

There is a clause of the fishery laws which prohibits the fishing by foreign vessels, the carrying of tackle, &c.

109. Do you allow them to fish and carry tackle contrary to our laws, you, one of the law officers?—My position is that of collector of Customs.

110. You say the collector of customs could do so?—You misunderstood me. I pointed out to these men that the enforcement of the fishery and customs laws—I had only reference to the particular branch I represented—would impose an entrance and clearance fee on each vessel, fifty cents for entrance and fifty cents for clearance.

111. That has not been exacted?—No, every vessel would be obliged to make an official report and secure a clearance, if she touched at any Canadian island or the Canadian shore. That has never been done.

112. What did you mean as a Canadian official, by your reference to the enforcement of the fishery laws?—I think I said to you that any conversation I had with the hotel men and merchants, I ascertained that it was the feeling there that the enforcement of the fishery and customs laws would operate very injuriously against them.

113. Did you have the authority to enforce those laws?—I have already said no. I am not a fishery officer, I am collector of customs.

114. Had you authority to enforce the Customs law?—As collector, most assuredly.

115. So you used that to intimidate them, so as to prevent them from carrying out the American law?—You put words in my mouth that I do not endorse. I discussed the whole matter with these people. I did not use intimidation; I merely discussed the matter with them. I wished to ascertain their views and feelings. I felt that our Canadians were being roughly handled, and I wanted to know how far this thing was to continue.

116. Admitting that you did not use intimidation, will you tell me why you referred to the fishery laws if it was not to a certain extent to intimidate?

The CHAIRMAN—That could not change the law on the American Statute Book.

117. In all authority, the member for Leeds issued his proclamation against the American nation; but what was this used for? Why did you refer to it, if it was not to act as a deterrent to keep the Americans from pursuing a certain course?—I had no desire to intimidate them.

118. Why did you use it?—I have already stated that I interviewed the collectors and sub-collectors and ascertained that they were largely at the mercy of the citizens, any one of whom could enforce the law, and I thought it better in that state of affairs to enquire just how far that feeling existed among the hotel men and merchants. I had a conversation with them, and that conversation took a variety of directions, and whether it was really essential in pursuance of my mission to discuss the fishery and the customs laws, is a matter of my own judgment, but I used no intimidation or threat. I gave them to understand that this could be put into operation. Now what I was desirous of was this, to ascertain whether it was a prudent thing that these things should take place along the border. If it might not involve serious consequences between the two nations.

DR. FERGUSON—I do not desire, as this has been taken down, to let this statement go to the country that this Government authorized the collector of Customs at Gananoque or any other place to go there clothed with authority to make certain intimidations and certain threats. The witness before us went at the request of the Department to gain information for the use of the Department. He went and got this information for the use of the Department and transmitted it in the shape of a report. He was not authorized by this Government to go there to intimidate or to use any language in the direction of intimidation. He went there to get the exact condition of things and report it to the Department. Now there is another side to this question. The witness stated with reference to the American hotel keepers that we had certain laws in this country which, if enacted, might be troublesome. The collector might have stated to those across the line “you see we have certain laws which we might enforce, but we desire to be friendly with the American people. We do not