

*Live Stock and Products Act*

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): The Manchester lines and Anchor-Donaldson.

Mr. CASGRAIN: Has the minister the figures paid in each instance, and the number of head of cattle exported under the new policy adopted last year?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): We have not the figures for cattle exported, nor have I the figures as to the money paid, because this work has not been handled under the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. CASGRAIN: Under what department?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): The Department of Trade and Commerce.

Mr. CASGRAIN: When either the Department of Trade and Commerce or any other department made these arrangements with shipping companies for fitting up boats, as indicated by the minister, and when apparently some encouragement was held out to induce people to ship cattle to the old country, were these things done under any authority? Under what authority was the transaction carried out?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Is the hon. member asking under what authority the boats were fitted up?

Mr. CASGRAIN: Yes.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): Under the authority of the Farm Relief Act, I believe, to give assistance to the marketing of agricultural products, in this instance, cattle.

Mr. CASGRAIN: I do not know the minister personally very well, but from the point of view of cattle and agricultural matters generally I know that he is a highly qualified member of the government. I do not understand how this matter stands. If the export of cattle had to be encouraged and extended, surely it should have been done under the direction of the Minister of Agriculture rather than under the Minister of Trade and Commerce. The Minister of Trade and Commerce sees to the opening up of new avenues of commerce here and there, having Canadian representatives in various dominions and countries promoting the sale of the different forms of produce which we have to export. I submit, however, with all due deference to the persons who carried out this transaction, that it is a reflection on the Minister of Agriculture to have removed from his purview this very important part of the work of improving conditions in agriculture, in connection with the cattle export in this case, and putting the matter in the hands of the Department of Trade and Commerce, with-

[Mr. Casgrain.]

out any control on the part of the Minister of Agriculture, who I submit is the member of the government best qualified to direct such operations, and to indicate to individuals who wanted to go into the cattle export business exactly how they should set about it.

I have not all the details of the transaction, but I am told that it is not too rosy, and that some people have suffered losses in consequence. I know that the minister, being himself a farmer, should have been the one directing these operations. I do not think it is fair to divide between two departments the administration of a branch of agricultural activities. The Department of Agriculture should be charged with the responsibility of developing the cattle export trade, but here we find the Minister of Trade and Commerce stepping in. I do not know what was done, but as the result of inducement, or friendship, or the belief that it would make a good story, certain privileges or bounties were given, or certain prices were paid to allow individuals to go on with that trade, developing it, with the result that to-day the Minister of Agriculture does not seem to know anything about it, although he is the man most competent to inform the country regarding the matter. He can only say, "I do not know anything about it, because it was not done under my department but under the Department of Trade and Commerce." It seems that the Department of Agriculture has been deprived of an important function in this regard.

Mr. GUTHRIE: My hon. friend is mistaken in that. This is in the nature of a steamship subsidy to fit up ships for cattle. My hon. friend has been long enough in the house to know that all steamship subsidies and subventions are under the Department of Trade and Commerce, and have been for the last thirty years.

Mr. CASGRAIN: We had not known that it was done that way.

Mr. GUTHRIE: The subsidies granted for the carrying of mail from the post office are also all granted by the Department of Trade and Commerce. Consequently, when money was to be advanced for the fitting up of steamships for carrying cattle, the proper department to do it was the Department of Trade and Commerce, which I understand carried it out. And, if my memory serves me, it was under the provisions of the farm relief legislation. I am not familiar personally with the particular transaction to which my hon. friend has referred, but I know