

few years ago when he believed we would not take it over.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Not at all; you cannot prove that.

Mr. REID: I would not want anything better on which to meet the hon. gentleman on the platform than this very Canadian Northern Railway measure to show the people that we have now a railway that we operate ourselves. However, that is getting away from the item.

Mr. PUGSLEY: That is quite in order.

Mr. REID: No, I am going to ask the Chairman to rule me out of order when I get away from the question.

The CHAIRMAN: Order.

Mr. REID: I believe that in starting with a line of vessels between British Columbia and the Atlantic coast the Government will greatly benefit both the East and the West, and that the people on both coasts will appreciate the start which has been made.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Why were not tenders called for, as this involves an amount over \$5,000?

Mr. REID: We asked every shipbuilding yard in British Columbia.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Why not in eastern Canada as well?

Mr. REID: Because there were contracts for a dozen vessels exactly the same awarded by a private company in British Columbia, after every effort had been made to have them built in eastern Canada. I do not believe that these vessels could be got for anything like the same price in the East, because in British Columbia they have the timber while they have not it in the East.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: The Minister of Customs chastised the hon. member for Guysborough (Mr. Sinclair) for raising the issue of a shipbuilding policy for Canada, and said that this was not an appropriate time to raise such a question. Perhaps that criticism was fair. On this side of the House we think very highly of the Minister of Railways, and after the criticism by the Minister of Customs of the member for Guysborough I did feel, and I do now feel, that perhaps hon. members on this side were a little unfair to him this afternoon in discussing what is a matter of public policy upon an item to vote moneys for the purchasing of two boats which are not really to be operated as a part of the

Intercolonial railway. Perhaps that was why the Minister of Railways was silent. I can understand his silence now. If this vote does not involve the question of the proper national policy for this country in respect of shipbuilding, then the question is, is it a proper thing for the Intercolonial railway to acquire two ships in the operation of the railway? Perhaps it is not that question either, as I think it really has nothing to do with the matter of the operation of the Intercolonial. This policy was inaugurated by the Minister of Customs and was the result of a visit by him to British Columbia. Now he has described his programme at great length—almost three-quarters of an hour—and has informed us very fully as to its origin and its purpose. We are asked to vote \$600,000, not for the purpose of determining what our national policy shall be in respect to shipbuilding, not in respect to the Intercolonial, but upon another question altogether, the development of inter-provincial trade between the Atlantic coast and the Pacific coast.

Has this vote anything to do with the Intercolonial? If not, it should not be here, and the Minister of Railways should not be asking for this money. If it is for the purpose of the development of inter-provincial trade, as the Minister of Customs says, it is a matter of trade and commerce, and must be discussed upon different lines altogether. If this belongs to the Intercolonial, let us inquire whether this is sound policy or not. Why attach this venture to the Intercolonial? The Minister of Customs informs us that it is not to be a part of that railway system. It is not possible to operate these two steamships as a part of that railroad; it is not thinkable that it could be done.

Mr. COCHRANE: Why?

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: How can you interchange traffic between the Intercolonial railway and these ships, with any degree of certainty?

Mr. REID: How are you going to get the traffic between Ontario and Halifax and St. John in the winter?

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: By rail.

Mr. REID: Over the Intercolonial.

Mr. A. K. MACLEAN: But the Minister of Customs had these two ships cavorting down to West India waters.