

any distinction between members of the cabinet, but perhaps the members of the cabinet will agree with me when I say that next to the Prime Minister the Minister of Finance is the most important member of the council. Yet here is a constituency, represented as I say by the minister second in importance in the cabinet, treated in this way by the Minister of Trade and Commerce; for what has the Minister of Trade and Commerce done in this connection? In spite of the fact that a contract was entered into with a good Tory, a nice fellow and a personal friend of mine—he does not help me in election time but that doesn't matter—we find this service reduced by \$3,750.

Mr. STEVENS: There is no contract there except a year to year contract.

Mr. DUFF: Well, may I ask the Minister of Trade and Commerce whether the contractor was consulted before the amount was reduced and whether or not the contractor agreed?

Mr. STEVENS: The contract for the \$33,750 is the current contract which expires shortly. No new contract has been entered into.

Mr. DUFF: How can the Minister of Trade and Commerce either through the statistical department or by any other means, arrive at this arbitrary sum of \$30,000? How does he know that my good friend, the good Conservative who owns the boat, will accept it?

Mr. STEVENS: He may not.

Mr. DUFF: And I suppose the minister does not care whether he does or not. But I care, and the Minister of Finance cares, though that gentleman cannot get up on the floor and criticize his brother minister. I hope, however, that he will do it in council to-morrow morning after he hears what I have to say to-night. I ask the Minister of Trade and Commerce: Is this sort of thing fair to his colleague the Minister of Finance, the gentleman who is carrying the financial burden of this country and who is trying to bring in a new Bank Act? Is it fair to that minister to make this reduction without consulting him? Without consulting the Minister of Finance or the contractor he deliberately reduces this contract by \$3,750, not knowing, as he has just admitted, whether the contractor will accept it or not. And suppose, for the sake of argument, that the contractor does not accept it; what will happen? What will happen in the county represented by the Minister of Finance and

[Mr. Duff.]

in my own constituency, one of the most important parts of the province of Nova Scotia, where this service goes on? In the light of the fact that the Minister of Trade and Commerce has increased the subsidy in his own province to \$22,800, is he going to throw out of gear the whole maritime problem as it affects my own constituency and that of the Minister of Finance, without consulting either the Minister of Finance or poor little me? Surely that is not fair; it is not good business for the Minister of Trade and Commerce to make this reduction deliberately with a view to balancing the budget—because that is the whole game. And after all it is only balancing the budget on paper; you may reduce the estimates as much as you like, or put in anything you like, but you will not balance your budget unless you get the revenue. Yet the Minister of Trade and Commerce, for some reason best known to himself, deliberately jeopardises the position of the Minister of Finance and my position in our two counties by reducing this subsidy by \$3,750. Oh, yes. But that does not satisfy this Cassius—is that a good word?—in the person of the Minister of Trade and Commerce.

There must be some Scotch in the English Minister of Trade and Commerce because he is not satisfied with deliberately going out of his way to reduce the subsidy in the county represented by my good friend the Minister of Finance and in my own county as well, but he takes another crack at my constituency. Here is the service between Mulgrave and Guysborough, calling at intermediate ports, reduced from \$10,500 to \$9,500—a very important service. The Minister of Trade and Commerce was one of those who sat around the council board when my hon. friend from Pictou, before he was a member, came at his own expense to Ottawa and urged that a railway be built through part of his county and part of mine in order that the people might have railway accommodation—and I thank the hon. gentleman for having done it. But it was deliberately decided not to go on with the building of that railway, so that the only communication the people have is this water transportation between Mulgrave and Guysborough.

Mr. CANTLEY: They are shipping lumber over my end of it now.

Mr. DUFF: My hon. friend is stronger than I thought he was. The only means of communication the people have there in the winter time, especially when the roads are blocked with snow and ice, is by steamer be-