

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. Not of the *John C. Barr*.

Mr. MONTAGUE. Suppose the Minister of Customs was valuing a boat, and there was a dispute, would he go to the captain of the boat, and to the owner of the boat, and to one of the employees to make a valuation, or, would he take an independent man, whose opinion would be a disinterested opinion? Why, the very fact that Mr. Davis went to these men, is almost proof positive that there was intended to be a fraud, perpetrated on the revenue of this country. I say further, that when Inspector McMichael found that these men had sworn to the value of the boat as \$10,000, and that the value was \$25,000, according to his opinion, he ought to have punished these men, as the government would punish any men who undervalued goods brought in by them through any port in Ontario. The Minister of Customs has told us that we had to take with a grain of salt the statements made by Belcourt & McDougal, because they are the representatives of a rival line. That is throwing considerable distrust upon the member for Ottawa (Mr. Belcourt).

The MINISTER OF CUSTOMS. No.

Mr. MONTAGUE. The minister says that they are the representatives of the rival line and that in effect they are not acting as fair and honourable men. Which was the rival line, I want to know, properly speaking? There was a number of Canadian lines there equal to the task of doing the business, and we find this American line coming in, undervaluing their boat at \$10,000, when it should, at least, have been \$25,000, and when the hon. member (Mr. Morrison), says it should have been \$60,000. We find them taking up the business which could be done by Canadian boats which had observed the law in every particular, according to the statement of Messrs. Belcourt & McDougal, and under these circumstances we had better find the Minister of Customs dealing with the American line as the rival line. Yet the American line is the line which he is defending in the House to-night; whose fraud he is defending—because undoubtedly who ever performed it, it was a fraud upon the Treasury of Canada.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. As well as upon the rival line.

Mr. MONTAGUE. Yes, as well as upon the Canadian line. The Minister of Customs tells us to-night that there is not a word of fraud, or of collusion, or of wrongdoing attributed to Mr. Davis, or attributed to the conduct of the whole affair, at the customs port at Dawson. What evidence of fraud does the minister want? Here we have the evidence that the boat was only valued at about one-third of what they eventually had to pay duty on. That is fraud. Here we have the evidence that the

Mr. WALLACE.

collector of customs (Mr. Davis), advised. I have no doubt—although it does not appear in the return—by Mr. Wade, the Crown prosecutor, who was acting for the owners of this American boat; we have Mr. Davis getting the owner, and the captain, and another employee of the boat to make the valuation.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. Where is your proof of that?

Mr. MONTAGUE. If that is not collusion, and if that is not wrong-doing, I do not know what these can be defined to be by the Minister of Customs. The Minister of Customs says that Mr. McMichael reports that this was simply an error of judgment. Where does that statement occur? There is no such language in the report of Inspector McMichael. He finds that the boat was grossly undervalued, and that false invoices were statements by the owners of the boat. He found that a fraud had been committed, and that a false oath had been taken as regards the valuation. But why has he not reported more fully upon the circumstances, and reported that severer and sterner justice should be meted out to these men. Sir, there are other government employees in connection with this matter. It is not Mr. Davis alone. I venture to say that Mr. Davis would receive very little sympathy, at the hands of the Minister of Customs, if he came to deal with Mr. Davis alone. But there is another gentleman pretty close to Mr. Davis. That gentleman is Mr. Wade, and he is pretty close to some other gentleman. The minister has refused to investigate the conduct of Mr. Wade, when there can be no doubt about the fact that there was a collusion between Mr. Wade and some one regarding the whole circumstances of the valuation of this boat. Then there comes the other question as to the registration of this boat as a British bottom. She was built at St. Michael's, was undoubtedly an American boat, and before she could do business upon Canadian waters she had to secure British registry. How was it secured? Her record shows that the boat was sold for \$100 to a Canadian in Dawson; a boat that is valued at \$10,000 by themselves, \$25,000 by the government, and \$60,000 by the hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Morrison).

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. Where is that evidence?

Mr. MONTAGUE. That is my information.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. It was one of the other vessels.

Mr. MONTAGUE. Yes, it was one of the other vessels, and the fact that the other vessel was sold for \$100, and transferred to a Dawson owner, may be taken as evidence, that the same thing was worked in regard to the *John C. Barr*. The whole system was