

Amherst via Pictou, N. S., March 20th.

The County Council of the Magdalen islands authorizes me to transmit to you and to the Department Marine and Fisheries the following resolutions passed yesterday, and to humbly solicit that you use your utmost endeavours to have the enclosed request acted upon as soon as possible, viz., that the Council at its regular meeting assembled hereby expresses to the department its appreciations and thanks for the services rendered by the steamer Stanley during the month of January in bringing to these islands provisions and other goods which were absolutely necessary in order to enable the inhabitants of these islands to survive the severe winter without excessive hardships. That this Council humbly beg to draw the attention of the department to the following facts: the inhabitants of the islands are almost entirely dependent on the fishing industry for their livelihood. This industry is entirely dependent on gasoline and kerosene for motive power and the amount of fuel which had been purchased for early spring fishing was not brought by the Stanley, but remained in Pictou and Souris. Should this fuel not be on hand here before the opening of navigation for commercial vessels it would entail a loss of thousands of dollars to the fishermen of these islands as the early spring is the most productive fishing season. This loss would not only occasion a material loss at the time but also a loss of earning power which would certainly cause a famine during the coming winter. Therefore, that this Council humbly beg that the steamer Stanley be sent to these islands with gasoline, kerosene and other needed fishing supplies as early during the month of April as it will be possible for her to come here. May add that since above resolution is passed the public is informed that the Amelia has been sold and that no other steamer is offering for the Magdalen Islands service next season, which makes it even more urgent that the Stanley be sent as requested. Kindly keep us informed promptly as what steps are being taken.

A. J. PAINCHAUD,

Secretary Treasurer of the County Council
Magdalen Islands.

This telegram, and the report which I have read from the Toronto Globe of 6th February, speak for themselves. I suggest that the Ministers of Trade and Commerce and Marine and Fisheries consider the situation which confronts the mainland on the northern coast of Gaspé and the Magdalen islands. In view of the high cost of bacon, pork and other kinds of meat, fish is becoming more and more valuable and is entering more largely into the diet of the consumers. Why should we let the Americans gather all the fish from the Magdalen islands and from the northern coast and thus prevent our own city people from getting it? As no steamers can be found—I quite understand the reasons why—I suggest that the two departments arrange that the steamer Princess, for instance, be made available for the people on the river St. Lawrence and that the steamer Stanley be

[Mr. Lemieux.]

put on the route between Magdalen islands, Prince Edward island and Pictou during next season. This request is a reasonable one, because the people of the Magdalen islands are absolutely isolated during several months of the year. I hope that the Minister of Marine and Fisheries will be as generous in this case as he was at the beginning of last winter, when he agreed to the request which I made on that occasion.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: Mr. Speaker, three services under the Department of Trade and Commerce which have been for many years subsidized, are of nearly equal importance, and all very necessary. These three have, within my experience, received as large a share of attention and have been as troublesome and difficult as any three in the whole range of our local services. In order of importance, I think the Magdalen islands service comes first, because the Magdalen islands have no rail communication with the outside world. The next one, I would say, is the north shore. The north shore is sparsely inhabited, but the people of that district are our citizens, and by virtue of the very sparseness of habitation and the extent to which the population is scattered along the coast, have special claims for being looked after by the Dominion Government in the way of steamship communication. The other is the Gaspé shore, from Gaspé along the coast, about which my hon. friend has been speaking. That, however, has railway communication on two ends. At Gaspé there is rail connection with the Government railways; at Matane there is rail communication with the rest of Canada. The important stretch there which has no available service except by water is that portion of the coast between Gaspé and Matane. With reference to the Magdalen Islands service, my hon. friend sees as well as I do the extreme difficulty of getting any vessels at all, let alone thoroughly suitable vessels for that service. The same holds good with reference to the north shore, and the stretch of country between Gaspé and Matane, or the old service between Gaspé and the cities of Montreal and Quebec. The two vessels which last year carried on the Gaspé service have gone out of the service, and in spite of every effort put forth by the department to obtain one, no suitable vessel is in sight. It is possible that a vessel may be obtained; everything possible is being done to obtain one. What I do think should be provided for in some way is the stretch