

The I. C. R. Expenditures Where Money Goes

Considerable Discussion in Parliament Over Items for Various Points in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia ---Fredericton Will Have Station House Improvements from Time to Time---Large Prices to Be Paid for Lands at Some Points.

While the estimates for the Intercolonial were under discussion in Parliament, some information was elicited upon items in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. For improvements at Sackville, \$30,000. Mr. Fielding said that this was for a station, freight house and platform.

Mr. Crockett—Is any portion of this for water supply at Sackville?

Mr. Fielding—No. Station, freight house and platform, \$23,000; grading, \$5,000; 1½ acres additional land \$1,365.

Mr. Fowler—Do you pay \$1,000 an acre for land at Sussex, ordinary farm land, with no village within a mile?

Mr. Fielding—The land has not been bought. This is an estimate for it.

Mr. Fowler—Surely it is not the intention of the department to pay \$1,000 an acre for land at Sackville station. It is ordinary marsh land, the town is some distance from the station. It will never be used for anything but farming purposes.

Mr. Fielding—This \$1,365 for 1½ acres are the figures reported from Moncton as being probably necessary. It is hardly a thousand dollars an acre.

Mr. Fowler—They are altogether too generous in their figures. I am afraid they have been following Mr. Lodge's figures.

Improvements at Amherst, \$34,000.

Mr. Fielding—This is for a station, baggage room and platform.

Mr. Fowler—Amherst has already a very good station.

Mr. Fielding—I am told Amherst station is a very unpretentious one for so large a place.

Mr. Fowler—It is built of stone, a very substantial structure.

Mr. Fielding—The local authorities regard it as a very mean station for so important a town. They have been asking for it for some time.

Mr. Fowler—I may say to the acting minister that the station at Amherst is a very handsome, tasty and attractive station, built of stone in a very substantial manner. The minister says that one reason why it was granted is because it has been agitated for some time. I have been in this House for several years, and every session I have agitated for a new station in my county, at Sussex. The station there was built over 40 years ago, a barn-like structure that is.

A Disgrace to the Railway, and yet agitation there has not produced any such results as the agitation at Amherst. Sussex is one of the most important stations along the whole line of the Intercolonial. The deputy minister knows there is a great deal of business done there, and it is simply a shame and a disgrace that such a wretched structure should be allowed to remain.

Mr. Fielding—Sussex is one of the points where it is recognized that station accommodation is not as good as it should be. No doubt we will get round to Sussex before long. Sussex is an important place, but it is hardly as important as Amherst.

Mr. Fowler—At the same time you have a very good station already at Amherst.

Fredericton Station.

Mr. Crockett—I hope the minister won't forget Fredericton either. There we have a very small wooden building that is utterly inadequate to the requirements of the place. The matter has been agitated in Fredericton for some time, the people think they should have a new station. Fredericton is the capital of the province and the station is entirely out of keeping with the town. I trust that when further appropriations for new stations are being considered, Fredericton will not be forgotten. I think perhaps there is no place along the Intercolonial Railway where a new station is more required than at the city of Fredericton.

Mr. Fielding—To doubt what the hon. gentleman says of Fredericton is correct, the station there is a very inferior one. But it is to be remembered that this is a line which has only recently come into the possession of the government, and no doubt from time to time we should put up decent station buildings. Fredericton as the capital is entitled to a better station than it now has.

Improvements at Newcastle, \$32,000.

Mr. Fielding—This is for enlargement of the engine house, station and water service. We supply our own water service there.

Mr. Crockett—Has a contract been let for the work at Newcastle?

Mr. Fielding—Not yet.

Mr. Bennett—Will it be done by tender?

Mr. Fielding—Yes, for the enlargement of the engine house. The water service is done by officials of the government.

To Increase Accommodation at Truro \$110,000.

Mr. Daniel—Is that a new station?

Mr. Fielding—Additional yard accommodation, water, service, coal plant, ash pit, cinder pit, and rearranging yard at a cost aggregating \$110,000.

Mr. Bennett—How much will the land cost?

Mr. Fielding—There is no land to be purchased out of this item.

Mr. Bennett—Will this work all be done by tender?

Mr. Fielding—A considerable portion of the work is what is called yard work and is done by the men of the Intercolonial Railway. Outside of that it is expected that it will be done by tender.

To Increase Accommodation at Halifax, \$300,000.

Mr. Fielding—This is for additional facilities on west side of Water street \$173,000; extension of quay wall in connection with pier No. 8, \$15,000; 26 stall engine house, heating, turntable, \$160,000; double track to the cotton factory siding, \$55,000; freight car repair shop, planing mill, store house, round house, ash pit, heating and piping of new building and sewer, aggregating altogether \$579,000, of which it is proposed to take at the present year \$300,000.

Mr. Daniel—Are these works to be done by tender?

Mr. Fielding—The contract has been awarded to the lowest tenderer.

Mr. Daniel—Who has the contract?

