

Mr. SELLAR: No, they are being kept as economically as I think is possible.

Hon. Mr. MARTIN (*Essex East*): Very good administration.

The CHAIRMAN: That completes paragraph 18. Paragraph 19, public works.

Mr. BOURGET: Mr. Chairman, with regard to paragraph 19, would Mr. Sellar explain the procedure followed in taking expenditures on the Trans-Canada highway in different provinces—or are you taking the figures given to you by the Department of Public Works?

Mr. SELLAR: May I use one province, whose account passed before me the other day?

Mr. BOURGET: Yes.

Mr. SELLAR: A progress claim came in from the province of Manitoba. It was complete in all details as to the particulars. It was certified by the deputy minister of highways of the province; it was certified by the provincial auditor or comptroller of the province; it was certified by the responsible engineer of the Department of Public Works of Ottawa in the province; it was certified by the treasury costs section and also by the treasury office of the comptroller of the treasury in Winnipeg. Therefore, there were either five or six certificates in connection with that. Quite frankly, I do not go very far beyond that. If six people examine it, we just total it to make sure things look all right, and we pass it.

Mr. BOURGET: So you are relying mostly on the figures given by Public Works?

Mr. SELLAR: The figures are supplied first by the province and verified by Public Works and the treasury; and if they make payments the accounts come to us. I do not send a man out in the field to make an examination of those claims.

The CHAIRMAN: What amount has been spent on the trans-Canada highway to date?

Mr. SELLAR: When you say to date, do you mean March 31, 1958?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. SELLAR: Roughly \$156 million.

Hon. Mr. HELLYER: You mentioned six certificates on an account in connection with the trans-Canada highway. To an ordinary layman like myself, it sounds like a lot of paperwork is involved in order to get a small amount of physical work done. Do you think the method of doing this work and paying for it is the most thorough there is available?

Mr. SELLAR: I have no opinion as to that, sir; we are governed by the agreement. It is in the agreement that the deputy minister of the department of highways and the provincial auditor must certify. I think those are two safeguards the government of Canada should have. That has been in the agreement ever since the arrangement started seven or eight years ago.

Hon. Mr. HELLYER: Do you have any recollection as to whether accounts were received by the federal government for those works in the province of Ontario which allegedly were not actually constructed?

Mr. SELLAR: You are referring to those which were under inquiry a few years ago?

Hon. Mr. HELLYER: Yes.

Mr. SELLAR: Yes; we are mixed up in those.

Hon. Mr. HELLYER: Those accounts have been received?

Mr. SELLAR: Some, yes.