

Supply—Public Works

two. Now, quite frankly I had expected to see the minister rise and say he had opened some additional offices across the country and therefore he needed a supervisor in each office or something like that. I did not expect to hear him say he had consolidated and therefore needed more supervisors. I wonder if he would give us perhaps a little more adequate information on this score and particularly in view of the fact that his office staff, clerks, stenographers and typists, has actually decreased in number while his supervisory staff has increased 500 per cent.

Mr. Winters: Mr. Chairman, I have asked the personnel people to let me have an answer to that, and I shall have it in a few minutes.

The Chairman: Shall item 365 carry?

Mr. Hamilton (Notre Dame de Grace): No, could we stand the item until we get an answer and perhaps go on to the next item.

The Chairman: Does the hon. member for Comox-Alberni desire to speak to item 365?

Mr. Barnett: Yes. I have one or two matters I should like to bring up under this item if it would not inconvenience the minister. Probably we could deal with these while his advisers are getting an answer to the other question. As a matter of fact I have been waiting to raise one or two questions in connection with Ripple Rock, but in deference to your suggestion I shall defer that.

There is one matter that involves the general administration of this branch rather than any particular item which I should like to bring up at this time. I refer to the general plan or design which is being followed, at least in the province of British Columbia on the coastal area, for the construction of the approaches to some of the fishing floats which are being installed there from time to time. I have had this problem brought to my attention, and perhaps the minister might be able to give some information on this subject. The problem which some of the fishermen on the British Columbia coast have brought to my attention arises from the fact that some of these approaches are quite long and go out over a gently sloping beach to deep water. They are being built in a manner which makes them not quite wide enough to allow for the passage of a motor vehicle.

In none of these places would there be any heavy motor vehicle traffic, but situations do arise where fishermen wish to move heavy nets or remove the engine from their boats for major repair or transport fuel to

their vessels, and it would be a great convenience to them and save a great deal of backbreaking effort if they were able to take motor vehicles out over these approaches to carry whatever they wanted to move. As the members of the committee know, I am not an engineer but from my observations it would appear that the type of construction which is being used would be quite adequate to carry the ordinary motor car or truck. Most of these approaches are being built on good piling, either driven piles or piles on concrete block bases, and the joists and timbers underneath would appear to me to be adequate for that purpose. It does seem that the increased cost involved in adding another foot or two to the width of these approaches would not be substantial.

For these reasons, Mr. Chairman, I would be interested if the minister could give the committee some statement as to why it has been the policy of this branch to design these approaches in this particular manner, where the approaches are primarily for use in approaching fishing floats rather than a wharf-head which is designed for steamer service and where the approaches are wide enough for motor vehicle traffic.

Mr. Winters: Mr. Chairman, there has been no over-all policy that is applied to all approaches to these floats. We try to consider each one on its merits. I do recall the hon. member spoke to me about one some time ago.

Mr. Barnett: Yes, I did mention this problem to the minister. I was wondering whether he might have some information on the subject. While I did mention a specific project that was in contemplation, I also mentioned that I had observed a number which had been designed along similar lines and I had been led to assume there may be some general policy in respect to the plan or design of these approaches. I thought it might be useful if we could have some general clarification of this matter rather than a discussion of one specific project. This matter goes beyond that.

Mr. Winters: We consider each case on its individual merits, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Barnett: There is one other matter upon which I should like to say a few words. I am not sure that I necessarily expect the minister to make a statement in reply but I would be happy if he could do so. This is a matter to which I referred during the discussion of these estimates last year and I believe the year before. It arises out of the fact that, so far as my observation goes, there appears to exist an almost complete impasse in the relationship which exists between the