

and to be a little more careful about putting lives in jeopardy in mid-winter in order to please Mr. Douglas and to make a few miserable votes from the graft that might be made out of this vessel. There was no other reason for their going there at that time of the year.

Public works—chargeable to collection of revenue—Levis graving dock—further amount required, \$2,500.

Mr. LEMIEUX: How is the work on the graving dock at Lévis progressing?

Mr. REID: The new dock will be completed and in operation this year.

Telegraph and telephone lines—Prince Edward Island and mainland—revote of lapsed amount, \$14,000.

Mr. SINCLAIR: Will the minister explain this item?

Mr. REID: That is for two annual subsidies of \$7,000 each due to the Anglo-American Company for 1915 and 1916.

Mr. SINCLAIR: Does a company own the line and the Government pay a yearly subsidy?

Mr. REID: Yes. Since Confederation this has been done. It was part of the terms of Confederation.

Mr. LEMIEUX: You control the rates?

Mr. REID: Yes.

Mr. SINCLAIR: Why are we voting two year's subsidy now?

Mr. REID: There was a dispute between the department and this company as to the rates that they should charge and as to other matters connected with the operation of the line. For this reason, during about two years the subsidy was not paid, pending final settlement of the dispute.

Mr. SINCLAIR: We get no revenue from it.

Mr. REID: No. This communication is furnished under the terms of Confederation.

Mr. LEMIEUX: Navigation is closed for several months of the year between Picton and the Madgalen islands. Under an arrangement made at my request, during the winter months the people of the Magdalen islands received over the cable a synopsis of news from the outside world, which was distributed to different places on the island over the telegraph line. Is that service being continued?

Mr. REID: For all I know, it is. I do not know that there has been any change.

Mr. McKENZIE: The cable between the Magdalen Islands and the mainland lands at a place called Meat cove. For about a year the cable was broken, and it was not repaired,—there was a good deal of complaint about the negligence of those in charge. On that account, for a time the winter news of which the hon. member (Mr. Lemieux) speaks was not conveyed from the mainland to the Magdalen islands. But the real reason was that the highly competent operator who had been in charge of the cable station at Bay St. Lawrence was dismissed by this Government. In her place they put two men, neither of whom was a telegrapher. One was named McNeil and the other McDonald; they are still there. No. and then they pick up a boy here, and a boy there and get them to do some operating. It was found convenient—by those who wanted to help them out—to keep this cable broken. There was a combination between the men who were in charge as operators and the men who were in charge of fixing the cable, and that convenient arrangement was carried out. The cable was not in a position to receive any news; it was so arranged that the blame would not fall upon those men. That is the condition there. The hon. member for Rouville (Mr. Lemieux) will find that if the people on the Mgdalen islands expect to get a news service from the mainland, they will have to insist upon the Government putting a competent operator in charge of the operating station. The Government is paying big salaries to men who are absolutely incapable of doing the work.

Mr. CARVELL: Surely the minister is not going to allow a charge like that to go by unnoticed? This is the worst of all the charges that has been made during the course of these estimates. What has the minister to say about it?

Mr. REID: All I have to say is this: It is hard for me to believe that any person in charge of a telegraph office would deliberately break the cable, as the hon. member has stated.

Mr. McKENZIE: I did not say that they had broken the cable. The line was left broken for over a year.

Mr. REID: Then I misunderstood the hon. gentleman.

Mr. McKENZIE: Hansard will show that I said nothing of the kind. The line broke at a convenient time, and for over a year