

I know that this expenditure is doing the Dominion Government a lot of harm because we are blamed for squandering the people's money and not looking after its expenditure. Certainly the officials of the Ontario Government are not attending to their business. I make the statement knowing what I am talking about, and I say to hon. members on this side of the chamber that the farmers in our part of the country are crying out against the great extravagance on roads.

Mr. MURPHY: As a neighbour of my hon. friend from Hull across the river, I should like to supplement what he has said regarding the road from Hull to Wakefield. In reply to the hon. gentleman the Minister of Railways said that no request had yet been received from the Government of Quebec for the construction of this road. According to the newspapers, the municipalities concerned have concluded preliminary agreements and have reached a complete understanding regarding the road to be constructed and the abolition of tolls on the remaining toll roads. Is the request from the Quebec Government the only further step necessary in order to have this work carried out?

Hon. Mr. REID: Yes, it must come from the Quebec Government. We take no action until we get an application from the Provincial Minister of Public Works.

Mr. MURPHY: Upon receipt of that request, the work will proceed?

Hon. Mr. REID: The matter is looked into and considered, as if we see no objection we approve the plans and the work proceeds, the Dominion assuming forty per cent of the cost.

Mr. COPP: It is gratifying to observe that my hon. friends opposite have at last come to realize that the expenditures of the Government are made in a very slipshod and haphazard way. They are beginning to appreciate the facts as we on this side have been stating them for some time, and if they take that attitude in connection with a small item such as that which we are now considering, a matter of \$53,000, it is evident that they will take a similar stand when we come to consider items involving large amounts. The member for Dufferin finds much fault with regard to the building of some roads in his constituency; he says the farmers there are on the point of selling their land and moving away. Well, if my hon. friend wants to be honest with himself and honest with

[Mr. Best.]

his electors he will go back to them immediately after the close of this session and tell them to keep their powder dry until the Government has the courage to go to the country, and advise them, as in effect he advises us, to vote against an Administration which squanders the public money. Now, with regard to this particular item, as I understand it the aid for the building of roads is distributed honestly and equitably among the provinces, each province getting its fair apportionment according to population. As I understand the procedure, it is this: specifications are submitted to the Commissioner of Highways with respect to highways with which the province desires to proceed within a certain length of time; these are considered by the commissioner and his engineers; the kind of road to be constructed is determined upon. Then the provincial government call for tenders, and if these are found to be satisfactory the contract is awarded and the work proceeds, supervision being exercised by Dominion Government engineers in co-operation with provincial engineers, and the cost is borne by the Dominion Government and the provincial government in certain proportions. It seems to me that this item should not stand. The details of the number of roads to be built, the mileage and so on does not matter, because these are the subject of consideration and co-operation between the Dominion and provincial governments. In view of these considerations, I think this item might very well pass.

Mr. STEELE: I should not like the committee to cease discussion of this item after the speech of the hon. member for Westmoreland in which he suggests that members on this side have admitted that the expenditures of this Government are being made in a slipshod way. The only thing wrong with the expenditures made by this Government on roads in Ontario is that they are being made through a very inefficient medium. The money is handed over to the Ontario Government for expenditure. The plans concerning the roads may be all right; the specifications may be very accurate, but unless the money appropriated for these roads is spent wisely, carefully and economically, the whole thing falls to the ground. That is what the people of Ontario are suspicious of to-day; that is what they have doubts about. They are not satisfied that the money spent on roads in Ontario by the Provincial Government and its officials is