

prominent men made important pronouncements and specific promises in that regard. I do not wish to take up the time of the House in discussing early history, but those statements are a justification for this Bill, and for the program to nationalize the port of Saint John in the future. One very prominent statesman, in discussing the construction of the Intercolonial Railway, said that by reason of the fulfilment of these promises the Maritime ports would take their place among the great emporiums of the world, and all the resources of the West would flow to the bosoms of their harbours. When advocating Confederation Sir Georges Cartier made the following statement in the city of Montreal:

During six months of the year we Canadians have to knock at the door of our neighbour in order to carry on our trade. This cannot be tolerated. This Confederation must be carried out. We Canadians are enriching the American States, whereas we ought to be enriching our own states; we ought to be enriching such harbours as Saint John and Halifax.

The desire of the people at that time, naturally, was to create outlets for Canadian trade through Canadian ports. The people were afraid that the bonding privilege in the shipment of goods into Canada through American ports might be discontinued, and therefore the desirability of using Canadian channels was impressed upon the advocates of Confederation.

Notwithstanding the promises and pledges made at that time, very little, if anything, was done for a great many years. I sometimes wonder what Sir Georges Cartier would have said had he visited the port of Saint John some thirty or thirty-five years afterwards and found that hardly a shack or a shingle, or anything worthy of the name of terminal facilities, had been provided. It seemed during that period as though the outlets must be the St. Lawrence ports in summer and the United States ports in winter. Some time along in the eighties the Canadian Pacific Railway, with Sir Thomas Shaughnessy at its head, came into being, and he and David McNicoll came to the city of Saint John and interviewed the authorities there, with the result that the people were inspired with the belief that Saint John was capable of handling a large portion of the exports of Canada. The fact is that up to 1893 or 1894 the Government of Canada had been subsidizing steamship lines which made Portland, Maine, their terminus, and which were fed by the Grand Trunk Railway. So, in co-operation with the Canadian Pacific Railway, the people went deep down into their pockets and furnished about \$3,000,000 to be used in demonstrating to the rest of Canada the feasibility of making

Hon. Mr. FOSTER.

Saint John a national port. I mention that, honourable members, not because I desire to draw attention to the action of the people of Saint John on that occasion, but because of the fact that the Harbour Commission Act, which I shall mention in a few moments, provided for the assumption of the amount of \$3,000,000 which had been spent by the people of Saint John.

I do not intend to enter into the early history of the port, interesting though it may be, but I should like to point out that the harbour of Saint John, unlike other harbours of Canada, was owned by the people of that city. There were granted to them in 1758 all the land around the harbour, the land under the water, and the fishery rights in the harbour. These were leased to persons who desired to make use of them, and from them the city secured considerable revenue. Such was the condition that obtained in 1927, when the Saint John Harbour Commission was appointed by Act of the Parliament of this country.

I had the honour of being selected as the first chairman of that Commission. Of course we met for the purpose of organization. We had no organization of any kind, not a penholder, or a desk, or a bottle of ink, and no funds in the bank. At our second meeting we had in attendance the Deputy Minister of the department and I put before him the question as to where we could get money to carry on our work, and he said, "You had better go out and borrow some." So the first act of the Commission was to borrow some money; and I imagine, not that the present loan is the last, but that the Commission will be here seeking further loans from time to time.

We were not very long in office before we found that the harbour of Saint John was extraordinarily and wonderfully made. By that remark I do not desire to cast any reflection on those who were responsible for bringing into being the facilities which were there when we took charge. The people of Saint John owned the harbour; certain harbour frontage was leased to certain individuals; there had been certain wharves and buildings erected by the people of Saint John; the Government had built some wharves; and the Canadian Pacific Railway had some wharves and buildings. Our second effort, therefore, was to bring into co-operation these different managements, which were charging different rates.

Following that, we laid out a comprehensive plan of port development, emphasizing three important policies: first, to see that the port