

Mr. DUNNING: The matter of the boats entering the St. Lawrence, in the opinion of my hon. friend too early in the season, is one of management. The government does not interfere with that, but I will of course see to it that the views expressed by my hon. friend in that regard are communicated to the management, and I have no doubt they will be carefully considered. I should, however, like to ask my hon. friend a question with regard to his other suggestions as to the building of the boats. He speaks of the economy which could be secured by giving two boats or four boats to one yard. If he were in my place and tenders came in indicating that one Canadian yard had tendered the lowest in Canada for all five ships; that a substantial saving or a saving could be secured by giving all five ships or four or three of the five to one yard, would he regard that as good sound policy, or would he come here next year and criticize the government for proceeding along that line?

Mr. CANTLEY: The minister has misunderstood what I said. I had reference to two identical ships. What I said will apply only when they are identical, that is as regards detailed drawings, plans, estimating figures, moulds, templates, jigs and all that sort of thing. There are probably fifty items that apply to the two boats—not necessarily the whole five, because when you change from one size or type of ship to another you have to make new templates, et cetera.

Mr. DUNNING: My hon. friend does not clearly get my question. Regardless of the factors which he mentioned, if for any reason one Canadian yard is low for the whole five ships, or if, let us say, two Canadian yards are low, one for three ships and one for two, what is his judgment? Should we confine the building of these ships to those two yards?

Mr. CANTLEY: I do not see why not, but I am quite sure I would not give the five ships to any one yard.

Mr. STEVENS: Of course there is this to say in regard to that. My hon. friend is rather cute.

Mr. DUNNING: No.

Mr. STEVENS: These tenders, as we have been insisting, must be open tenders, so that all will have exactly the same deal, and we would like to have that safeguard inserted in the bill. It would not be fair for the minister to come here next year, having given all these ships or three of them to one yard, and having given that yard perhaps an opportunity of making a special tender on

three ships, and say: I propounded this scheme to the House last year, and the House agreed. This all depends upon the conditions surrounding the granting of the contract to the one yard.

Mr. DUNNING: I can tell my hon. friend that exactly the same conditions will apply to all tenderers. That is the business practice of this government.

Mr. STEVENS: We are not so sure of that. I am not desirous of starting a row to-night; I would like to go through the rest of this day quietly and harmoniously, but I want the minister to understand that we are not children and we are not going to be fooled by very quiet and kind observations such as he has made. We might as well say this now: We warn him now that next year when this House meets, if a kind Providence spares us and the government does not dissolve in the meantime, if he lets all these contracts to one yard we shall scrutinize the job pretty closely no matter where it goes and we shall want to know the why and the wherefore.

Mr. DUNNING: I thought I might be successful in arousing the normal suspicions of my hon. friend.

Mr. STEVENS: My hon. friend has never allayed them. They have been there all the time.

Mr. DUNNING: I never hope to convince my hon. friend that any of us on this side of the House is even ordinarily honest.

Mr. STEVENS: My hon. friend seems to be looking for trouble to-night.

Mr. BENNETT: Methinks the lady doth protest too much.

Mr. DUNNING. I am merely appealing to the good business judgment of the remainder of the members of the committee who, I am sure, desire to be fair. They have heard the repeated statements of myself and the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Malcolm) with respect to the manner in which we intend to conduct this business. I am content to leave the matter to the judgment of the committee and to the record of Hansard, knowing fully that we shall be responsible for what we do. I do not hope ever to satisfy my hon. friend that any business we conduct is conducted honestly; but I am not concerned about that; I am concerned rather about the verdict of the whole House and particularly the verdict of the Canadian people.