

John. But I do not wish to speak of one port as against another; our purpose here is to seek to extend and increase the West Indian trade.

#### GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP OF TELEGRAPH AND TELEPHONE LINES.

Mr. LEMIEUX. I regret that the Postmaster General (Mr. Pelletier) is not in his place. But I suppose the hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Foster), who is leading the House will be able to give me the information I desire. I see it stated in the 'Evening Journal' that the Postmaster General made an announcement yesterday on the nationalization of the telegraph and telephone lines by the Dominion. It is a rather startling announcement, and I desire to ask if the government has considered this matter of nationalizing telephones and telegraphs. Also I see it announced that the Postmaster General said that free rural mail delivery will be given. I am sincere in asking for information on these points. Does this represent the personal view of the Postmaster General, or did he speak for the government?

Mr. FOSTER. (Toronto). I think it would be more satisfactory if the hon. gentleman would put the question to the Postmaster General himself. We have had an illustration already to-day of the inadvisability of tying ourselves up completely to items in newspapers. While trying to be as correct as possible, they are tinged with human frailty, I fear.

Motion agreed to, and the House went into Committee of Supply.

#### SUPPLY.

Mr. PUGSLEY. I believe the item 'Wingham—Public Building—Tower Clock, \$2,000,' was allowed to stand. I was speaking when the House adjourned on Wednesday last at six o'clock. I have only a little more to say. I noticed in some of the papers the statement that my hon. friend, the former Secretary of State (Mr. Murphy) announced that the government had decided to abandon the land on Sussex street, as the site for a new departmental building. I observe also that in one of the newspapers the language of the former Secretary of State was quoted for the purposes of showing that I evidently was unaware of the statements which that hon. gentleman had made.

I have, however, looked at 'Hansard' report of his statement and what he said, as I interpret it, is not that the government had decided that the Sussex street site was not suitable for a departmental building to be erected now, or looking to future needs. I take it that what the hon.

Mr. McCURDY.

member for Russell meant was that that land would not be sufficient for all the accommodation that would be required now or in the future and therefore a sub-committee of council had been appointed with a view to looking over other available sites in order to purchase the land in advance of the actual requirements. It is true we had differences of opinion as to the extent to which we should use the land on Sussex street.

When I became Minister of Public Works, plans had been prepared under direction of my predecessor for two departmental blocks and also a Palace of Justice which were intended to cover all of the land purchased from Sussex street up to Mackenzie avenue and also to cover Mackenzie avenue. Subsequently when by an arrangement between the government and the City of Ottawa and the Ottawa Improvement Commission the City of Ottawa proposed to buy certain lands along Sussex street and facing the river in order to improve the driveway, the Ottawa Improvement Commission made a very strong protest to me and other members of the government, including the then Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier), against the closing of Mackenzie avenue, saying that it would be desirable to keep that avenue open as a public driveway particularly because a portion of Major's Hill park had been taken for the Chateau Laurier. I yielded to the view of the Ottawa Improvement Commission as urged upon me. I directed the Chief Architect to prepare new plans for a building which would come only to the edge of Mackenzie avenue. Owing to the change, we had to take one story off the building in order to give proper light in the wells and we had to narrow the building by some 40 feet, the width of Mackenzie avenue. It took some time to prepare those new plans and while they were under consideration quite a feeling was expressed by prominent citizens of Ottawa, which, I may say, was shared in by the late Governor General, who is a warm friend of Ottawa as well as of Canada, and who takes a very enthusiastic view of the future of Canada and of Ottawa and who urged very strongly that it would be a mistake to erect a building upon any part of the land acquired, that it should all be left open as a public park and that the building should be put either on the other side of Sussex street or in some other locality. I felt bound to give weight to these representations which were made to me and which I knew were shared in by at least one gentleman who is now very prominent in the Conservative party. I deferred coming to a final decision as to the construction of the building until the return of the late Prime Minister from England. After his return, as my hon. friends know, the House