

Mr. Harrington On page 2, where it says "Committees are entitled to grants....", is that grant made annually?....

Mr. Smallwood Well, Mr. Chairman, that is the amount they give. The experience that I have had with the local road committees leads me to think that, although \$25 per mile, or 25 cents per head of the population, is what the government officially says it is prepared to grant to local road committees, actually they do grant quite a bit more than that. So far as I can learn, ... if the people of a locality show a genuine interest in their own local road problem, and in a way that the government likes, i.e., by setting up a local road board and showing a definite desire and intention to push ahead with local co-operation, then in that case, although \$25 per mile or 25 cents per head is the rule, actually the government treats them much more generously. For example, if Mr. Harrington will look further down on the last page¹ it says that the total value of the repair program for local roads and bridges authorised to be performed during last year, 1945-46, was \$179,000. Of this amount the Department of Public Works assumed liability for \$109,000, the balance, that is \$70,000, being put up by the people either in cash or with free labour. In other words \$109,000 from the government and \$70,000 from the people in cash or labour.

Now, at the beginning of the scheme, I understand the agreement was that the government would match the people's money or labour value dollar for dollar, but in actual fact they are doing much better than that. Then again of course, as Mr. Harrington will appreciate, if a local road committee is formed it is only because the condition of the local roads in a settlement has become so bad that the people in desperation get together, either led by one of themselves or an official, and form a local road committee. When you get a committee formed in that way you get a certain enthusiasm which results in much better value being gotten for the work done than if it were a straight out-and-out government project, with the government footing all the bills, hiring men and paying them wages. So that it's not quite as bad as it sounds.

Mr. Butt I might say \$25 a mile is given each year provided the committee wants to carry that

out. In other words if \$25 is given this year, it means that \$50 is spent on the road. If they spend the same amount next year they may do so, so that over a few years the amount spent on that mile of road is much more than \$25. When those committees are formed, it is probably for a number of reasons, but one is that when a man sits in an office in St. John's, and a community applies for a grant, obviously that man cannot answer each individual in the community; but if there is a representative committee, then the man here knows he is dealing with a responsible group of people who have taken up the matter already with the magistrate or roads superintendent, or someone of that kind.

Mr. Jones How is that 25 cents per head basis applied to the town councils and their special grants? Is it on the same basis?

Mr. Smallwood I would like the answer to that question.... I am sure Mr. Butt could answer it.

Mr. Butt I think that as far as town councils are concerned it is a matter of dollar for dollar. It may be \$25 per mile, but it may be very much more. For instance, a small community has a small piece of road, which having \$50 per mile per year spent on it would be kept in fairly decent shape, but if there is in that community a large bridge which requires special attention, then the government is prepared, as I remember it, to give very much more so that in some cases it may work out a little better than the town councils are getting. It depends on the situation. Is that an answer, Mr. Jones?

Mr. Jones Yes.

Mr. Smallwood When it comes to bridge building, or repairs of bridges or the provision of culverts, I think in that case the government provides the material to repair or build the bridge or culvert over and above this \$25 per mile.

Mr. Northcott I think you are all wrong about that scheme, because it only just came into being. For 12 years we had no \$25 per mile or anything at all; then the thing got so bad we got after the government, and it is only the past couple of years that we have been getting that. Since then committees have started up, and now we are getting the \$25 per mile or 25 cents per head. Getting back to town councils, we have got to get dollar for dollar until we reach the \$3,000 mark, then

¹Volume II:93.