

*Supply—Public Works*

The other question I want to ask the minister, if he will be good enough to try to shed some light on it, is this. Are the figures which have been given to us the cost of the renovation of the property, or do the figures he has given include the cost of suitably furnishing the residence?

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** The best answer I can give is in a report I have here. Believe it or not, I took this as good advice from my officials:

Due to the nature of the work involved, the age of the building and the impossibility of determining the structural condition of the building until the work was under way, it was not possible to arrive at an accurate estimate of the total cost. The department therefore considered that a contract on a basis of cost plus a fixed fee would be the most practicable. Negotiations were entered into with Alex I. Garvock Limited, who offered to perform the work on a basis of cost plus a fixed fee of \$10,000—

That amount I am sure of; we know that. —such fee to include the provision of all supervision of the workmen, the engaging of a superintendent satisfactory to the department, and the provision of workmen's tools and equipment required on the work which are ordinarily supplied by the general contractor.

I know what it is costing for this contractor; we will have to pay \$10,000, and he undertakes to do this work. Being no expert myself, I find that even these people cannot give me a final or definite estimate; but I am told that it will amount to something in the neighbourhood of \$135,000.

**Mr. Abbott:** Perhaps it will help my hon. friend if I add that an additional \$80,000 is provided in the main estimates for 1950-51, which were tabled some time ago.

**Mr. Fleming:** The minister has not dealt with my final question, as to whether any provision is made here for the furnishings.

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** In which figure?

**Mr. Fleming:** In either figure.

**Mr. Abbott:** No.

**Mr. Fleming:** In other words the figures the minister has given simply represent the cost of the structure as renovated?

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** Yes.

**Mr. Fleming:** Then I come back to my other point. Were not the considerations set out in the report the minister has just read available to the government before they selected this particular property for the Prime Minister's residence? I should have thought that, faced with such a situation, that is to say, complete uncertainty as to the eventual cost of renovating this large property, the government would have asked themselves whether they could not do better with their

[Mr. Fleming.]

money by buying another property, or by building a new home on this site instead of renovating a house that I am told is many years old. Will the minister give us some further information on that point?

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** The government gave a great deal of thought to this project, and came to the conclusion that this was the best way to acquire and have a home for the Prime Minister of Canada.

**Mr. Adamson:** The reason I brought this up in the first place was that I have heard it said by architects and others interested that it would have been better, and would have provided a better building at approximately the same or at least a known cost, if the house were torn down and a new house built. I wondered if the department had considered building a modern house instead of trying to renovate the old house on this site. As everyone knows, this is an admirable site for a home for the Prime Minister.

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** It was discussed for I do not know how long. Every angle was gone into, but we came to the conclusion that having that site and the shell of this building we owned, it would be a proper way to proceed to provide this residence.

Item agreed to.

597. Prince Albert public building—addition and alterations—further amount required, \$165,000.

**Mr. Knight:** Could we have the particulars concerning this expenditure?

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** A contract was given last year for the alteration and enlargement of this building in Prince Albert. We estimated that during the year we would spend a total of \$220,000. The contractor has proceeded more rapidly than we estimated, and we owe him a progress payment on the contract in this amount of \$160,000.

**Mr. Knight:** What is the building?

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** It is the post office and federal building in Prince Albert.

Item agreed to.

## DEPARTMENT OF RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT

600. Departmental administration—further amount required, \$2,500.

**Mr. Blackmore:** I notice that this item is called "resources and development". I should like to say a word or two about the development of resources. I think everyone recognizes now that in the province of Alberta we have probably the finest resources of any province in Canada. Those resources have been there for hundreds of years; they have been there ever since people went to Alberta. We have