

United States government asking them to pay part of the cost of this fence? They certainly should pay part of the cost of that fence. The fence will not only require to be built but to be maintained; from time to time it will no doubt be broken down, 800 miles of fence will not stand for ever, and it appears to me that this government should ask the United States in all fairness, as our neighbours, friendly, and as jointly interested in the territory, that they should pay a fair share of the fence that is to be erected. I commend this point to the attention of the government, and I trust that if it is due to us that the United States pay a part of the cost, they will see that the United States do pay a part both of the cost of construction and the cost of maintenance, inasmuch as the fence is really an international boundary.

Mr. W. H. BENNETT. The other day, in discussing the question of dredging I made a statement—and I have no reason to take it back in consequence of anything that has been said since—that in certain departments of the government, so far as the riding I represent is concerned, the public is of opinion that common honesty is not expected, and common honesty would be at a premium. That seems to be the difficulty in this matter. Now the secretary of the department, Mr. Keyes, is to be dragged in as a scapegoat, and after the statement has been made in the House, and after this gentleman gives a written and explicit official letter that a contract has been made, then we are told to-day that no contract has been made. I do not know Mr. Keyes, but I can only say that it is a great draught on any man's imagination to believe that a gentleman occupying the responsible position of secretary of the department goes and makes large contracts of a quarter of a million dollars without the assent of the minister, and without conference with him. But Mr. Keyes cannot back out of it so easy, and the department cannot back out of it so easy, because there is correspondence to-day on the 'Hansard' to which I must now revert. I regret that Mr. Speaker is in the chair, because of necessity his name is brought into the discussion. The letter that the member for Kent (Mr. Clements) read a while ago, I will now read again:

We at once wrote that department, under date March 20th, but did not receive a reply until under date April 8th, a letter signed by Mr. P. G. Keyes, stating that the government had already let the contract for the wire fence. In the meantime we had got a friend to write Mr. R. F. Sutherland for information regarding this matter, but he professed ignorance and only just a day or two ago a letter was received from him stating that he found the contract had been let to McGregor, Banwell, a firm in this town.

Now is this Mr. Keyes conducting a department in such a manner that he is

Mr. COCKSHUTT.

deliberately misrepresenting to Mr. Speaker, when he goes for information, because you, Mr. Speaker, must have gone to the department for information, and I cannot believe and I do not believe, if Mr. Speaker did write that letter to this firm, that he had concocted it out of his own mind, that the Speaker had drawn on his imagination to that extent. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that you went to the department, I believe that you found there the secretary of the department, or whoever was in charge of this matter, and that the gentleman in charge informed you exactly what Mr. Keyes had written before, namely, that the contract had been made. But here is the striking feature in connection with this whole deal—because it is a deal—it never would have leaked out had it not been for this firm. It is only in ridings represented by hon. gentlemen on this side of the House that many matters are likely to come to the front, because when a riding is not represented on this side of the House the chances are that matters go without comment in those ridings. Why, to give this Department of the Interior all the brunt of that crooked work is unfair when you take it in connection with other departments, and more particularly when the past Minister of the Interior has been either slandered or not slandered by the government press as a wrong-doer in that department. I say there are other departments—and I am not saying the Department of the Interior is wrong—I say there are other departments where similar tactics are carried on in order to curry favour with their friends. What do I find in my own town in reference to a government dock? I asked the question the other day who were the lessees of the dock in the town of Midland, and here is the answer:

The storehouses at Midland are occupied jointly by Playfair, Preston & Company and the wharfinger. The rent is \$100 per year, fixed in accordance with value thereof, as estimated by resident engineer.

The resident engineer occupies part of premises that anybody would pay about \$200 a year rent for, and the resident engineer reports that it is has been leased to a party for \$100. Here is a letter written to the department by a firm in the town who wished to get possession of these premises and was willing to pay \$450 a year for them. They cannot have them, but these party hacks and hangers-on of this government get it for \$100. Here is the Department of Marine and Fisheries going up to Depot Harbour advertising a contract for buoying out the channel, and giving it to party friends without ever calling for tenders at all. Not to mention such trifles as handing over a steamboat worth from \$7,000 to \$8,000 for \$2,500. Take the Department of the Postmaster General, who I am sorry to see, is not in his place, and what do I find? A mail contract, no tenders asked for, and a party