

is simply nothing short of a distribution of patronage. That is, I think, putting it pretty mildly.

Mr. KING (Kootenay): I think my hon. friend's statement is unfair. The work is being done in this way on the recommendation and advice of the departmental officers who consider day labour to be the proper method to pursue in such a case. It is a system that has been followed in the department for years. I think I have given a fair explanation, and I am sure those members of the committee who have knowledge and experience of this class of work will admit that it can be better done in this way.

Mr. STEVENS: I have already covered the ground two or three times, and I do not wish to repeat my criticisms, but I cannot accept the minister's explanation. It would be satisfactory if it were only being done in one or two cases or in response to an emergency, but what I am trying to impress upon the minister is that it is the preponderating number of such cases that I am objecting to. It is an indication of a change of policy, a retrograde movement back to what we have been fighting for years to get away from. I appreciate the difficulties the minister has to face, and the pressure he is subjected to, but that does not alter the facts of the case, nor does not lessen the objection to this departure from a well recognized policy.

Mr. MEIGHEN: There is a great difference between the reconstruction of a wharf and its repair. Were these only trivial repairs one might justify the employment of day labour, but when it is the reconstruction of a wharf what justification is there? Can the minister give us any?

Mr. KING (Kootenay): I have already given an explanation of these items and repeated them a great many times. In this case I read the information as set out in the report of the officials of the department.

Mr. MEIGHEN: In this case?

Mr. KING (Kootenay): Yes. I have explained that it was to reconstruct this wharf by removing the cap, covering, stringers and three tiers of face timbers from the inner section, and so on.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Does not the minister see that there is more or less of a specification in that very statement? What is to hinder tenders being called for there?

Mr. STEVENS: A moment ago when the minister was replying to me on the item of

\$4,800 he said it was a breakwater and repairs. The minister argued again that in connection with repairs it was impossible to get sufficiently definite specifications to call for tenders, but he says in constructing new work or reconstruction—

Mr. KING (Kootenay): Yes, where the old work is being demolished.

Mr. STEVENS: We come to an item calling for wharf reconstruction, and now he argues in the same way as in the previous item.

Mr. KING (Kootenay): In reconstruction, where the old work was demolished and the new work was going to be built, but it does not apply to this case. There is reconstruction in certain portions of the work.

Mr. STEVENS: He has taken off the top of the wharf, the caps and the piling, he is going to put on a new cap and new piling, so that it is a new job so far as it goes.

Mr. KING (Kootenay): No, not piling.

Mr. STEVENS: It is down to the caps. I know what caps are. Down to the caps it is new work.

Mr. KING (Kootenay): As the work goes on they may find some stringers which it is not necessary to remove at all.

Item agreed to.

Pointe du Chene—Repairs to breakwaters, \$2,400.

Mr. STEVENS: Is this a new item?

Mr. KING (Kootenay): No, this item is for rebuilding from high water up, the north face of the protecting block at the northeast corner of the breakwater; recovering the same with 4 inch plank; placing large stone blocks on the old breakwater where the stringers and covering have been washed off; filling the north face of the wharf with stone ballast to replace that recently washed out and driving 15 piles across this face. This was necessitated on account of the damage done to the wharf last fall by the severe storms.

Mr. STEVENS: I would like to compliment the engineer on the exactness of the specifications, showing how convenient it would be to call for tenders in many of these items.

Item agreed to.

Robichaud's (Savoy's) Landing—Wharf, \$11,000.

Mr. STEVENS: This is a large vote. Will the minister give an explanation of it?

Mr. KING (Kootenay): This is to construct a cribwork wharf 310 feet in length consisting of an approach 211 feet long and 15