

Mr. SPEAKMAN: I have pointed out that not only was there a control of the Canadian crop at that time but also a central buying agency. There were not a number of buying agencies competing with themselves for that crop, and there is the difference. However, that was rather a digression. I only wanted to use the pool as an illustration of the statement that a conference is not necessarily a menace so long as it is well regulated. The question before us now is this: Has that conference gone beyond its legitimate purposes?

Mr. MEIGHEN: The hon. member has some reasoning power and I want to follow his reasoning. Is not the point he makes against himself? With a central buying agency, and a control here of the western crop, then, unless there was collusion between the buying agency and the controlling agency here, there could be no increase in prices. But without any central buying agency, and without collusion, the control would be far more likely to increase prices.

Mr. SPEAKMAN: The right hon. gentleman would seem to suggest then, that at that time there was collusion between the buying agency in Great Britain or in Europe and the board here. In that connection I might point out this, that although Mr. Stewart is no doubt an authority, notwithstanding what he may say, popular opinion maintains that, had it not been for the board of control, prices, owing to competition, would have been higher than they were. The question as regards this conference is, as I have stated, whether it exceeded its legitimate functions. So far as we can judge—and we are judging on insufficient data—one thing stands out certain, that since the organization of that conference the cost of the service it renders has immeasurably increased. That is a statement that cannot be challenged; it rests on no report or investigation but on facts within the knowledge of every hon. gentleman in this House as well as of every business man in the country.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

After Recess

The House resumed at eight o'clock.

PRIVATE BILLS

WEST VIRGINIA PULP AND PAPER COMPANY

The House in committee on Bill No. 13, respecting a patent of West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company.—Mr. Jacobs—Mr. Gordon in the chair.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Will the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Motherwell) be good enough to explain this bill?

On section 1—extension of time for payment of fees.

Mr. MEIGHEN: In the absence of the sponsor of the bill or any member of the government, I move that the committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Progress reported.

EDGEWORTH GREENE PATENT

The House in committee on Bill No. 14, respecting a patent of Edgeworth Greene—Mr. Jacobs—Mr. Gordon in the chair.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Has this bill been referred to committee?

The CHAIRMAN: It has been referred to committee and been reported on.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I make the same motion that the committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Progress reported.

OCEAN SHIPPING RATES

AGREEMENT WITH SIR WILLIAM PETERSEN—MOTION FOR RATIFICATION DISCUSSED

The House resumed consideration of the proposed resolution to ratify and confirm an agreement between His Majesty and Sir William Petersen, providing for the establishment of a subsidized steamship line and government control of certain ocean rates, and the proposed amendment thereto of Mr. Clark.

Mr. SPEAKMAN: When the House rose at six o'clock, I was endeavouring to point out that, whether as the result of a combine or not, ocean rates in the last few years had risen very materially and, indeed, in many cases to an excessive height. I had also pointed out that this statement was not based upon any report of a commission, but was a matter within the personal knowledge of every member of the House and of every business interest in the country. I might point out by way of illustration one or two of the items upon which those rates have so risen. I will refer first to rates in connection with the live stock industry, not because the increase has been greater on that industry than on others, but because I am more familiar, perhaps, with the effect of the increase upon that industry. As has been pointed out, since 1913 and 1914, rates upon live stock carried overseas have increased from about \$7.50 on an average a head to about \$20 to \$25 a head at the present time.