

munication in the districts not served by railway, is by boat along the coast and the boat must call at wharves in order to do business. The present minister is allowing these wharves to fall to pieces, and there will soon be no place for the boats to call at. On behalf of the people of North Cape Breton and Victoria I register my complaint before the minister and before this committee. While we need more wharves I am not asking for the building of new structures; I am simply asking that the old wharves and breakwaters be kept in repair, and that the privileges which the people have enjoyed for many years past shall not be taken away from them. That, I think, is a reasonable proposition. The minister is spending ten or twelve millions of money in the harbour of St. John on a very doubtful venture, on a new enterprise, on a thing that is not going to bring any good to anybody. The people of St. John and the people of the province generally are getting along splendidly with the present accommodation in the harbour of St. John, but it seems that we must spend all these millions of additional money in dabbling in the mud in Courtenay bay without any certainty of proper results. Yet the minister has not a dollar to maintain the wharves and breakwaters in the county which I represent in a proper state of repair. I want to tell my hon. friend that I do not regard that as a proper policy. I would therefore like to know from him what the policy of the department is in regard to these breakwaters? When he finds that a wharf, or a breakwater, will cost \$1,000 to repair does he propose to allow that structure to fall to pieces and leave nothing at all for the use and service of the public? I would like to hear from the minister what he has to say so that the people whom I represent will know what the policy of the Government is, and what hope they have for the future in regard to these public undertakings which are so very useful to them? There are several members from Nova Scotia, and some from Cape Breton, and they know what I am talking about. They know the places which are served by these wharves and breakwaters and they know how absolutely helpless the people will be if there is no opportunity for boats to call at regular intervals in order to allow them to carry on their trade.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall the item carry?

Mr. McKENZIE: No, I am not going to be defeated by the minister. He will

[Mr. McKenzie.]

either give me some answer as to what his policy is, or we will have to talk a little further on the subject.

Mr. McCURDY: The hon member for Inverness (Mr. Chisholm) had the floor and I had no opportunity to reply.

Mr. CHISHOLM: I thought the minister was not going to make any reply to my hon. friend from North Cape Breton and Victoria and for that reason I rose to ask him a question. The other day when we were discussing the Estimates of the Public Works Department I was unfortunately absent. I may be a little out of order now, but I want to get some information as to the intentions of the minister and his department with respect to Port Hood wharf. There is an item of \$7,000 in the Estimates, for this wharf, but I do not know what it is proposed to do with this money. The people of Port Hood—in fact the people of a large section of country—are anxious to know what is going to be done in the matter of this wharf, which is so necessary to the boat which calls at the port. They are totally dependent upon this service, it is the only one they have. I have already informed the minister that the wharf is in a dilapidated condition and that in its present state the boat cannot go near it. I will, therefore, be pleased if the minister will tell me what his intentions are.

Mr. McCURDY: I have been hoping to be able to visit the place of which my hon. friend from Inverness speaks, but hon. gentlemen will realize how difficult it is for a minister to get far away from this scene of his labours. My hon. friend knows that large sums of money have been spent on the Port Hood wharf, which has existed ever since Confederation. I have not the exact figures of that expenditure with me, but I think a total in excess of \$250,000 has been spent on Port Hood harbour. That is my recollection at any rate. Requisitions for additional expenditures continue to come in, but I would really like to see the place myself before determining what shall be done. Engineers' reports and plans are all very good, but they do not make a matter as clear as do personal observations on the spot. I cannot give my hon. friend any assurance at the present moment in regard to further expenditures in Port Hood harbour. Neither can I say very much more to my hon. friend from North Cape Breton and Victoria, than has been already said at this sitting of the committee. Large requisitions are coming in