

Supply—Public Works

federal Department of Public Works and the provincial department of public works in British Columbia in respect to any form of co-operative arrangement in places where some form of co-operative arrangement could very well effect substantial savings to the taxpayer.

The minister may recall an individual case in last year's discussion concerning the question of harbour protection in respect to the operation of a ferry between Hornby island and Denman island. Also this same problem has arisen in respect to the crossing between Campbell river and Quathiaski cove on Quadra island. This summer I came across an example of the same sort of thing where all that appeared to be involved, at least so far as the people in the locality were concerned, was a small piece of sheet iron. I do feel some definite attempt should be made to work out closer liaison between the engineering branch of the federal department and the provincial department. I am not attempting to assess where the main responsibility for this situation exists, but I do know it is one thing which has caused more exasperation on the part of residents of such communities as Van Anda and Blubber Bay than any other single item. They feel they are caught in a complete run-around because when they go to the federal department they are told any action is the responsibility of the provincial department, and when they go to the provincial department they get the opposite answer. As far as I am concerned most of the matters involved are straight matters of fact, of common sense, of business co-operation and of the effecting of economies through joint action.

A little earlier in the discussion the minister referred to his appreciation of the value of facts of a situation. I would submit, Mr. Chairman, that here is an area of operation which does affect the life of a good many citizens of British Columbia and a careful appraisal of the facts of the situation by the minister's department and by the corresponding department of the government of British Columbia could bring about some desirable results.

If the minister has any comment to make on the matter I would be very glad to have it from him.

Mr. Winters: I have no great profound knowledge to communicate on this business of co-operation between provincial and federal governments in this field of public works. I think the co-operation is pretty good. We each have our own spheres of activity but our relationships are quite close. There is quite a constant flow of correspondence between

[Mr. Barnett.]

me and the minister of public works in British Columbia. Sometimes there are projects that one government might be reluctant to acknowledge as being within its jurisdiction and it takes a little time to resolve matters such as that but generally speaking there is pretty good co-operation.

On the question raised by the hon. member for Notre Dame de Grace, who pointed out the fact that there has been an increase of eight in the number of supervisors of office services, I told him that came about as the result of consolidations, and that is true. There have been some reclassifications as a result of those consolidations. If he will look further on the same page he will find there has been a decrease of six in the number of clerks, grade IV, and a decrease of two in the number of principal clerks. That means there has been a decrease of eight. Eight people have been reclassified in those district offices where there have been consolidations with the result that there has been an increase of eight supervisors of office services but not an increase of eight bodies.

Mr. Hamilton (Notre Dame de Grace): Are they doing the same work as heretofore?

Mr. Winters: No, they are not, Mr. Chairman; their work is in the nature of that of a manager of the combined office.

Mr. Hamilton (Notre Dame de Grace): We then seem to come back to the original position. We have consolidated and in the process of consolidation we have 10 managers where we used to have two; is that correct?

Mr. Winters: No, there is no increase. As I have said, it is a reclassification rather than an increase.

Mr. Hamilton (Notre Dame de Grace): It seems to me, Mr. Chairman, it might take a very careful examination of the minister's office operations which we are not in a position unfortunately—and I say "unfortunately" advisedly—to give here in this house. It seems to me it is a most peculiar situation. It was obvious from the rather lengthy time it took to answer the question which was asked in the house, which will not appear on *Hansard*, of course. It was obvious from the time it took to get an answer to that question that no study has been given to this particular situation at all which, on the face of it, is an unusual one. When we look at the minister's estimates, as has already been pointed out, we find that the amounts for which he estimated last year were almost invariably greater than his expenditures. If there were such careful search for economies and a reduction of expenses and careful administration which