Mr. Fielding—The round house, which is one of the largest items, has been awarded to Mr. M. E. Keefe, of Halifax, and the other shops to Rhodes, Curry & Company, of Amherst.

Mr. Crockett—What is the price of the roundhouse?

Mr. Fielding—The contract for the roundhouse is \$122,000.

Locomotive and Car Shops and Land Purchase at Moncton, \$520,000.

This is to provide new shops and additional yard accommodation at Moncton. This, of course, is in consequence of the fire which destroyed the Moncton shops some months ago. Contracts have been awarded for the locomotive and other shops, to E. A. Wallberg and for the planing mill to Rhodes, Curry & Company.

Mr. Crockett—Would the minister give the prices of the contracts?

Mr. Fielding—The Wallberg tender for the freight car repair shops is \$56,630; the same contractor for the repair passenger and paint shop and offices, \$154,945; the same contractor for the locomotive shop, \$130,000 and Messrs. Rhodes, Curry & Co. for the planing mills, \$23,295.

Mr. Daniel—What are these buildings to be constructed?

Mr. Fielding—Steel and concrete chiefly.

Mr. Daniel—How much of this goes for the purchase of land?

Mr. Fielding—None of this is for the purchase of land.

Mr. Daniel—Was the lowest tender accepted?

Mr. Fielding—In every case.

Mr. Daniel—It mentions land in this item.

The Purchase of Land.

Mr. Fielding—For the convenience of accounting the same wording is used as was used in the vote of last year, but there will be no purchase of land out of this vote.

Mr. Fowler—How much did you pay for land?

Mr. Crockett—Does that land adjoin the old trotting park?

Mr. Fielding—It is close to it.

Mr. Fowler—In that \$23,000 is there included the amount paid for the land that was bought by Mr. Lodge?

Mr. Fielding—No, this is different land.

Mr. Fowler—If the acting minister will remember when that matter was up for discussion last year the defence that was made by the then Minister of Railways and Canals (Mr. Emmerson) when he was taxed with the price being excessive, was that some twenty years before the Conservative government had purchased land for which they had paid \$2,000 an acre, that they had bought some 51,000th of an acre which would be a fraction over one half an acre, and had paid at the rate of \$2,000 an acre. He defended the purchase of this land from Mr. Lodge at a very excessive price on that ground. As I remember, the hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) took an active part in the debate, and his defence of that purchase whereby

Mr. Lodge Made a Very Handsome Rake-off, was upon the same ground that the

old government had paid at the rate of \$2,000 an acre for land in that vicinity which they had bought some twenty years before. That was the only ground that the Minister of Finance and the present acting Minister of Railways and Canals put forward as a defence for this transaction, which we, on this side of the House, had called a most iniquitous transaction, whereby a very large sum of money was lost to the people of this country. Now it has turned out that the then Minister of Railways and Canals made a mistake of only being a fraction more than half an acre which was bought by the old government it was something over six acres for which the rate per acre would be about \$200 instead of \$2,000. Has this knowledge come to the ears of the minister and has he any explanation to make to us or has he any other defence of that infamous Lodge transaction.

Mr. Fielding—The Minister of Railways stated in his speech last year that land had been purchased many years ago under the former government at the price mentioned. I had no knowledge other than the statement which the Minister of Railways himself had made, and in following him in the debate I referred to the same item. The deputy minister informs me

That the Minister was Astray.

The figures which should have been six and a half acres had been in a memorandum which had been furnished to the minister by some officer of the department and in copying the statement the figure six was dropped out. It read half an acre, and the minister in all good faith read it here as being half an acre. It is quite evident that he made a mistake and it naturally follows that I accepted the statement of the Minister of Railways and made a mistake in accepting it.

Mr. Fowler—Then what becomes of the defence of that transaction?

Mr. Fielding—That was only part of the defence. That was only part of the defence. It was used by way of illustration.

The Government Defence.

Mr. Fowler—The whole defence was that the present government had paid the smaller price for this land than the Conservative government had paid for similar lands years before. If the Minister of Finance will consult Hansard he will find that that statement was entirely wrong. The fact is that this land bought by the present government had been purchased by Hewson acting as agent for Lodge, knowing that the government was going to acquire this land for railway purposes. The rake-off was something like \$8,500, and it went into the pocket of Mr. Lodge and out of the public treasury. The minister has now lost his only defence for this transaction; has he any other to put forward in its place?

Mr. Fielding—No, this is plain.

Mr. Fowler—Has he any other defence for this transaction?

Mr. Fielding—It was only one of the grounds of defence, and to that extent the Minister of Railways was mistaken. Mr. Lodge undoubtedly made a profit out of the land; most people who do buy land and sell it again intend to make a profit.

Mr. Fowler—Sure.

Mr. Fielding—There was the testimony of independent witnesses from the land, only three weeks before, sold it for \$5,000 less than the government paid for it.

Mr. Fielding—Quite possible.

(Continued on page 6.)

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