

for the speedy trial of cases in which goods have been seized, and to pay for a commission, or a board of arbitrators, or a board of judges, or to devise some scheme, no matter what it is, that will secure the speedy trial of persons who are accused of infractions of the customs laws. Another mode might be the establishment of a police force having special powers to look after this smuggling in the Gulf, as I understand that is where it is intended to expend the money. Now, why not come out frankly and say: We want this money for police purposes, and ask for a vote of \$5,000 or \$10,000? There would be no objection to that. But to take a sum of \$5,000 as a secret service money to be expended by the Minister with no obligations on his part to account for it to anybody, is revolting to the ideas of the people of this country, and I think the vote ought not to be concurred in.

To pay expenses of commission appointed to inquire into the Algoma election..... \$547 30

Mr. SPROULE. Before this item is concurred in, I want to say a word with regard to the commission to inquire into the Algoma election. I looked over the report of that commission, and I cannot see why the information reported by the commissioner could not have been acquired just as easily from the Secretary of State here, as by appointing Mr. Crerar to go and make that report. He made one trip to Sault Ste. Marie and asked a few questions of the returning officer, then he made a trip to Dunnville and asked a few questions of Dr. Montague; and upon the strength of that and with the information that he got from the department here, he made his report. He bases his report upon the correspondence that passed between the returning officer and the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery here. It was the plainest thing imaginable. There was no information contained in it beyond what might have been got from the department here. I do not see, therefore, any need for that commission whatever, and this sum of \$547.30 appears to me to be a very big sum for a very little service, paid to a needy party lawyer.

Lachine Canal—

Roofing and painting sheds at Jacques Cartier Basin..... \$1,500
Complete electric station at Montreal.... 2,700

Mr. QUINN. Before this item is concurred in, I would like to draw the attention of the Minister of Railways and Canals to the fact that he was to have brought down some papers giving information in connection with dismissals from the Lachine Canal. I have not seen any of these papers yet.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. The Minister of Railways and Canals is not in his place. I would like to ask the hon.

Mr. QUINN.

gentleman (Mr. Quinn) whether the return asked for was promised to be brought down on concurrence?

Mr. QUINN. Yes.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. In that case we will have to reserve that item until a later stage in the day.

Mr. QUINN. If you please.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. Unless the hon. gentleman intends to move against the item, I hope he will allow it to pass and I will undertake to see that he has an opportunity to discuss it with the Minister of Railways and Canals. I do not know what promise the Minister has made.

Baie des Chaleurs Railway—Operating and maintaining..... \$18,500

Mr. FOSTER. The House will remember that in discussing the Baie de Chaleurs Railway arrangement the other evening I asked, whether or not, before the Government had undertaken to operate that road, the Minister of Railways and Canals had laid sufficient information before the Council that the Council might base its action on a report from the Minister which would give them grounds for supposing that they could operate the road without involving the country in expense. I think the committee will remember that I ventured the assertion that the Minister of Railways and Canals had probably laid no such detailed information before the Government. I asked that the Order in Council be brought down. I shall just read an interesting and instructive portion of this Order in Council that the committee may know the utter absence of any information there was before the Council when they determined upon taking over the running of the road for which they had not the least parliamentary authority and for which they had no appropriation. The Order in Council reads:

On a report, dated 17th November, 1896, from the Minister of Railways and Canals, stating that the Atlantic and Lake Superior Railway Company have made application for a revote of the subsidies granted to the Great Eastern Railway Company towards the construction of a railway from Sorel to Chaudière Junction, and also for a subsidy of \$3,200 per mile for the extension of the Baie des Chaleurs Railway from Paspébiac to the Gaspé Basin, and have prayed that the amounts of the several bonuses given by the Dominion Government and the municipalities and provincial government may be taken and held by the Government of Canada as a fund out of which to guarantee and pay interest on the company's issue of bonds, as authorized by their charter, and in accordance with the scheme outlined in the company's proposals.

That is one share of their proposal.

The Minister observes that, in promoting their application, the company have pointed out that the Baie des Chaleurs Railway is at present in the hands of sequestrators, under proceedings pending in the courts of the province of Quebec,