

afraid that in the end the minister will find that financially it will not be of much benefit, and that on the ground of trouble in its operation, it will be subject to disadvantages and cause grievances, and I believe in the end will cause a reversal of the policy.

Mr. BRODEUR. I appreciate that there will be some difficulty in putting this project into execution. But my hon. friend who has been a Minister of Marine and Fisheries himself knows the difficulties of the present situation, he knows how difficult it is to collect wharfage rates on these wharfs. After having given a good deal of consideration to the matter I thought we might adopt these two plans I am proposing here. Perhaps they will not be successful, but I think they are worth trying, because the situation which exists to-day is an extremely difficult one. When we appoint as wharfinger a man in the locality, and every person who receives goods at that wharf is called upon to pay a small sum of money, 5 cents, 10 cents and so on, the wharfinger finds it almost impossible to carry out his instructions. I may say that in some cases we have not been able to get a wharfinger. In some cases where a wharfinger has resigned, we cannot get anybody to take his place. In some cases they have accepted the position, and after a little experience in collecting those small sums, and after having trouble with almost every one in the locality who uses the wharf, they have become disgusted and have resigned. The result is that to-day we have no wharfinger on some of the wharfs to collect the wharfage rates. Consequently some legislation has become necessary in order to meet the situation. I thought at one time of providing for a commutation of rates, that is, making some agreement with these shipping companies by which we would charge them a certain sum of money for side wharfage and top wharfage. I may say that we have done so already, although it may not have been strictly legal, with the Richelieu and Ontario Navigation Company in respect of three wharfs in the lower part of the St. Lawrence. We are now collecting on those three wharfs more than we are collecting in 25 or 30 other wharfs in the neighbourhood of the St. Lawrence, perhaps not quite so much. The result has been very satisfactory. The Richelieu and Ontario Navigation Company pays \$1,000 for these three wharfs. And we have no trouble with them—they are the only company who uses the wharfs—without any trouble to our officers, without any trouble to the wharfinger there, we receive a check. Out of that check we pay 25 per cent to the wharfinger, and 25 per cent also

Mr. FOSTER.

on cargoes that are delivered there for some other companies. The plan works very satisfactorily, and we wish to take power to extend that plan and make similar arrangements with other shipping companies. My hon. friend comments on our decision to call for public tenders. Our intention was at one time to lease the wharfs only in places where there would be one company using them. The reason I ask for public tenders is that I do not wish the public to be taken by surprise, I want the public to know what we intend to do; and this notice will be given, not only to the shipping companies, but also to the general public. This provision is not in the Bill at present, but I intend to move an amendment in the following words:

Substitute for subsection 1 of section 1 the following:—

1b. If the minister deems it desirable to lease to any provincial government, municipal council, harbour commission, shipping company, or railway company, any wharf, pier or breakwater under the control of the minister, tenders by public advertisement for such lease shall be invited by the minister for a term not exceeding three years, and the Governor in Council may thereupon lease such wharf, pier or breakwater upon such terms and conditions as are agreed on: provided that nothing in this section shall interfere with the public use of the wharf, pier or breakwater; and, provided further, that the lease of such wharf, pier or breakwater shall not charge wharfage tolls or dues in excess of the tolls and dues established under the authority of this Act by the regulations for the government of breakwaters, piers or wharfs in Canada, as approved from time to time by the Governor in Council.

We think that with the section amended in this way, we shall be able to get some revenue out of these wharfs which we do not get to-day. It will give us an opportunity also of preventing large expenditures being made in repairs. My hon. friend says that the government should be able to make repairs as well as the shipping company. My hon. friend knows that when repairs of that kind are required we need to send an engineer to visit the works and report and all that causes expense. I admit that the wharfs will have to be inspected, but if the company is obliged to keep the wharf in ordinary repair the inspector will not have to visit so frequently.

Mr. FOSTER. Suppose when you lease one of these wharfs there is only one shipping company plying to it, but later on another company enters into business, then the lessee may say that the new company has no privileges there. The individual or company that goes into trade along a river or lake has naturally a right to look to the government wharf as being free to him as to every other person, but if you lease