

I will not take up more of the time of the house, but I do think the government should drop this business of government by order in council. What good are we here? What are we here for? This matter could have been threshed out long ago by the committee on marine and fisheries, and I would ask the minister even now to consider cancelling this order in council and leaving the matter to that committee.

Hon. ALFRED DURANLEAU (Acting Minister of Fisheries): I do not intend to answer in detail the remarks of the hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Reid) and the hon. member who has just taken his seat (Mr. Munn). My colleague the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Stevens) has fully covered the ground. With regard to the two matters brought up by my hon. friend from New Westminster, particularly with reference to purse seining at the mouth of the North Fraser river, let me assure the hon. member that we will study the question very closely. This is a very important matter, and this government has in mind only one end; that is the welfare of the fishermen, of the business interests and of the country at large. Those orders in council were adopted after consideration by the officials of my department, who are men of long experience, and by the government. After listening to my hon. friends, however, let me say that we will again consider these matters, and I hope we will come to some reasonable conclusion. That is all I can say at the moment.

ALLEGED MALADMINISTRATION IN DEPARTMENT OF MARINE

Hon. ALFRED DURANLEAU (Minister of Marine): I would ask to be allowed, Mr. Speaker, to say a few words with regard to a matter brought up the other day by the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Neill) with regard to some repairs made on the trail between Bamfield and Pachena, on the west coast. My hon. friend brought this matter up the other day without any previous notice, and I want to say that he was unfair to the Minister of Marine and even to this house when he made the statements he did about the minister.

This is a contract for \$1,000 for repairs to five little wooden bridges on that trail and the hon. gentleman made the statement that he was bringing up the matter here because he had received no satisfaction from the Minister of Marine although he had been in correspondence with him since October last—

Mr. NEILL: With his department.

[Mr. Munn.]

Mr. DURANLEAU: —without results, without reply. I could not answer the other day; my hon. friend had his file in his hands and I had none here. However, I was amazed when I came back to my office to discover that the first and only letter which was directed to the minister by my hon. friend was a letter dated February 9, 1933. This letter was received at my office on the following day, the 10th, and the hon. gentleman brought the matter up in this house on the following Tuesday, the 14th. Now I say, Mr. Speaker, that this statement was absolutely unfair to the minister—the statement that he had been in communication with the minister since last October. I have his statements here. He said, "I have been writing to the minister since October."

Mr. NEILL: It should have been the department.

Mr. DURANLEAU: And further he says that "you cannot get replies to letters." I say that was absolutely unfair. I had only one letter which was received at my office on the Friday, and on Monday morning, when I came back from the week-end in Montreal, I wired immediately to my marine agent in Victoria, asking him for particulars about that contract. My hon. friend, in that letter dated February 9, summarized the charges he made the other day, that in connection with that contract of \$1,000 the contractor had made a profit of \$700. On the Monday I wired to my marine agent in Victoria in these words:

In connection with McDonald contract repair bridges on trail between Bamfield and Pachena, it is necessary to know at once how long McDonald took to do work, how many men he employed, what wages he paid to each, amount of material McDonald supplied and how much profit he made on the job. Wire reply soon as possible.

That was on the 13th, the following Monday, and before waiting for my reply my hon. friend got up on the following day and made the charges which I have just stated. The hon. gentleman compared this contractor to highwaymen, to Bill Miner, who robbed the Canadian Pacific, and so on.

Now what are the facts? The answer I received was this:

Your wire repairs bridges Bamfield. Work lasted twenty-seven days. On account lateness of season men worked every day at ten and one-half hours per day September twentieth to October seventeenth. Crew consisted six men, four men at four dollars per day and board, one at five dollars per day and board, one at six dollars per day and board, total wages seven hundred and forty-five dollars. Expenses food ninety-six dollars camp equipment and launch hire one hundred and seventeen dollars, material furnished by contractor forty-two dollars. Contractors profit represented by