

Mr. POULIOT (Translation): Has the hon. Minister of Marine nothing to do with item No. 142?

Mr. DURANLEAU (Translation): The dredging of the St. Lawrence river is under the control of the Department of Marine, while all other dredging in the country comes under that of the Department of Public Works.

Mr. POULIOT (Translation): I am very pleased to find that we now understand one another.

Mr. NEILL: I think under this vote I might ask the minister a question. I understood him to state a few weeks ago that it was his intention to bring in a bill amending the Merchant Shipping Act, and I think he told me across the floor that it was his intention to send that bill to a committee of the house. I presume that would be the committee on marine and fisheries. Am I correct in that supposition?

Mr. DURANLEAU: The complete revision of the Shipping act is now in the hands of the printer, and I think half the bill has been printed. It may be that the act will be brought in first in the upper house, where full opportunity will be afforded to all interested parties to be heard before a committee. When the measure comes to this house, we will decide whether or not it should go to a committee here. I think it will go to such a committee, but if the bill is introduced in the upper house everyone will have an opportunity to appear before a committee and be heard.

Mr. NEILL: I thank the minister for the fullness of his explanation. I have been one of those agitating for the last ten years for the revision of this act; I would hesitate to do anything to delay it, but I do think the time would be well spent if the bill were not passed through this house for a year after it was printed. There are so many complex interests involved from the Atlantic to the Pacific and on the great lakes as well that it is impossible for those men who are not skilled in law and who have not strong organizations looking after their interests to be even apprised of how their interests are affected. I would suggest to the minister, as I suggested to his predecessor for several years, that he should introduce the bill in this house and even have it go to a committee, but then let it stand until another session in order that copies of the bill may be circulated to the people interested on the Atlantic, the Pacific and the great lakes, so that they may be able to get together and present such evidence to the committee as they

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may desire. Men out on the deep seas at this time may never know that the bill has been passed, and they will not have an opportunity to make such representations as they may desire. Of course the big shipping interests can be easily reached, but that does not apply to masters, mates and engineers and seamen or to a great many owners of small gasoline boats who are very much concerned with this measure. This is going to be a very difficult subject to deal with, and I suggest to the minister that he earnestly consider whether it would not be wise to delay it for another session. It has been delayed for so long now that another year will not matter very much, and then we will be able to get the real opinions of the people interested.

Mr. POULIOT (Translation): May I inquire from the minister what are the winter services which are connected with navigation, and what amount is expended on each one of them.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ross): The discussion now is really on item 133. Shall item 132 carry?

Item agreed to.

Miscellaneous services relating to navigation and shipping, \$37,000.

Mr. DORION (Translation): Mr. Chairman, for a number of years past, the shipping federation as well as the "Union des Pilotes" of Quebec have requested the erection of a semaphore at St. Jean, island of Orleans. It is stated that such a measure would be very useful to navigators and prevent a number of accidents.

May I inquire from the Minister of Marine if, in No. 133 of his estimates, there is an amount set aside for providing at St-Jean, island of Orleans, a signal service absolutely necessary to the navigation of the St. Lawrence river?

Mr. DURANLEAU (Translation): Mr. Chairman, the inquiry made by my hon. friend from Quebec Montmorency (Mr. Dorion) would come under item No. 148, Marine Signal Service. However, I am ready to answer his inquiry immediately. No amount in the estimates is specially affected to the erection of a semaphore at St-Jean, island of Orleans. There is a round sum which we request the house to vote and part of which might be used to erect a semaphore, if we find it possible. I must state that the question has already been submitted to the department and is, at present, under consideration.