

HUDSON BAY SHIPPING COSTS

Before the Orders of the Day:

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: Honourable members, I am rising before the Orders of the Day are called, to refer to a matter of urgency. Companies with which I am connected have for some time been making charters for ships, and in the Montreal Standard of the 3rd of March, last Saturday, there is an article which I wish to read. As honourable members know, considerable negotiations are necessary in the chartering of a ship; you cannot go about it as if you were hiring a taxi. So I am taking the liberty of calling attention to this newspaper article, in order to give the Government notice of what is going on. It reads as follows:

Every Bushel of Wheat from Hudson Bay
Route Cost Government \$1.23

(Montreal Standard's Parliamentary Correspondent at Ottawa). Ottawa, March 3.—For every bushel of wheat shipped via the Hudson Bay route last year, the Dominion Government expended \$1.23. And about the same the year before.

Wheat shipments from Port Churchill in 1932 totalled 2,700,000 bushels. To permit this movement of grain the Government's expenditures on the Hudson Bay route for the year amounted to \$3,328,000.

This sum would have paid the combined lake and ocean freights on 40,000,000 bushels of grain from Fort William to Liverpool at the rates prevailing during the period last summer when the Hudson Bay route was open to navigation.

The Hudson Bay Railway, the Port Churchill developments and the aids to navigation in the Strait, cost \$53,000,000, entailing annual interest charges of \$2,650,000.

Hon. Mr. GILLIS: I rise to a point of order. Is this a matter of urgency?

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: The Orders of the Day have not yet been called. The article goes on to say:

Maintenance costs of \$414,000 and operating deficit of \$163,000 brought the total Government disbursements up to \$3,328,000 last year. This does not include provision for sinking fund or expenses of icebreakers.

Hon. Mr. GILLIS: Mr. Speaker, are we interested in this matter?

The Hon. the SPEAKER: There is a point of order.

Hon. Mr. GILLIS: What is the honourable gentleman speaking to? Is there a motion before the House? We have already disposed of the first reading of the Shipping Bill.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: The Orders of the Day have not been called.

Hon. Mr. GILLIS: This is not a matter of urgency.

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Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: Companies that I am connected with have been chartering ships for a long time. They have to make charters—

Hon. Mr. GILLIS: If the honourable gentleman wants to bring a matter to the attention of the Chamber he should give notice of it. This is not a matter of urgency.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: That is the opinion of the honourable gentleman. In my opinion it is of great urgency. There is only one more short paragraph in the article:

If the shipments from Churchill were increased ten times to 27 million bushels the interest charges would still constitute a transport subsidy of ten cents a bushel, or more than the combined lake and ocean freight via Port Arthur and Montreal for the greater part of last season.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: I had never heard the figures which the honourable gentleman has given us. If it were not for the unimpeachable character of the authority he has quoted, I should not have believed them.

THE WORK OF THE SENATE

DISCUSSION POSTPONED

On the Order:

Resuming the adjourned debate on the question proposed by Hon. Mr. Murphy:

To call the attention of the Government to the work of the Senate and to the efforts made by the Senate to secure the initiation in this House of Government measures, and to inquire if it is the intention of the Government to introduce in the Senate at an early date any of the legislation indicated in the Speech from the Throne.—Right Hon. Mr. Graham.

Right Hon. Mr. GRAHAM: Honourable members, as I explained previously, my object in moving the adjournment of this discussion was to keep the matter open until the honourable leader of this side of the House (Hon. Mr. Dandurand) is present, as he wishes to speak on it. I suggest that if no other honourable member desires to speak to-day, the order should stand until to-morrow.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: I desire to speak myself, but the honourable leader on the other side has the floor and I shall be satisfied to have the debate adjourned until he is able to be present. However, I am quite sure that it would be agreeable to him, as to me, that any honourable members speak to-day who care to do so. I may say that we have a very important meeting of the Banking and Commerce Committee resuming immediately after the House adjourns; so most of us will be busily occupied during the afternoon in any event.

The Order stands.

The Senate adjourned until to-morrow at 3 p.m.