

upon the same topic. At the same time he hoped the hon. gentleman would withdraw his resolution.

**Mr. SCHULTZ** said that when the motion was made for a Committee he had objected to it, and then stated that he put a notice on the paper for the Commission about the same time a notice was put on for the Committee. This was the reason why he took this action, and he only pressed this matter now because he felt that while the Committee was perfectly competent on the two last subjects assigned to them, they would not at least have time to investigate the third subject.

He was willing, however, now for the Committee to continue the investigation and, if they found they could not bring in the report, that the remainder of the investigation should be completed by a Royal Commission. If this could be done, he would withdraw his motion.

**Hon. Mr. BLAKE** said the Committee had the power of recommending to the House the appointment of a Royal Commission.

**Right Hon. Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD** said that he agreed that the motion of the hon. member for Lisgar was premature. He was taken a good deal by surprise when the motion for the Committee was carried; but he supposed the hon. member for Selkirk (Mr. Smith) had consulted the Government before he made a motion of such grave importance, which trod on such delicate ground. There was no doubt that the consent of the Government had been given to the motion, and he was surprised at the statement of the Premier that he was not in favour of inquiring into the causes of those occurrences. That was the main motion and basis of the inquiry.

A duty had been imposed on the Committee and that duty could not be avoided except by the consent of the House—that was the investigation into the cause of the disturbances in the Northwest. If, on reflection, the hon. head of the Government was of opinion that the inquiry had better be limited, steps should be taken by which the Committee would be given to understand that.

He (Right Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald) considered that the Committee should be allowed to continue the investigation alone, and, if they were unable to complete that investigation, that they should recommend the appointment of a commission.

**Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE** said that it was quite evident that that reference was necessary to enable the Committee to make their enquiry effectual. He did not think it necessary to make any inquisitorial enquiry of a hypercritical character into other causes which were not necessarily connected with the matter referred to the committee. He had assented to the appointment of the Committee without noticing at the moment the precise wording of the resolution.

**Hon. Mr. CAUCHON** said he thought the motion was out of order. If the resolution of which notice had been given were put he would move an amendment to enlarge the enquiry. If they gave the cause they must also give the effect.

The motion was then withdrawn.

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#### SHORTEST MAIL ROUTE

**Hon. Mr. ROBITAILLE** moved for a Select Committee to inquire as to the best and most direct route for the conveyance of mails and passengers between the Dominion of Canada and Europe, the possibility of navigating the Gulf of St. Lawrence during the winter months, and of finding on the shores of the Dominion a harbour accessible both in winter and in summer, to be the terminus of such shortest route.

In speaking to his motion, he (Hon. Mr. Robitaille) referred to the inquiries which had been made last session, and to the able manner in which the subject had been introduced by an hon. member of this House. At that inquiry the relative claims of Paspébiac, Shippagan, and Louisbourg had been discussed; but it had been supposed that the ports on the St. Lawrence were altogether closed during the winter. He desired to ascertain whether this was the case, and, if not, whether they did not afford the best winter harbour which Canada possessed. (The remarks of the hon. gentleman were largely inaudible in the gallery.)

**Mr. MACKAY** said that a similar committee was appointed last year, but its labour was brought to a close by the close of the season. This was the most important matter which could come before the House, as it could be shown that the Dominion had the spot whence a more direct route to Europe could be found than the United States possessed.

**Hon. Mr. LAIRD** had no objection to the enquiry being made.

**Hon. Mr. TUPPER** also spoke in favour of the motion.

The motion was carried.

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#### LEASING OF THE WHARVES AT QUEBEC

**Mr. TREMBLAY** moved for 1. Any correspondence between the Government and the St. Lawrence Tow Boat Company, or any of the directors or agents thereof, on the subject of leasing the wharves below Quebec. 2. A statement showing the sums collected as wharfage dues established by the Department of Public Works, and the sums paid to the Government for each of the said wharves. 3. A statement showing the number of shares held by the ex-Minister of Public Works, the Hon. M. Langevin, C.B., in the stock of the said Tow Boat Company at the time when the lease of such wharves was granted to the Company.

In speaking to his motion he charged the late Minister of Public Works with having, for a consideration of stock, made an unusually favourable contract with the St. Lawrence Tow Boat Company, whose toll exactions from the public were out of all proportion to the accommodation afforded.

**Hon. Mr. ROBITAILLE** read a communication from Hon. Mr. Langevin, denying that at the time of the contract with the St.