

Supply—Finance

and so on. That is the type of thing, where there is either an urgent requirement for a new project of a limited nature or, alternatively, the vote provided has been spent, the work is not completed and they have to draw on this account for that purpose.

Mr. Monteith: I should like to comment on the public building in Winnipeg. Would that not ordinarily come under public works?

Mr. Harris: It would ordinarily come under it, but the public works item had been exhausted and this fund was the only money available. The difficulty in the case of Winnipeg was that the work had been completed a good deal faster than we had anticipated in our estimate of the year before, and we had to use this account for it.

Mr. Monteith: Well, Mr. Chairman, I cannot agree with that. After all, the estimates of the Department of Public Works for the current year are in this particular book and the estimates for the Department of Finance are in this particular book. If an item is in finance under contingencies, why could it not have been put in the Department of Public Works for the same year?

Mr. Harris: Because it came out of my money and not out of public works.

Mr. Monteith: Well, why?

Mr. Harris: Because I had the million dollars and the Minister of Public Works' vote for public works in Manitoba had been exhausted. The only fund that was available for expenditures for the work on that job was in this million dollar vote.

Mr. Monteith: I beg your pardon; I understand you are now giving the amounts which were spent last year. I should like to know what the additional items are that go to make up this 550 per cent increase?

Mr. Harris: This happens to be only an estimate, Mr. Chairman, this \$1,500,000. So far as I am concerned it has no charge against it and it is purely a contingency vote to take care of exceptional demands on the treasury that may turn up because of the kind of thing I have described as occurring last year. I am only saying that last year we got up to \$900,000 and we were running very short of money towards the end of the fiscal year. For that reason, I desire that this year we should not be in such a tight position.

Mr. Monteith: There is only one further thought I have in connection with this \$150,000 for a public building in Winnipeg. It appears as money spent during the year 1955-56, and would it appear in the expenditures of the Minister of Finance during that period in the public accounts?

Mr. Harris: Yes, Mr. Chairman, it would. It was actually paid on December 16, 1955, and it would appear in public accounts in my case, but the public works vote will be used to reimburse my vote in the course of the arrangement of accounts between the two departments.

Mr. Monteith: How are we to get a true picture of what that public building in Winnipeg cost? In other words, the public accounts for 1955-56 will not show this \$150,000 under public works.

Mr. Harris: If the hon. member asks for a return of the cost of the public building in Manitoba, he would receive a correct return of the total expenditure by the two departments.

Mr. Monteith: I have only one further comment. It seems to me the whole system does not give enough of the information which we should have.

Mr. Zaplitny: This appears to be the minister's petty cash account. I notice that it covers special compensation or other rewards for inventions or practical suggestions for improvements. Can the minister give the amount that was paid out during the last fiscal period as rewards for inventions or practical suggestions?

Mr. Harris: It was \$12,500, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Zaplitny: Is that paid to the employees of the government only?

Mr. Harris: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Hamilton (York West): What was the amount spent out of the finance estimate last year of \$1 million at Port aux Basques, and what was it for?

Mr. Harris: It was to provide for the construction of a breakwater on West Baldwin rock extending from Graveyard point on the mainland to the western boundary of the channel, Port aux Basques, Newfoundland, and the amount was \$150,000.

Mr. Green: How did it happen that there was this oversight and the Department of Public Works did not ask for what was required? I presume that this item is connected with the Department of Public Works. I am surprised the minister would get himself mixed up in this Port aux Basques fiasco. We have already the Minister of Public Works and the Minister of Transport involved and now apparently the Minister of Finance is in on it. Have there been funds paid earlier by the Department of Finance for this same project?

Mr. Harris: I did not suppose I would have to engage in a discussion on this point, but