

pany at the wharf and then stipulate a definite sum calculated on the amount of business transacted. That will cause us less trouble and we would certainly get some revenue under it which we do not get now. It has been suggested that these wharfs should be free, but for my part I think we should have some revenue from them. If the provisions in this Bill do not work out satisfactorily we may have to come back for new legislation. At all events it is absolutely impossible to carry out the law as it is at present and it is one of the things which has bothered me since I became minister. Efficient officers have considered this matter, and this legislation is the result of their experience and judgment.

Mr. MARSHALL. I am not yet clear as to this matter. If I ship canned goods, lake and rail, to Winnipeg and they go by way of Sarnia, who pays the wharfage on these goods?

Mr. BRODEUR. The shipper when he does pay it, but that does not often occur.

Mr. MARSHALL. We export a large quantity of goods, and I have always understood that where goods were shipped, lake and rail, the wharfage charges are included in the freight.

Mr. BRODEUR. The wharfage rates have always been paid by the individual importer or exporter.

Mr. CROSBY. As I understand it the government is trying to better control these wharfs and to get some revenue from them. It is said that while the government is going to lease the wharfs they are still going to retain the wharfinger, and it does not seem to me that that would be necessary. If your wharfinger is not of any use under the present conditions why should you retain him? As to the wharfage rate you could have a top wharfage rate and a side wharfage rate, not controlled by the Governor in Council, but if there is any board of trade in the locality it should be controlled by that board of trade, or by the nearest board of trade to the particular wharf. You could provide that the wharfage should not be more than the maximum for top wharfage and side wharfage. Of course it is absolutely essential that these wharfs should always be for the use of the general public and should not in any possible way be exclusively for the use of the lessee. If the lessee of a wharf, having obtained the privilege should increase his business and should ship a greater quantity of goods over that wharf, so long as he pays the specific rate I do not think that would be any disadvantage to the government or to the locality. Possibly the merchant who is a neighbour of the

lessee might be at a disadvantage, but at the end of three years he would have an opportunity of tendering in competition. It might be well to make the lease shorter than three years.

Mr. BRODEUR. My policy for the present would be to lease only in cases where there is no competition.

Mr. CROSBY. In any case where competition might be found to be keen the term of the lease should be made shorter. Now, as to repairing the wharfs, I cannot understand how you can ask the lessee of a wharf to keep it in repair. Your inspector might visit that wharf and he might report that certain repairs were necessary, but the lessee might not be of that opinion, and difficulty would then arise. I think the only proper way is for the government to let it be understood when tenders are asked for that the wharf would be kept in good condition by them. In some localities in the maritime provinces the teredo worm is harder on wharfs than in other localities, and it would be difficult for the lessee to estimate how much he would have to expend in repairs. Again, if we gave the lease for a long term the wharf might come back on our hands in very bad condition. It seems to me that it would be safer for the government and fairer to the community, that the government should keep the wharfs in proper condition. Then the government would be sure, when their engineer said that certain things were necessary to be done, that they would be done. With regard to the rates, there should be a maximum limit fixed by the government; otherwise the lessee might charge a rate which would be unfair. The rate might be governed by the nearest board of trade in the locality where the wharf is situated. Just as the duty on a suit of clothes is included in the price of the clothes, so the wharfage rates are always included in the freight charges of the railway or the steamship line that uses the wharf. If the government had a wharfinger, it could not have much of a check on the lessee; and as the wharfage dues would be payable to the government, I do not think they would be any more likely to be paid than they are now.

Mr. BRODEUR. I cannot agree with my hon. friend that the services of a wharfinger would not be required where there is a lease. It might be that some people other than the shipping company or the railway company would require to use the wharf, and there should be somebody there to collect the wharfage.

Mr. FOSTER. Do I understand the minister to say that after he enters into a contract to lease a wharf to one person,

Mr. BRODEUR.