

## Supply—Public Works

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Item 681 appears as a dollar item; it is an authorization in respect of a public building at Spencerville. It is put in here as a dollar item because it is a new building project, and it is a matter of submitting it to parliament. No additional amount is required. Actually, the expenditure is being provided for out of the existing vote, but it is a matter of putting before the committee the fact that a new public building project which was not included in the estimate when the original estimate was passed has now been undertaken.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I get a lot of discouraging letters from the Minister of Public Works, who I hope is paying attention to what I am saying now—I got a lot more from his predecessor, I admit—about the difficulty of including new works in the supplementary estimates. I just wonder whether the minister can tell us how this new work managed to get into the supplementary estimates and what special urgency there was in this particular case?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** It is a post office at Spencerville and there is authority, as the hon. gentleman knows, for incurring expenditure up to the statutory limit of \$25,000. The post office was considered to be very necessary. There has been pressure for improved and enlarged accommodation since May, 1955. After some months of negotiations and advertising for rented space it was found that suitable quarters could not be obtained at a reasonable rental, and accordingly the treasury board advisory committee on accommodation standards recommended the construction of an 800 square foot standard plan post office building, and the tenders were called for and the work authorized.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I can tell the minister about another place named Hare Bay in Bonavista bay where I have been trying to get a post office building since May of 1955. I appeal to the minister to show the same consideration for Hare Bay that the treasury board has shown for Spencerville.

**Mr. Regier:** Will the minister explain why this item has to be listed at this time?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** I have referred to the statutory limit of \$25,000. It had been expected that the cost of this structure could be met within the statutory amount. When the tenders were called and as the work proceeded it was found that the work was going to exceed in cost the \$25,000; therefore, we brought it to the house for approval.

**Mr. Regier:** Am I right in assuming that this post office is some 800 square feet in size?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Regier:** Is it normal for a post office to cost over \$30 per square foot?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** It depends, of course, on the nature of the construction, Mr. Chairman. I am told that this particular building is one that was found to be necessary. It is not altogether unusual to find at times that the cost exceeds the estimate originally prepared in the department. We are happy, of course, when we find that the contract price can be lower than the departmental estimate, but it is not always so.

**Mr. Regier:** I assume the minister's parliamentary secretary has the details there. Can the minister say how much of this money was spent for the purchase of the land?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Yes, Mr. Chairman, \$6,000.

**Mr. Regier:** Approximately what is the population of this place?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** I am told that it is approximately 400 souls.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** The population of Hare Bay is larger.

**Mr. Regier:** Does the minister regard the expenditure of \$6,000 for a lot as being reasonable in a place with a population of 400 souls?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Mr. Chairman, as choice locations go in Spencerville, this was regarded as a choice location. It is at the intersection of South and Centre streets.

Item agreed to.

## Harbours and rivers engineering services—

Construction, acquisition, major repairs and improvements of, and plans and sites for, harbour and river works listed in the details of the estimates provided that treasury board may increase or decrease the amount within the vote to be expended on individual listed projects—further amounts required—

682. Nova Scotia, \$1.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** This is another dollar item.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Mr. Chairman, this is another project at Pictou involving an expenditure toward harbour improvements of \$125,000. No additional money is required. It is a matter of including this in the scope of the vote.

**Mr. Robichaud:** Is this to replace the wharf and warehouse that burned down last fall?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Item agreed to.