

Supply—Public Works

Mr. Green: The Leader of the Opposition should have read them.

Mr. Pearson: But the minister this morning used the argument, as he did last Friday, that in all these cases the government had stepped in to accelerate these projects. There may have been difficulty preventing the acceleration—

Mr. Green: On a point of order, may I say that these works were not postponed, certainly not in the sense that that question was asked. In every single case there was some difficulty in connection with the site or the plans or something of that type. In no way could it be described as the government deliberately postponing a project. These matters arise every year. There will be cases this year.

Mr. Pearson: There are other works, which are not in this list and which perhaps the minister will explain, that have been postponed including the West Vancouver post office, the new Bronson avenue canal bridge in Ottawa, the Ottawa Post Office Department building, the national library, and the national memorial shrine. There may have been good reasons why those projects should have been postponed.

Mr. Green: Again the Leader of the Opposition is not being fair. These buildings were not postponed at all. I have never said they were postponed. The post office building was not postponed at all.

Mr. Pickersgill: It just was not proceeded with.

Mr. Pearson: If it is a question of semantics, I will change my language. These were projects which had been initiated by the previous government but which, for one reason or another, have not yet been proceeded with. The argument that my hon. friend was making, and he made it vigorously and in political terms last Friday—

Mr. Payne: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, I should like to draw the attention of the Leader of the Opposition to this fact. He said that the West Vancouver post office is not being proceeded with. May I say that work has been going forward for the past three months.

Mr. Pearson: The hon. member will have a chance to explain his attitude toward these matters. I leave the matter in your hands, Mr. Chairman, but I doubt that it is a point of order.

Mr. Fulton: You had better explain your inaccurate statement that you just put on the record.

[Mr. Pearson.]

Mr. Pearson: Last Friday the minister made a great point of the fact—and as I say again, he made the point in political terms; in fact, he gloated over our discomfiture at the time—that these public works had been accelerated, that we had held things up and that they pushed ahead with them. With regard to the magnitude of the program I am trying to point out that no case can be made for any great increase over the last year and with regard to acceleration, that there were some projects which were on the books, which had been initiated, had been planned and for which appropriations had been made but which were not proceeded with, certainly in an accelerated way. Those are the two points I wish to make. I think they are valid points and I think they have a bearing on this whole question of public works, both as something which is important for unemployment and also in respect of the government's position that they have pushed hard to give employment through public works. Neither of those points seem to have been entirely met by the minister in the discussion we have had on this first item of his estimates.

Mr. Green: I wish to say just a word or two. One very good example of a work which was accelerated is the post office in West Vancouver. We got that rushed ahead. The difficulties about the site were settled with the municipality and the work was actually started many months before it would have been started in the normal course. This was done wherever it was possible; it was done in many dozens of cases. I read a list a week ago of works which had been accelerated and I stand by that today.

Some mention has been made by the Leader of the Opposition of the Post Office Department building. I presume he means the one which is to be built on Riverside drive.

Mr. Pearson: Yes.

Mr. Green: No provision was made in the 1957-58 estimates.

Mr. Chevrier: Yes; there was.

Mr. Green: No provision was made at all in those estimates for construction of that building. There was money used for planning but there was no provision at all for actual construction. The vote was for planning of the building.

Mr. Pearson: How much was the vote?

Mr. Green: \$300,000.

Mr. Pearson: \$300,000 for planning only?

Mr. Green: There has been absolutely no delay in that building. If we had been in