

The operation of a ship at sea is not comparable to any institution on shore. The necessity for vigilance in every department is more exacting and the time involved is twenty-four hours every day during the entire voyage. A change in the established policy of the company as it affects the men of the ships would, we feel, reflect on the prestige and earnings of the company within a very brief period and to an extent in which it would take years to recover. Our ships have never been involved in a major accident on the Pacific Ocean entailing loss of life of either passengers or crew.

There is also the question of language and the necessity of employing labour familiar with the methods, customs, etc., of the Orient. A mixed crew of whites and Orientals would, of course, be entirely out of the question, as it would be impossible to maintain harmony, discipline and efficiency, apart from the necessity of providing separate feeding and sleeping accommodation. The conditions of the Orient are not conducive to the maintenance of a high standard of discipline when white crews are employed. A large part of the voyage is in the tropics, and Canadian crews would be unable to endure the climatic conditions existing in the Orient during the period May to October without a large percentage of breakdown in health.

It would be impractical to have Whites act as servants for Oriental passengers. There is the additional fact that the Chinese are ideal servants, with a natural aptitude for waiting on and pleasing all types of passengers, and in the victualling department the well-trained Chinese crews are in a large measure responsible for the ability to successfully maintain prestige with the travelling public in competition with other lines on the Pacific, who also employ Oriental labour in similar departments. About eighty per cent of the Chinese employed on the ships hold Canadian lifeboat certificates.

That "eighty per cent" is a mistake; it should be 45·80 per cent. I may say that this is much more than the number necessary to man all the lifeboats. I think Mr. O'Donovan suggested that the Chinese did not understand orders as to lowering the boats, but Commander Aikman will be able to give you information as to the efficiency with which these Chinamen operate the boats, which will completely answer any criticism of that sort.

Apart from the determining factors already enumerated, there is the very important one of economy, which is necessary if the Company is to continue to compete and maintain its high standard of service, with credit to itself and to the Dominion, in competition with the heavily subsidized opposition lines.

Following that, sir, you will see a sheet giving a comparative statement between Chinese and Canadian crews on the Pacific *Empresses*, the present number of Chinese employed; and you will see on the four ships the present number on deck is 277; in the engine room 558; in the victualling department 933, making a total of 1,768 men. Captain Aikman has made up this estimate of the number of white men or Canadians who might be used to replace those 1,768 Chinese, and he shows a total of 1,475 men.

The CHAIRMAN: That would be in the case of a complete reversal of policy?

Mr. FLINTOFT: Yes. It is given by departments, but to save time I will take the total. I wish the committee to keep in mind that when making up that figure Captain Aikman has gone below what he thinks would be necessary to maintain the service as efficiently as it is to-day with the Chinese. We sought to cut down expenses to the very limit, and we would not be satisfied that we could maintain our premier position on the Pacific if we had to cut the crew to that degree.

[Mr. E. P. Flintoft.]