

on the other side of the question this contract is going to do some good. We hear that opinion expressed every day as we walk around this city. They evidently think that the Petersen contract is going to be of some effect. While this particular agreement calls for the construction of only ten ships so far as Petersen and his company are concerned, there is no reason why the government should not enter into a contract with other companies, if they deem it necessary, in order to regulate these rates more effectively—for instance, with the Canadian Pacific company. It seems to me that this company should be in the arrangement, because after all is said and done, whether they have been guilty of charging excessive rates to the people of this country or not, they are a business organization, and so long as the people and the government of Canada stood for it, I do not blame the Canadian Pacific Steamship Company for getting as high ocean rates as they could get. But, as I have just said, I feel that this great organization should come in and help straighten out the matter, and that therefore if necessary the government should make a contract with the company to use their ships for the purpose of breaking the alleged combine.

Mr. IRVINE: Does that imply that the government should issue another million and a quarter dollars annually for ten years to the Canadian Pacific Steamship Company or to any other company that might engage in this bold effort to break the combine? Does the hon. gentleman not think that in that event it is not likely we would receive in reduced ocean rates sufficient to pay the taxes required to provide the subsidies?

Mr. DUFF: I am surprised to hear my hon. friend speak in that way, because I thought that he came especially to this House to lead us out of the wilderness not only with respect to high freight rates but also in regard to the high cost of living. I am surprised, I say, that he throws cold water on this simple proposition of the government to bring down the cost of living and so enable the people of this country to benefit. Whether the arrangement will work out satisfactorily or not, I am not prepared to say; it is a big question; but I do say that the government should be given an opportunity to put all the information it has before the committee and before the House so we may deal with it intelligently. I am convinced from what other speakers have said that the government has a good deal of information in its possession to prove conclusively that high ocean rates

have been charged, and that the government believes that in this contract, it has an effective way of reducing those rates on the north Atlantic.

Mr. IRVINE: Where is this information? That is what we want.

Mr. DUFF: As I said a moment ago, I presume the information will be given by the government when this special committee meets, and I think it will be the duty of the government to have someone present to give the committee all the information which it has on the subject.

Mr. IRVINE: Why not give it now?

Mr. DUFF: I have been giving some this afternoon; I do not know whether my hon. friend heard me. I can give him some further information, but I do not want to weary the House with too many quotations. Let me give him some information from his own province. I presume my hon. friend is interested in the cattle industry of southern Alberta, the province from which he comes. This is what the Lethbridge Board of Trade said a short time ago about the ocean freight rates on cattle:

Whereas the ocean freight rates on cattle from the Atlantic seaboard to the United Kingdom are at present excessive in the extreme, being practically prohibitive of the success of building up an export trade in cattle from the province of Alberta to the United Kingdom.

And whereas it is the considered opinion of those qualified to judge that cattle can be profitably carried across the Atlantic at rates much below those now in force.

And whereas the production of cattle is an important industry in southern Alberta, and the growers desire to export cattle to the United Kingdom.

Therefore be it resolved that the government of Canada be urged to take such steps as may be necessary to have Atlantic rates on cattle reduced to a point where cattle from Alberta can be profitably exported to the United Kingdom.

Mr. BRISTOL: Will the hon. member permit another question? I understand that grain rates are not controlled by the combine—if you want to call it a combine; that is, you have the greatest competition in the world between the tramp steamers on the one side and the liners on the other fighting to get all the grain they can. In view of this competition, how is the western farmer going to be helped on grain?

Mr. DUFF: I think I said earlier in my remarks that I did not agree with everything we have heard with regard to there being a combine, that I did not agree the rates were too high in some cases. All I said was that there was such an agitation all over the country by manufacturers, farmers, lumbermen and