

*Supply—Public Works*

save money by doing so. These men not only have a knowledge of local conditions and water levels and a knowledge of local people enabling them to secure the best labour available, but they also know how to assemble materials. I have known of cases where the building of wharves was delayed by from a year to eighteen months because lumber could not be obtained, or a contract had been let to someone to supply material and they had failed to deliver, or cedar logs could not be obtained under contract from certain logging companies or individuals, or piles could not be purchased.

The local men employed by the department have full knowledge of all these things. They know where all the stands of timber are. They know the people who can supply timber quickly. They know where it is required and they know the best place to order from to get delivery at the lowest possible cost. I do suggest, Mr. Chairman, that the department and the minister would be well advised to give consideration under certain circumstances, such as I have mentioned, to the building of some of these projects in that way. I am thinking, for instance, of the Arrowhead wharf for which, I understand, the figure is some \$57,000.

They have had considerable experience in driving piles, building wharves and so on, and I think that wharf could be most economically built by day labour under the supervision of your senior and local officials. You would be sure of getting materials on the job, and that the wharf would be completed in a certain definite period.

I make those suggestions as a result of my personal experience, and I would ask the minister to give them his consideration.

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** There is a lot of truth in what the hon. gentleman says; but we could not take many of these works by day labour because we have not the staff. We would have to increase our staff to a figure far beyond that which we actually have; and there is always the danger, if we delegate our authority, of going beyond what the statute authorizes, and then I would be blamed. For instance, Mr. So and So could make this lumber during the season and we might make a contract with him to have the lumber delivered on the spot for such and such a date, but I would feel that under section 36 of the act I would not be authorized to do that.

True, there is delay in our department because of the act, but by following the act everyone is protected. We have many revotes. If you will look at the figures for the province of British Columbia in the present estimates

[Mr. Herridge.]

you will see a great many revotes. You will find about 30 of them, but there are actually some 19 projects that are proceeding at the present time. I think the statute is about the best control and protection that the finance department, the treasury board and the comptroller of the treasury have over a spending department.

**Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood):** You owe it all to us.

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** This is a spending department. We are asking for \$120 million this year to be spent in different parts of the country, and I am in favour of these controls. If I were in the opposition and somebody tried to get out of these controls probably I would be quite outspoken about it. We have a certain reputation in the department and we do not want to lose it, at least I do not want to lose it while I am there. However, I shall take into consideration the remarks that have been made.

(Translation):

**Mr. Robichaud:** Mr. Chairman, I know that the hon. Minister of Public Works (Mr. Fournier) would be surprised and might blame me if I did not, tonight, reiterate the plea I have been making ever since my election to the House of Commons in favour of Gloucester county.

First, I must say to the minister that I have greatly appreciated the courtesy he has always shown me and my requests have been numerous; in some instances I even went to knock at his door and I was always well received. Unfortunately, last week *Le Droit* announced that he may abandon his present portfolio—

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** Do not believe everything you read in the papers.

**Mr. Robichaud:** —to accept a higher appointment. I deeply regret this mention that has been made of the possibility that he may leave the Department of Public Works to sit on the bench of the exchequer court.

I would not like to repeat, tonight, the long list of works that are needed in my constituency and to which I have already drawn the minister's attention, by letter or otherwise. That would entail a great deal of repetition and I will try to be as brief as possible. However, there are some which I cannot help mentioning tonight.

In view of the new mining developments which have proved very important in the county of Gloucester, certain public works are urgently needed in the Bathurst district for the development of the Bathurst harbour, that