

United States Government for 125 ships to be built in Canada and paid for under the Hyde Park agreement. There does not seem to be very much co-operation between the Minister and the Chairman.

Hon. Mr. COPP: The information being given, it does not much matter who gives it, I suppose.

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE: There is nothing secret about the building of cargo ships, and my honourable friend will agree, I think, that Parliament has a right to know how this ship-building programme is going. It is the duty of the Minister to tell Parliament from time to time, in a full and complete way, what he is doing and how he is getting on, just as it was my privilege to inform Parliament during the last war.

Now I quote a few brief statements the Minister made recently. I will give the best one first:

We have perhaps two yards in Canada that are fully manned; the other seventeen yards are still in process of expansion. One new large six-berth yard in Montreal laid down its first keels last week. At the present time we are launching a 10,000-ton merchant ship every four days, and we expect later on to bring this period down to three days.

He does not make very long statements. Then again, in referring to the type of 10,000-ton cargo ships that we are building to-day and the statement that it might be greatly improved, he said:

I may say that this ship was designed particularly to meet present-day war conditions. All the designers in England pooled their ideas to produce the design, which came from England, and I might say that in the United States and in Canada that design was accepted with very slight modifications. I understand that the Liberty ship in the United States is slightly, but only very slightly, different from the 10,000-ton freighter which we are building in Canada. Both follow the design which is being used in England for common-type cargo ships.

I have only one more statement, but I think honourable members will be interested in hearing from the Minister himself. He said, speaking in another place:

I might give the committee some information which would be of interest. To-night at midnight two West Coast yards are each launching a 10,000-ton freighter. One of them was completed at the yard, in every way, in eighty days from the time the first piece of steel was laid for the keel. That is a record up to this date. Those two shipyards have just begun a three-shift, seven-day-week operation. They are the only two yards we have been able to staff up fully. I expect that later launchings will show a still shorter time of construction up to the point of launching. However, as I have said to the committee, we are at the present time delivering one ship, complete for sailing, every four days.

Then he makes this further statement:

The industry is constantly expanding. We never close the door on any industry; we are always expanding. We have laid keels in a new six-berth yard within the last week or two in Montreal. We are expanding berths at Vancouver Island, and we are also bringing in new berths at Pictou and Sorel. We attempt to fully staff one yard before we start on the next. We have made mistakes; we have opened new shipyards too soon. Once a yard is fully staffed and on a full-time basis—we have only two yards in the country on that basis—it may be worth while to start another yard; but while a yard in a locality is expanding it is not considered good business—and we were so warned by experts from the United Kingdom—to start another yard.

Hon. Mr. COPP: May I ask the honourable gentleman if what he has just been reading is a statement by the Minister?

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE: Yes.

I wish to indicate some of the salient points of these very brief statements of the Minister. You will note that he said we had nineteen yards in Canada, and only two of them partially manned.

Hon. Mr. HUGESSEN: Fully manned.

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE: Oh, no.

Hon. Mr. KING: Only two fully manned.

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE: I do not think he said that.

Hon. Mr. ROBINSON: Would the honourable senator speak a little louder, so that we may hear?

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE: I do not think I shall have any trouble in doing that. The Minister said:

We have perhaps two yards in Canada that are fully manned.

My honourable friend is right.

Hon. Mr. COTE: The Minister said "perhaps".

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE: Yes. Out of our nineteen yards only two are perhaps fully manned. After the British expert advised the Minister that it would be well not to build any more new yards unless the present ones were manned, it does seem to me a strange procedure for the Minister to be busy erecting new yards now, especially the one that he refers to, the six-berth yard at Montreal.

The Minister makes another statement that I cannot quite understand, though it may be clear to my honourable friend from Westmorland (Hon. Mr. Copp), a Maritimer. He says: