

He held that after Parliament had passed a vote based on certain plans and measurements, they had no right to interfere with the size of the canal, and maintained that the Government could not obtain any further information than that they were already in possession of. However, the statement made by the Minister of Public Works that the Government would alter the width of the Canal if, after obtaining further information they found it necessary, in order to accommodate the paddle-wheel steamers now connecting between Pictou and the Bras d'Or Lake was satisfactory. These steamers, owing to the accommodation they gave, and not drawing much water, were likely to continue in use for many years. These are the description of boats used in all inland navigation in Upper Canada and the United States, and unless the Canal was made wide enough to allow the Prince Edward Island steamers to enter Bras d'Or the people of Cape Breton will have just grounds for being dissatisfied. We have now been asking since 1869 for the enlargement of this canal. About that time its insufficiency for the trade of the Bras d'Or was brought to the notice of this Government, and three years elapsed before even a survey was made, and now three years more have elapsed and not one dollar has been expended in improving this important work. There was a feeling in that portion of the Dominion that they had not been fairly treated by the Government, and in that feeling he (Mr. Flynn) fully participated. In consequence of the steamers running between Pictou and the Strait of Canso not being able to use the canal, the people of the Bras d'Or and a large portion of Richmond County are prevented from dealing in Montreal, as they otherwise might do if the canal was large enough to permit the Island boats to use it. They could connect with the Gulf boats at Pictou and carry freight to different points in Richmond and the Bras d'Or. The sum required to improve the Canal is not a large one. Last Session we voted \$4,600,000 to improve three canals in Upper Canada—the Welland, St. Lawrence and Lachine—while only \$260,000 was required to complete the

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work on the canal in question. He regretted that the Hon. the First Minister did not now give a positive assurance that the work would be enlarged to the size recommended by Mr. Perley. But he had no doubt that when he instituted the enquiry promised, it would result in the enlargement of the Canal to the extent desired by the people of the Island of Cape Breton. He believed there was only \$38,000 difference between the price of the present contract and one of the tenders sent into the Department of Public Works when the first tenders were invited, and he thought it unfair and ungenerous that Cape Breton should have been denied what they required for so trifling a sum. However, he hoped the further information the Prime Minister said he would endeavour to obtain would be the means of enlarging the canal to the extent required and allay the dissatisfaction at present existing in Cape Breton in connection with this work.

Mr. DAVIES said the enlargement of this canal was a matter of the greatest importance to Prince Edward Island, but he thought the Government should proceed carefully in the matter.

If a report to the Government had shown that there was only 12 feet of water in the basin, it would be folly to make the canal 15½ feet. With regard to the class of steamers there, they were very broad, but he thought these steamers would die out as it had been found that propellers consumed one-third less coal, and paddle-wheel steamers could not compete with them on that account. It might be some time before this change would be effected, but he was confident that it would be effected. Therefore it would not, perhaps, be necessary to enlarge the canal to 50 feet. He was of opinion that the First Minister had acted wisely in not increasing the depth of the canal.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE then read from the report of Admiral Bayfield, in which he stated that vessels drawing 10 or 12 feet of water might run into the canal during rough weather with the aid of a chart, on which they would have to rely.

Mr. FLYNN—He does not say there are not more than 12 feet of water.