

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: The Canada Shipping Bill will likely be referred to the Transport and Communications Committee.

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): Then perhaps this one could go there too.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: I think that this bill should be referred to the Banking and Commerce Committee. It may be that the scope of it is intended to be confined to transactions between the Dominion of Canada and the provinces, but this is not so stated in this bill and I think a further explanation is desirable.

Hon. Mr. Hugessen: I do point out to my honourable friend the leader that, as the honourable senator from Trinity (Hon. Mr. Roebuck) has said, the bill is not confined by its terms to transfers from the Dominion Government to a provincial Government, but covers a transfer to Her Majesty in any right whatsoever. So, technically speaking, the Government of Canada could under this legislation transfer a part of the property of Canada to the Government of Australia or the Government of South Africa.

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: I move that this bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Banking and Commerce for further consideration.

Motion agreed to.

CANADA SHIPPING BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. Mr. Aseltine, moved the second reading of Bill S-3, to amend the Canada Shipping Act.

He said: Honourable senators, this bill proposes quite a number of amendments to the Canada Shipping Act. You will remember that prior to the Statute of Westminster we had practically no shipping legislation, but as a result of that statute a bill was brought in to give to the Dominion of Canada complete and independent control over all of its shipping. Not many honourable senators who are here today were here in 1934, when that Shipping Bill was introduced in the Senate. I distinctly remember that the bill, which was intricate and voluminous, was considered very carefully by the Banking and Commerce Committee at some 28 meetings before it was given third reading in the Senate and sent to the House of Commons for their consideration. Since that time some ten amendments have been made to the act, and most of them have been introduced in the Senate.

The amendments to the act which are included in this bill deal with a rather wide variety of subjects. A number of them are

in the nature of clarifications or improvements in relation to procedures or technical points where experience has indicated the need for a change, but are relatively minor or routine nature. Others are some of greater importance.

Since it is my intention, honourable senators, to ask that this bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications, I do not propose at this time to deal with each amendment. I will, however, outline some of the more important ones, but I wish to speak chiefly on the principle involved.

In the field of steamship inspection, under section 481 of the act, vessels of five tons are exempt from inspection, although they must comply with certain regulations as to life saving, fire extinguishing equipment and that kind of thing, and they are subject to periodic spot checks. It is proposed that these exceptions should not apply to a vessel of that kind which carries less than 12 passengers. The amendment is designed to provide for a greater measure of inspection in order to ensure the safety of small commercial vessels engaged in carrying passengers.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: Why limit the inspection to vessels carrying 12 passengers? Why not have it apply to vessels if they carry any passengers at all?

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: I might have a motor boat in which I carry half a dozen people and it would not come under the provisions of the Canada Shipping Act.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: Are you referring to paying passengers?

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: If my honourable friend wishes to pursue that question, I suggest that when the bill goes to committee he should ask the experts there.

Section 8 of the bill would repeal section 324 of the act and substitute a new section dealing with matters relating to Maritime pilotage. Under the act the boundaries of the pilotage district may be defined by the Governor in Council, with the exception of the Quebec and Montreal districts, where the boundaries are defined by statute. This results from the long standing history of those two particular districts, which I understand goes back perhaps as far as the nineteenth century. However, changes in working conditions and pilotage procedures now make it desirable to amend the act so as to give the Governor in Council the same authority in defining the boundaries of these two areas as exists for other pilotage districts.

One other important amendment is that proposed to section 346 of the act, under which we are unable to give to American