

away to have warranted the construction of a wharf at this place twenty years ago. That was a private wharf, and it has become dilapidated. A public wharf is very much required.

Mr. J. D. REID. This is a sample of what I object to, and that is, the points where the government build public wharfs. The policy which the government are carrying out is hardly in accordance with the public interest. I could mention one case where a wharf was built at an expenditure of thousands of dollars, and there was no reason for it except that a petition was sent in from the residents of that locality. The government never sent an engineer to look into it, made no inquiries at all, but as soon as the petition came in the government said: All right, here is a petition, go ahead and build this wharf. I am afraid this is a similar case. From what the minister has just said, there was only a petition sent in to the member for the county, and forwarded by him, I suppose, to the government. On that petition the government decided to expend, when it started, I suppose, \$5,000 or \$6,000, and by the time they get through with it they will have expended \$60,000 or \$70,000. When a petition is sent in by residents of any locality, the first thing the government should do is to send an engineer to the spot and see what is really required, and also get a report from the chief engineer of the department as to what is actually needed.

Mr. PUGSLEY. The hon. gentleman will be gratified to know that that is exactly what the government does. When a petition comes in for the construction of a wharf it is referred to the engineer, and he is instructed to make a report as to the necessity of the work and as to the probable cost. This course has been followed in every case since I have been minister, and I am informed it was the previous custom. I can give my hon. friend a little more information with regard to this wharf. It is five miles west of Point Fortune and seven miles east of Hawkesbury; that will give him an idea of where it is located. The old wharf to which I referred was built by James McAllister some years ago. It has been vested in the Crown so the Crown now owns the property, and this is for rebuilding it and making an extension to it to give very much needed accommodation.

Mr. J. D. REID. I am bound to accept the minister's statement that this is the policy of the department, but we have had evidence under oath to the contrary in the Public Accounts Committee in the case of the Pointe aux Trembles wharf. No engineer went there, the chief engineer knew nothing, there was no recommendation by him, the wharf was simply put there be-

cause a petition was put in. I have no doubt we could get other cases.

Mr. PUGSLEY. Since I became minister my directions have been when petitions are presented to have reports made as to the necessity and cost of the proposed works.

Mr. J. D. REID. I referred to the general policy of the department.

Mr. PROULX. The private owner of this wharf did not want to repair it; it is in very bad condition and the transportation companies made strong representations to the Department of Public Works for a new wharf. The private owner asked \$2,500 for the wharf, but received only \$800.

Mr. J. D. REID. What did the government want to buy it for?

Mr. PROULX. Because they wanted a site; this wharf serves as an approach and there is a good shed on it which can be used. The contract for the extension and rebuilding is \$6,000.

Mr. J. D. REID. Along the St. Lawrence the transportation companies build these wharfs, and I do not see why the same rule cannot be applied on the Ottawa.

Mr. PROULX. I do not see why the transportation company should build it. There is no railway communication and there is heavy traffic from this point especially in butter, cheese and other agricultural produce.

Mr. J. D. REID. What is the population?

Mr. PROULX. The population is about 300 or 400, but there is a large farming section around it who use the wharf. It serves the whole township of East Hawkesbury, which has a population of 5,000 or 6,000.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. Is the private owner to continue to manage the wharf?

Mr. PROULX. I am not decided as to that; after it is built that must be arranged.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. I wish to correct my hon. friend Mr. Reid for saying that the wharfs on the St. Lawrence are built by the transportation companies. The late member for Prince Albert, now a senator, said only a few sessions ago that the government had piled wharfs along the St. Lawrence so thick they had not room for them on the banks and had to hang them in the trees to get the money expended.

Mr. J. D. REID. I think the forwarding companies and those interested in the wharfs should keep them up. Are there to be dues charged and will they allow a man to collect and retain the dues?