

Mr. STEVENS: My hon. friend asked me to take notice of it and make an explanation, which I did at the earliest possible opportunity out of courtesy to him.

Mr. NEILL: Asking him to take notice is hardly a question. However, that is of little importance. Now, to my mind—and I suppose I am stupid—the explanation made the situation rather worse. It was threefold. First, it was explained—and I presume it is to a certain extent correct—that one record was taken from exports from Canada and the other from imports into Great Britain, but not, mark you, from the British but from the Canadian records.

Mr. STEVENS: My hon. friend is wrong there. He will pardon me for interrupting him, but I think it would be very unfortunate were an impression to go abroad that the bureau of statistics was in any way inaccurate. The figures of imports into the United Kingdom are the United Kingdom figures. Will my hon. friend please accept my word on that?—because the reputation and honour of the Dominion Statistician are being questioned in this matter and I am indeed sorry that that should be the case.

Mr. NEILL: I am not attacking the reputation and honour of the statistician; I am saying that the man who prepares these bulletins and who turns out 3,000,000 words for \$6.20, as the minister himself said the other day, hurriedly selecting the material as the stuff went past, did not do the work as accurately as he might.

Mr. STEVENS: I made no such statement.

Mr. NEILL: About the bulletin?

Mr. STEVENS: No such statement.

Mr. NEILL: Well, let us refer to Hansard.

Mr. STEVENS: Very well; refer to it.

Mr. NEILL: It will be found that the minister said that this was a selection; that as the items were passed in review, somebody picked it out; that the system was rapid and the material was picked out in that way.

As regards the point whether the information comes from Britain, I have no access to the British records, and I took it from the bulletin prepared by the minister and from the Commercial Intelligence Journal, which the minister will certainly admit is under his authority. I did not take it from the British records. The Commercial Intelligence Journal does not say that they are British records, but I shall take the minister's statement that they are.

[Mr. Neill.]

I understood the minister to say that if some of the shipments of salmon from British Columbia were shipped by water, it would be a considerable time before they arrived at their destination, and consequently some of them would appear in a different quarter of imports into Britain from that in which they were recorded as having left Canada. That is quite true and would be a good explanation as to the discrepancy in one quarter if it showed a smaller amount received in Britain than had been exported from Canada. But that will hold only once. The next quarter it will not apply, because the hang-over from the previous quarter would be in the second and the one should more or less balance the other, whereas it does not do so. In the June quarter the shortage was 9,000 hundredweight. In the September quarter it got worse; it was 23,000 hundredweight, and for the nine months ending September, it was 32,000, so it was cumulatively worse. I admit that it will apply to one quarter, but it does not seem to be borne out by the records of three quarters or of the nine months period.

The second explanation the minister gave was that the figure for the exports from Canada was reckoned on 100 pounds to the hundredweight while the figure for what was received in Great Britain was on the basis of 112 pounds to the hundredweight. The answer to that is that at the very most it would make a difference of only 12 per cent, and not of 40 or 60 per cent.

Mr. STEVENS: There is no such difference. I ask my hon. friend to pardon me for interrupting him. I am not asking any favours for myself as minister, but I certainly am jealous of the reputation of the bureau of statistics as one of the outstanding institutions of this country. My hon. friend is making statements which, by the very page of Hansard which he was quoting a moment ago, are shown clearly not to be so. My hon. friend need not give me any quarter at all; about that I do not care twopence, but I ask him to be fair in regard to one of our institutions of which hon. members on both sides of the house are justly proud.

Mr. NEILL: Really this lecture is very severe and all that, but the minister has not proven anything.

Mr. STEVENS: It is not a lecture; it is simply an interruption in the interests of accuracy. I protest against allowing to go out to the world statements such as my hon. friend has made. In order to make the point I wish, I shall take the opportunity now of giving the committee the facts. In the ex-