

Demobilization—Munitions and Supply

and that is another reason why we are anxious to get rid of them before ice forms. That is all the information I can give. I may point out that I personally do not operate War Assets Corporation, and even if I did I do not think I would have all that detailed information. I would again suggest that the war expenditures committee can easily obtain this information from persons with first-hand knowledge, and I therefore propose that we move on to matters that can be more properly discussed here.

Mr. ROSS (St. Paul's): In his earlier remarks the minister made reference to the point raised by the hon. member for Muskoka-Ontario in connection with the \$470,000 commission. Who pays that commission—War Assets Corporation or the buyers?

Mr. HOWE: It is paid by the seller.

Mr. ROSS (St. Paul's): That is, War Assets Corporation. The minister said that all he was interested in was net cost. Surely he must be interested in the commission that is paid in order to get at what the net cost is. Was it a secret commission?

Mr. HOWE: No, it was not a secret commission; it was paid in the ordinary course.

Mr. ADAMSON: Are these ships navigable when they are sold to private corporations? That is to say, have they all the navigation instruments on them?

Mr. HOWE: There is a rudder; there is operating gear for the rudder, and there is an engine. With these, it is possible to navigate the boats in the daytime.

Mr. ADAMSON: But they must have wireless and compasses?

Mr. HOWE: I am told there were no wireless and compasses left on the boats.

Mr. ADAMSON: They would not be navigable if the compasses were taken off. You cannot run a ship without a compass.

Mr. FRASER: The statement which the minister put before the committee gives us five different items. Would he give us a statement showing what came under his department last year; what he has this year, what he has turned over; what controls have gone out, and what he has at the present time? Would that come under reconstruction?

Mr. HOWE: I hope to get on to the items of control and I shall be glad to give that. If we can return now to Munitions and Supply the information will come up.

Mr. FRASER: Under which item? That is what I want to find out. I should like to

[Mr. Howe.]

have a list of the different departments that have been under the minister during the last year, because this statement is very brief. If the minister had made it a little more explicit it would have been better.

Mr. HOWE: If we can revert now to Munitions and Supply I will answer the questions asked by the hon. member for Eglinton (Mr. Fleming) with reference to Wartime Housing.

Mr. FERGUSON: My colleague from the west made a statement with reference to the minister's remark about a million dollars being a trivial matter when it comes to discussing public funds. May I read from page 2258 of *Hansard*—

Mr. HOWE: Quote your colleague correctly. Read in *Hansard* what he said and read what I said.

Mr. FERGUSON: May I read what the minister said regarding the triviality of a million dollars of public funds?

Mr. HOWE: Yes; you can do that.

Mr. FERGUSON: The minister made this statement at page 2258:

I daresay my hon. friend could cut a million dollars from this amount; but a million dollars from the war appropriation bill would not be a very important matter.

Mr. MACKENZIE: That is all relative.

Mr. FERGUSON: A million dollars is not an important matter!

Mr. FRASER: The minister did not answer my question.

Mr. HOWE: No. I was listening to my hon. friend over there.

Mr. FRASER: But I asked the minister a question before that.

Mr. HOWE: That hon. gentleman contributes a great deal of information to the debate and I was anxious not to miss it. May I now be permitted to answer the questions asked by the hon. member for Eglinton? They were as follows, with the answers to them:

How many of the 7,000 war-time houses being built for veterans will have foundations?

The answer is: Eight hundred.

How many houses are already constructed, and how many have been commenced but not yet completed?

The answer is: I am tabling herewith a progress report on the various veterans' projects under the direction of Wartime Housing Limited showing the position as at November 15.

How many of these houses are for veterans?