

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN. Yes, certainly. Although I say 'on all,' it would appear that for two or three years at one time no payments were made to the company, but the number I gave and stated as 'paid on' was the number on which the company were entitled to receive a bonus.

Mr. FOSTER. Yes.

Mr. STOCKTON. And on what they had received the bonus subsequently.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN. Subsequently, yes. A great deal of fun has been afforded to my hon. friends of the opposition by reason of the fact that there was some delay in the incorporation of the company. No representation was made by the company under the first or under the second contract that they were ever incorporated. Everybody knew they were simply a syndicate of booking agents or something of that character, organized under the name of the North Atlantic Trading Company to engage in this contract. The first contract does not, I think, state them to be a body corporate, in fact there was no first formal contract and no second formal contract. This appears only in the last contract. I submit, further, that there is no evidence that this company have not a charter, there is no evidence before the House, there was no evidence before the committee, that they did not have a charter in Holland as is represented in the preamble of the contract. That last contract bears a seal; I must admit that the seal is not the form of seal usually used in this country for such purpose, but I will not undertake to say, and no person is authorized or justified in saying, that the company have no incorporation and are not a body corporate under the laws of Holland. Now the fact that the company have recently applied for an English charter—

Mr. FOSTER. Will the hon. gentleman say they have incorporation in Holland?

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN. No, I do not say they are incorporated under the laws of Holland, all I can say is this that there is before parliament, there was at least before the committee and there appears on the files, a contract signed by the Minister of the Interior, signed on behalf of the company by its manager and its secretary, and there is a seal there with the letters N.A.T. Co. stamped upon it. That is all I can say concerning that. I will not, of course, undertake to say that they are duly incorporated under the laws of Holland, but I do submit that no person can say that they are not incorporated under the laws of Holland.

Now surely there was nothing peculiar about this company going to the Island of Guernsey and asking for a charter. They may have a purpose in doing so, a very good one, and until some explanation

Mr. FOSTER.

reaches us from the company or from somebody authorized to speak on their behalf I say it is unfair to discuss that matter at all. Furthermore, I wish to state that Mr. Smart in evidence stated that last year when the matter of this contract was mentioned in parliament, and it was suggested that they were not an incorporated company, he wrote them and they wrote back saying they were an incorporated company. My hon. friend afforded some amusement to the opposition by reading the names of the charter members of this company. They were the subscribers. My hon. friend knows as well as I do that under the English Companies Act, under the Companies Act of nearly every province in Canada, any three or more persons may organize a company by subscribing one share each. My hon. friend has often incorporated companies himself in the same manner. He has even been president of companies which were organized in the first instance by three persons and there is no reason why he should waste the time of parliament in having a little fun owing to the fact of this company going to Guernsey for their charter. My hon. friend has been president of companies which secured their charters in Virginia. I do not know who the incorporators were but they may have been Johnny Jones and his sister Sue, and their mother. I do not intend this as a reflection on the hon. gentleman but I say it was not fair, it was not becoming to so old a parliamentarian, to so old a statesman, if you like, as my hon. friend from Toronto (Mr. Foster) to solicit the applause and laughter of this House by simply stating the facts contained in the cablegram received from Lord Strathcona the other day, giving the names of the subscribers to the memorandum of association.

Another objection urged against this contract is that everything was done in secret, that Mr. Sifton and Mr. Smart and Mr. Preston, with malice aforethought and in cold blood organized this company, suggested, a contract, initiated it and finally consummated it, and then arranged that this whole thing should be kept secret. You will find that Mr. Preston in the correspondence urged very ably that there was no objection legally to this contract under the laws of the countries in which the company were to carry out their propaganda. The contract was submitted first of all to a firm of lawyers in London, Charles Russell & Co. Mr. Preston was not satisfied with their opinion, and he again consulted Mr. B. C. Knox, to whom he was referred by the Russell firm. Mr. Knox revised his first opinion and admitted the contract was perfectly legal. Mr. Preston was the only man, so far as I can see, who argued that the contract was not illegal. He argued that the Canadian government had had booking agents in these parts for many years and the governments must have known it, and