port used?

I take it from reading the *Hansard* of the other day that all was well in Newfoundland