

to abandon his bill because people make suggestions. That stand would be an invitation to those opposed to the bill to keep up the fight a little longer in the hope that his already frayed nerves may become completely destroyed.

Mr. HOWE: We have now found what the right hon. gentleman wishes to know, and I believe I can help him considerably. If he has studied the bill he is aware that the accounting is to be under the Minister of Finance, and that the men doing the accounting are in the civil service. So far as the dismissal of engineers is concerned, I know of no engineer being dismissed for a great many years. Even subsequently to 1930 we find that the engineering staffs at all the harbours were the staffs which had been there for many years.

Mr. BENNETT: Some had contracts.

Mr. HOWE: Yes, but a great many had not. I do not think there has been any great trouble of the type he suggests in connection with technical men occupying responsible positions. I do not think they have been dismissed in the past, and I do not believe there will be a tendency to dismiss them. Whether we could go farther than we have, I doubt very much. We are trying to get the wheels turning, and we believe that without hurting the business of the ports we have gone as far as we can. After all, the one important point of which we are apt to lose track is that ports must operate efficiently, that business must be done through a port and that the wheels must turn with a minimum of friction. I am more afraid of obstructing the wheels of progress in the port than I am of one or two political appointments. My experience with political appointments is that the man you replace is apt to be as good as the man who replaces him. I believe the business of the country is more concerned with efficiency than with matters of that kind.

Mr. BENNETT: So do I.

Mr. FINN: Let me say to the right hon. leader of the opposition, who has singled out Halifax harbour for personal comment, that from his admissions one would think he had joined the Oxford movement, because he has confessed that he was in favour of immediately implementing the report of Sir Alexander Gibb, but that his colleague in the government and his supporters would not permit him to do so. It is a sad state of affairs when we have that statement from my friend, the

right hon. the leader of the opposition and the once great Conservative party, who now deserves more than ever to sit in the cold shades of opposition.

Mr. MacNICOL: It will be a greater party after the next election, too.

Mr. FINN: It may be; no one knows. I hope that if the leader of the opposition lives—and I trust he may—he will follow the policy and procedure of the government of the present prime minister.

With reference to the port of Halifax and the harbour commission may I say that there have been but four removals. These removals were made after Mr. Cornell, an appointee under the government of the leader of the opposition, through the chairman of the commission, Colonel Phinney, was handed the four resignations which were accepted by the new port manager at Halifax. Mr. Cornell was an appointee not of the Liberal party or of the present government, but of the government which held office under the present leader of the opposition. No other removals or dismissals have taken place in connection with the harbour commission at Halifax.

I want to say here and now to the leader of the opposition that there was never such a spectacle as that to be seen after the provincial election of 1933, when the Hon. Angus L. Macdonald became Premier of Nova Scotia. It was found that members of the harbour commission, belonging to the party to which the leader of the opposition belongs, had started out to steal the franchise from the people of the province of Nova Scotia.

Mr. BENNETT: Mr. Chairman, I think I shall have to ask the hon. member to withdraw that statement. Men who are not in this house are charged with stealing something.

Mr. FINN: I did not say the leader of the opposition was a party to it.

Mr. BENNETT: It is far worse to say that people who have no chance to be heard are stealing than to make the statement about people who can be heard.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Go on.

Mr. FINN: Furthermore—

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Johnston, Lake Centre): With regard to the point raised by the leader of the opposition, may I say that the hon. member did not make the charge that any hon. member of this house had done something wrongfully. The statement was made that certain people outside the house did something they should not have done.

Mr. BENNETT: He used the word "steal."