

in their respective provinces. That is the view of the present administration.

As to endeavouring to have assistance given to those who are suffering, I think that makes a very special appeal to every individual member of parliament, and I shall be very glad to join with other members of this House in making a personal contribution to those who are suffering in the strike at this time; indeed, I had so intended to do. However, I do not think I would be justified as a member of the federal government, holding federal funds in trust, to use those funds in any way which may have a bearing upon an industrial dispute with which this government has had nothing to do.

Miss MACPHAIL: Has not the government of Canada at other times sent money and supplies to relieve suffering in other countries?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: No request has come from the province of Nova Scotia for assistance. If a request comes from the province, from the recognized authorities there, the government will be prepared to take it under consideration.

Mr. E. J. GARLAND (Bow River): Had the Prime Minister requests from Japan when relief was sent to that country?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: My impression is that a request did come; I cannot say it came from Japan, but certainly it came I think from some other governments that were associated together in seeking to give relief. It was an international matter.

PEACE RIVER RAILWAY OUTLET

On the Orders of the Day:

Mr. D. M. KENNEDY (West Edmonton): I would ask the Minister of Railways (Mr. Graham) if the report from the two railways on the matter which was referred to them on the 8th day of January, and which Sir Henry Thornton thought could be prepared within thirty days, is yet in his hands. Have the two railways yet reported regarding the Peace river country?

Hon. GEORGE P. GRAHAM (Minister of Railways and Canals): They have not.

Mr. KENNEDY (Edmonton): It is a long thirty days.

Mr. GRAHAM: Of course, if the railway presidents and their staffs had nothing else to do, they could perhaps get the report out in three or four days; but they are both very busy organizations. I hope to have the report, however, next week.

OCEAN SHIPPING RATES

AGREEMENT WITH SIR WILLIAM PETERSEN— MOTION FOR RATIFICATION DISCUSSED

The House resumed, from March 10, the adjourned debate on the motion of Hon. T. A. Low (Minister of Trade and Commerce) to ratify and confirm a contract between His Majesty and Sir William Petersen providing for the establishment of a subsidized steamship line on the Atlantic, and government control of certain ocean rates, and the amendment thereto of Mr. Clark (Burrard).

Mr. WILLIAM DUFF (Lunenburg): Mr. Speaker, the resolution which has been moved by the hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Low) is, in my humble opinion, one of the most important that has ever been introduced into this House for discussion. It seems to me, Sir, that I need not say that the matter of freight rates, both on land and sea, has been a burning question for a great many years, and business men in all spheres of activity have for a great many years been endeavouring to get this question solved. Of course, there are two sides to every question, and there are two sides to this question of freight rates, whether on land or sea, and for that reason this parliament should be willing to study the question from all angles so that they may arrive at a satisfactory conclusion.

It will be remembered, Mr. Speaker, that some years ago the Prime Minister of this country, the late Sir Wilfrid Laurier, after listening to representations from a great many people all over Canada, decided that it was necessary to do something with regard to freight rates on land, and the consequence was that in the session of 1903, I think it was, a bill was introduced into this parliament creating what is known as the railway commission. That commission, I think we will all agree, has done good work with regard to railway freight rates. Since that time, there has been a great deal of discussion from time to time with regard to whether the government or some other body could not in some way control ocean freight rates. In my opinion, and I think I shall be backed up by eminent authorities, it is not quite so easy to control ocean freight rates as it is to control freight rates on land; but nevertheless that is no reason, in my opinion, why this or any other government should not do everything possible to see to it that the products of the people of this country reach foreign countries at freight rates as low as possible commensurate with the service performed by the steamship companies.