

that it would be for two months of the year. What would he suggest doing with them in the other ten months?

Mr. PROBE: My information is that we can operate there for more than two months out of the year under any conditions, and possibly with a little government ingenuity, shall we say, and with the provision of radar and icebreakers in that bay, we might be able to operate for ten months of the year. I do not think it has been established by anyone except the eastern shipping interests that Hudson bay is not a feasible route for more than two months of the year.

Mr. HOWE: I have been in Churchill in every month of the year except January, February and March. I have been there from April to December, and I can assure my hon. friend that if two months is not the limit, then certainly three is the maximum. You cannot get within miles of the place outside that limit.

Mr. PROBE: At the present time I believe we are not operating the port at all and even three months of the year, ninety days, would be an advance on what we are doing with the facilities there at the present time.

Mr. MACDONNELL: Will the minister repeat what he said this afternoon with reference to the \$27 million? I believe he mentioned three 8,000-ton vessels. I did not catch the rest of what he said.

Mr. HOWE: The amount in the estimates this time is required to complete three vessels of 8,500-ton capacity. They are diesel vessels of the type of the later United States ships.

Mr. MACDONNELL: Does that mean about \$9 million each?

Mr. HOWE: No. The item we are discussing is an item of \$3,619,942.

Mr. MACDONNELL: What about the rest?

Mr. HOWE: The \$23 million odd is for finishing up the shipbuilding programme which ended on September 6. That is the amount spent up to August 31, 1945.

Mr. MACDONNELL: I began to figure it out; I asked someone who knew, and I thought that the whole \$27 million could not apply to the three. But what programme does this \$23 million finish up?

Mr. HOWE: The amount of \$23,380,000 was the actual expenditure from April 1, 1945 to August 31, 1945, and that includes finishing up a number of merchant ships built all the

[Mr. Howe.]

way from Saint John, New Brunswick, to Victoria, British Columbia. The programme had been finished as of V-J day, except for three ships that were still under construction. These were three fast motor ships that were built at the wind-up of the merchant programme.

Mr. MACDONNELL: When were they begun?

Mr. HOWE: They were begun seven or eight months ago.

Mr. MACDONNELL: When did you first sell ships? When were the first sales made?

Mr. HOWE: Within the last month.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: What vessels were completed in the \$23,380,000 programme? Will he give the amount expended on the different vessels? This has all been done under the government-operated crown company, the Park Steamship company?

Mr. HOWE: No. It is done under War-time Shipbuilding. The Park Steamship company is the operating company.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: The whole item comes under cargo vessels operated by the Park Steamship company.

Mr. CHEVRIER: Operated, not built.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: Would the minister outline what vessels were completed and which ones have been finished since April 1 of this year?

Mr. HOWE: Does the hon. member want the names of the ships?

Mr. CASTLEDEN: The names and the amount spent on each since April of this year.

Mr. HOWE: It would not be very illuminating, because part of the expenditure would probably come before April 1. Does he want to get at the cost of the ships?

Mr. CASTLEDEN: How was this amount expended since April 1? Can the minister give the tonnage of the vessels that have been completed, the number of vessels completed, the amount spent on each since April 1? That would give a picture of what is being done with the \$23 million. That is what we are after.

Mr. GREEN: This item brings up two policies which are of vital importance to Canada: in the first place, the policy on merchant shipping, and, in the second place, on shipbuilding. They are, of course, of great interest to those who come from either the