

W. L. Forsyth, W. Lorn Macdougall, D. E. Papineau and others; Trustees of Toronto Savings Bank. Committee reported adversely on petition of Levis Board of Trade.

INTERCOLONIAL RAILROAD.

Hon. Mr. LETELLIER DE ST. JUST—I hope that the feeling which prompts me in making the present motion will be well understood by the House. I do not make it in a personal spirit, for I would be very sorry that any feelings which prevail elsewhere should be exhibited in this House. It has been said that large expenses—injustifiable expenses in fact, have been incurred in connection with the Intercolonial Railway—that property has been purchased at exorbitant prices by the Commissioners of the work. It is our duty to enquire what foundation there is for such statements, and therefore without further preface I beg leave to make the following motion:

For an Address to His Excellency the Governor General, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be laid before this House copies of all papers, letters and documents that have passed between the Government of the Dominion, the Commissioners on the Intercolonial Railway, and other persons interested in the following matters, viz. :—

As to the rent paid by the said Commissioners, for the use of the House occupied at Newcastle, by A. L. Light, Esq., and the Intercolonial Office, stating who was the owner.

1st.—Of the said House at the time it was so rented.

2nd.—Of the lands taken for the railway station.

3rd.—Of the old ship yard intended for water terminus.

4th.—Of the old commercial buildings now occupied as the Custom House at Newcastle.

Specifying separately the amount paid yearly for rent, the land damages, the price paid or to be paid for each of the said premises, and to whom, when and how?

Hon. Mr. MITCHELL replied—I am glad that the hon. member has made such a motion, and I fully appreciate the kindly spirit in which he has done it. I am pleased to have an opportunity of refuting immediately certain assertions made elsewhere; but I may first say that the papers asked for will be brought down as soon as possible by the Government. I must observe that I do not intend going at length into the subject at present, inasmuch as the motion which has been made elsewhere has not yet been taken up; and therefore I shall reserve full explanations until that happens. In the meantime I may state that the moment I saw the motion, I enclosed it to the Railway Commissioners, and received the following reply:—

OTTAWA, May 1st, 1872.

SIR,—Yours of yesterday with slip of questions by the Hon. Mr. Hutchison, and your wish that I should give you an official answer is received, and I now beg to comply with your request as follows:—

QUESTIONS.

1st. How much is paid to the Minister of Marine and Fisheries for rent of the house lately occupied by him in Newcastle, and owned by A. L. Light, and the Intercolonial Railway Offices?

2nd. How much was awarded him as land damages?

3rd. How much is he to receive for the railway station location?

4th. How much is he to receive for the ship yard intended for a deep water terminus?

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your obdt serv't,

(Signed)

RALPH JONES,

Sec.

HON. P. MITCHELL,
&c., &c., &c.,

As respects the fourth question, the old Commercial Building at Newcastle, I can simply say, I am not in a position to answer it definitely. However, I believe the buildings are owned by Mr. Tuck of St. John, but the government have not made any appropriation for the use of the building, nor have they selected the place for the Custom House. I am glad to have this opportunity of giving an unqualified denial to the idea that may have arisen from the assertion made elsewhere, that I have derived some profit from the property referred to in the motion. The rent I receive is altogether insignificant compared with the value of the house, whilst I have always refused to receive anything for land damages. My advocacy of the Intercolonial Railway has been always on public grounds, and I am ready to vindicate, as I have always done, the present location of the line. On another occasion, however, I expect to have ample opportunity of dealing with the whole question at greater length.

Hon. Mr. WILMOT suggested an adjournment till Tuesday or Wednesday, if public business was not in a forward state and gave notice of motion with that object in view.

Hon. Mr. CAMPBELL said the Public Lands Bill was an order of the day for Friday, but the matter of adjournment was entirely in the hands of the House.

Hon. Mr. LETELLIER DE ST. JUST thought abundant time should be given for consideration of so important a question.

Hon. Mr. WILSON urged an adjournment.

ANSWERS.

Four hundred dollars (\$400) per annum for offices and residence of District Engineer!

Nothing. Solicitor reported 5th August, 1871. Will not accept payment at all, not because dissatisfied with award, but declines to take any amount.

Grounds for station not selected nor valued.

There has been no point selected as yet at Newcastle as a deep water terminus.