

ter of finding the best way to accomplish the thing which both Mr. Stevens and I have in mind, that is, that this route should get a fair test, not a loaded test, not a test which introduces extraneous factors which are favourable to the route, or on the other hand a test which by its very nature introduces unfavourable factors. I think that Mr. Stevens will agree that that is desirable.

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: I quite agree.

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): I agree with the Minister entirely in that, Mr. Chairman. I want to see all the favourable factors introduced in the opening of a new route like this, because there are sufficient handicaps that we have not yet overcome, and, if we can do it, we ought to give it a little leeway. We ought to put in all the favourable conditions we can to start the route. There are factors such as lack of experience in navigation, and so forth. Sir Henry, perhaps you will be good enough to give me information on two points. One is as to the relative speed of your present shipping.

Sir HENRY THORNTON: The average speed of the present ships?

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): Of the various classes, the tens, eights and fives.

Mr. DOHERTY: About nine and one-half knots; the smaller ones are slightly slower, perhaps eight and one-half to nine knots.

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): The small ones are eight and one-half knots?

Mr. DOHERTY: About eight and one-half to nine knots, and the others nine to nine and one-half knots. Then the oil burners, such as the *Constructor*, will probably do eleven knots.

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): That is the ten?

Mr. DOHERTY: That is the ten, yes. They will do about eleven knots, I think.

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): Without regular steaming.

Mr. DOHERTY: Yes, in ordinary fair weather conditions.

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): Sir Henry, would you say that your ships are so constructed and equipped that they can be run as economically as modern vessels that you would build to-day, if you were going into the market to-day?

Sir HENRY THORNTON: No, they are not.

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): What percentage of increased cost is entailed in the operating of your ships on account of lack of modern construction and equipment?

Sir HENRY THORNTON: I certainly cannot answer that off-hand. Can you, Mr. Doherty?

Mr. DOHERTY: No, sir, I cannot.

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: I wonder, could I ask Mr. Doherty, or one of your staff here; there has been a great deal said about these ships—I am speaking of the eight thousand and ten thousand ton class—being so hopelessly inferior that they cannot be operated in any economical way. Just in what respect are they inferior to the normal 8,000 or 10,000 ton freighters?

Sir HENRY THORNTON: Before that question is answered, I do not want anyone to get the impression that they are hopelessly inferior.

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: That is the impression we get. Every time we ask a question it is given back to us that there is no hope with these ships, that these ships by construction and equipment are very inferior.

Sir HENRY THORNTON: They are not modern ships, and are not as susceptible to equal economic operation as a modern ship, but I certainly do not want to give the impression that these ships are no good.

Hon. Mr. STEVENS: We know that they are not passenger ships, nor liners; they are just freighters—plain ordinary freighters.