

for representation on the committee, I agree with him, though I come from the east, because I am with the younger and more progressive element. I ask that fair-play be accorded to the younger members here. We have, for instance, a young member in the person of Senator McKay, from Montreal. He should be on the committee. The province of Quebec, owing to its large English population, should be represented on that committee. I have not asked the hon. gentleman if he would like to be appointed, but I think he is a fit and proper person to be on the committee. Even if the committee has been named in conformity with usage there is no reason why it should not be changed to-day. Canada has progressed and we must advance with it.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON—I should like very much if the leaders on both sides would move their desks a little further toward the middle of the chamber, so that those of us who are seated some distance from them, may have an opportunity to hear what is going on.

The motion was agreed to.

Hon. Mr. CLORAN—Do I understand that the hon. Speaker has declared the motion agreed to?

The SPEAKER—Yes.

Hon. Mr. CLORAN—Then the remarks of the hon. senator from Prince Edward Island are quite appropriate. I did not hear the announcement made.

Hon. GENTLEMEN—Order, order.

THE CANADA-MEXICO STEAMSHIP LINE.

INQUIRY.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL rose to:

Call attention to the provisions of the articles of agreements entered into between the Minister of Trade and Commerce of the Dominion on behalf of His Majesty, and the Messrs. Elder-Dempsey & Company, of Liverpool, England, for the establishment of a line of steamers between Canada, Cuba and Mexico, and will inquire of the government why in the third clause of said articles of agreement provision is made prohibiting the Canadian subsidized steamers from taking cargo at Cuban ports for Canada?

He said: In calling the attention of the Senate to the contract entered into between the government and the Elder-Dempster

Hon. Mr. CLORAN.

Company, I wish to assure the Senate that it is not done from any spirit of opposition or fault-finding on account of the policy which the government has adopted in establishing a line between Canada, Cuba and Mexico. On the contrary, I am fully in accord with that policy, it being a continuation of the policy of the late government, but there is a provision in the contract which I should like to have explained. It will be found at the end of the third clause of the contract. The contract provides for the establishment of a line of steamers between Canada, Cuba and Mexico, starting during the season of open navigation from Montreal and calling at Charlottetown and Halifax and other intermediate ports until it reaches some Cuban port. Then it provides in addition to that that the government and department shall have power to extend the provisions of their contract so as to have the steamers, after leaving Cuba, proceed to Mexico. In case the contract is confined to the first portion to which I alluded, they are to pay a certain sum, I think \$50,000 a year. Should the extension be agreed to, then it is to be \$100,000. I will read the third clause and ask the government why vessels are prevented from taking on cargo at a Cuban port on the trip from Mexico to Canada. The third clause is as follows:

3. It is understood and agreed that at the option of the minister, the service, herein contracted for may be extended to the republic of Mexico, calling on all south bound voyages at the ports of Progreso, Coatzacoalcas, Vera Cruz and Tampico, with the option on the part of the contractors of calling at any of the said Mexican ports on the north bound voyages; and in case the service is so extended to Mexico the steamers may carry and land in Cuba on south bound voyages, cargo and passengers, and may take on board at Cuban ports both cargo and passengers for Mexico, and on all north bound voyages from Mexico may take on board cargo and passengers for any Cuban port, but shall not take cargo at Cuban ports for Canada.

The last part of the clause is what I desire to have explained by the government. I can understand very well a provision of that kind being insisted upon by Mexico, provided there was any space reserved for a cargo at a Cuban port which could be filled in Mexico. The object of the contract is to cultivate trade between Canada and Mexico and West Indian ports, but why a vessel which has the right to