

Mr. MACDONALD: One of the difficulties the minister pointed out last night was that if any order from the board involved the expenditure of an amount of money there was no way in which the money could be legally got. My attention has been called to the fact that under the Exchequer Court Act, if a judgment of the Exchequer Court involves the expenditure of an amount of money, it is paid out of the consolidated fund of the Dominion of Canada. Automatically, such a judgment of the Exchequer Court has that result without any action on the part of my hon. friend.

Mr. COCHRANE: I have gone into this matter with the law clerk, and he says that a judgment of the Railway Board would operate in the same way.

Mr. MACDONALD: I was going to suggest that as a solution. That provision in the Exchequer Court Act, if applied here, would bring about the desired result.

Section as amended agreed to.

On section 6—Repeal of inconsistent provisions in Government Railways Act R.S. 1906, c. 36:

Mr. CARVELL: The sections mentioned here, which refer to the present Government Railways Act, have been amended very considerably. I can assure the committee that I have compared the proposed amendments with the Railway Act itself, with the assistance of one of the officers of the department, and I am satisfied that what is left in the Government Railway Act, together with those portions of the general Railway Act, practically put the railway under the control of the board with the exception of the penalties.

Section as amended agreed to.

On section 7—Commencement of Act:

Mr. J. J. HUGHES: In accordance with the notice I gave yesterday, I beg to move that this section be amended by adding thereto the following:

but shall not apply to that part of the government system known as the Prince Edward Island Railway until the gauge of the same has been standardized.

The minister, speaking on this matter yesterday, appeared to be under the impression that the difficulties and disadvantages under which the people of Prince Edward Island laboured were chiefly due to the delays connected with the extra handling of freight at the terminal points, and the extra cost involved.

While there is some disadvantage in that regard, it is not the most serious one under which we labour. Our great disadvantage is in not being able to ship perishable products to the markets of the other provinces and of the United States, because we cannot ship in refrigerator cars. It is impossible to get refrigerator cars until the gauge of the Prince Edward Island railway is standardized. We grow very large quantities of potatoes, and the time for digging those potatoes is the month of October. The people are then so busy that they can pay little attention to shipping. In the month of November there is such danger from frost that we are prevented from shipping unless we have cars that will protect the potatoes. Thus the season for shipping is so short that it is practically impossible to reach the market. I think until we become a real part of the Intercolonial, and until we get the privileges and the advantages enjoyed by those living on the mainland, we should not be asked to accept the responsibilities or burdens of additional freight rates. When we entered Confederation the great inducement held out to us was that we would be put in continuous communication with the Intercolonial railway and the railway system of the Dominion. That has never been carried out. There were, of course, great difficulties in the way. At the same time, it was one of the terms of Confederation. The present Government undertook to establish what will, perhaps, be a solution of our transportation difficulties, when it is completed, but until it is completed things are in a worse condition than they were before. When the present Government came into power, we had a very good summer service. Our winter service was fairly satisfactory, inasmuch as we had two excellent ice-breaking steamers, which maintained fairly regular winter communication. The Government undertook to improve matters by establishing what is known as the car-ferry system. Once this system is put into operation, the great advantage will be that it will be possible for us to ship right through from the point of production to the point of destination, and we can have cold storage cars to carry perishable products, particularly potatoes and fresh fish. I may say that in proportion to the size of the province of Prince Edward Island we have the best fishing grounds in the world. But we cannot reach the market until we get refrigerator cars. The Government of Canada being a party to this agreement, I