

I do not want to enumerate what this government has done for the western farmers or the amount of bounties they have paid out, and so on and so forth, but here is a concrete case where these farmers have been taken in, as my good friend from North Huron said, by financial crooks who represented to them that the government were behind them, and in that way the deal went through. I do not think I can put my case any stronger, Mr. Chairman. My hon. friend from North Huron said he thought the government should find some way of recompensing the farmers to the extent of fifty per cent.

Mr. SPOTTON: Would the hon. member be willing to call the amount which the government is going to give a compassionate allowance? That would not involve accepting any responsibility.

Mr. SANDERSON: It does not make any difference to me what they call it as long as they pay it. If it is a compassionate allowance I should say the government should pay the whole hundred per cent, the \$40,000, and not merely a portion of it. They should pay the whole loss of the farmers of western Ontario who were in this unfortunate affair, and not merely fifty per cent. Surely this government can do that. I know that the Prime Minister has been taking the matter into consideration. I do not suppose he is moved by anything I am saying to-night but I do know that in the bottom of his heart he believes that these farmers have a case which they can bring before this government and that they should be paid back the money they have lost. I hope that to-night before we prorogue the government will announce that they will find ways and means of paying this loss. It is not difficult for they have found ways and means of paying money for other purposes, and this is a just claim which should receive every consideration from this government. I hope before the house prorogues we will have a statement from the Prime Minister or the Minister of Trade and Commerce that the government will recompense these farmers.

Mr. BENNETT: Mr. Chairman, I have taken the trouble to read the papers in this matter and I have also had an interview with the former Minister of Public Works, the member for South Huron, the member for North Huron, and the member for the other Middlesex. The government could not under any circumstances be made primarily liable in a matter of this kind. If the statement made by the former Minister of Public

[Mr. Sanderson.]

Works is correct, and I accept it as such, it is perfectly obvious that there never was a company and that the three men in question are personally liable for this amount. That is, if they are directors of the company and the circumstances are as stated, their conduct has been such as to make them personally liable. The government will take steps to investigate the matter thoroughly and will not mind expending some money if it is necessary for the purpose of prosecuting them for theft if the facts are as stated. But to ask the government to pay because men have made improvident bargains is something that will not be found in any of the relief acts and certainly has not been advanced in what has been said within the last few minutes. It is quite clear that there never has been a case with respect to any of these farmers where it is alleged that there was any failure to supply the equipment for carrying the cattle. The representations were that the government had supplied stalls and put them on the ships. It is admitted that these stalls were supplied. It is admitted further that the cattle were carried on the ships. The government assumed no responsibility for the ships. Lloyds, I assume, or some other firm, were the insurers and satisfied themselves because the work was done with the approval of the Board of Trade so far as the equipment was concerned. But if these men are worth the money they are liable civilly and they are liable criminally. The government will investigate both phases of the matter and if there is any assistance that can be given for the purpose of securing the return of the money stolen from these men under the circumstances as stated, we will give it. It will be time enough later to consider what the position of the government may be.

Item agreed to.

Miscellaneous—

Dominion Franchise Act, estimated expenditure for preparation and printing of basic lists of electors, \$600,000.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I see that the Prime Minister is leaving the house. As he may not be back before we conclude with supply I should like to ask him a question, if he will permit me. I just wish to ask my right hon. friend whether his attention has been drawn to a speech that was made yesterday in London, England, at the Dominion day dinner given by the High Commissioner for Canada, the Hon. Howard Ferguson, in which Sir Edward Peacock is reported to have made a strong plea for the formation of a national government in Canada, alleging that Canada alone of British self-governing coun-