

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

HOUSE OF COMMONS

April 4, 1946

The Special Committee on War Expenditures and Economies met this day at 11.00 o'clock a.m. The Chairman, Mr. Gordon B. Isnor, presided.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, if you will come to order please we will start our proceedings. While we are waiting for Mr. Berry I might report that I have gone over certain matters with Mr. Berry in regard to questions which were placed before our Committee during the last session. A complete list of these has been compiled. Unfortunately, Mr. Low, who is looking after that, is indisposed at present, but I propose to have those questions answered in as nearly the same order in which they were placed before us as soon as possible. Then I took up with him the big question of ships. I think we should give the subject of these boats an entire sitting, or even longer perhaps.

Mr. REID: On the question of what?

The CHAIRMAN: Ships. It has been suggested that in view of the fact that War Assets Corporation will have a meeting of its directors next week at which Mr. Berry and other senior officials will require to be present,—I think it is on Tuesday and Wednesday, is that so Mr. McLraith?

Mr. McILRAITH: On Wednesday and Thursday.

The CHAIRMAN: So I am going to suggest that on Thursday we call a representative of the department of National Defence for naval services. I think Commander Arnold will likely be the witness. I am giving you advance notice so that you may be able to prepare questions for presentation on that subject at that time.

Lt. Com. ARNOLD: Mr. Chairman, I think the gentleman from the navy who will be here will be Captain Hope.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Commander.

Mr. JACKMAN: What is his position?

The CHAIRMAN: I understand that he is in charge of stores in general and of supplies.

Mr. JACKMAN: Is it the suggestion that we go into the question of surplus ships or all surpluses in the naval department?

The CHAIRMAN: More on the question of surplus supplies. I would also like to give notice of a meeting of the steering committee to be held at 2.15 p.m. to-morrow for the purpose of giving consideration to further matters to be placed before this committee.

Mr. REID: That is all right, Mr. Chairman; but I am just wondering if it would not be better if we were to call the heads of some of the other services, the army and the air force for instance, because it seems to me that there are possibly greater volumes of supply to be disposed of or declared surplus in those branches than would be the case with respect to ships or supplies in the navy. We should have at the earliest possible moment complete information regarding the huge quantities of material all over the country which are now and which will become surplus, and I think we all realize we will not be able to get very much of that information from officials of the marine service. I was wondering also about the army and the air force. That is just my opinion.