

Mr. BENNETT. In reference to this bargain and contract between the member for Digby and the town council, it is quite true that I brought it up, and I do not regret doing so. I simply brought it up to show the people of Canada an illustration of how business is conducted in this country.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. Does the hon. member think it is relevant to this vote? It has been denied by the hon. member for Digby that there is any connection between the two. This is a vote for repairs to the pier; the other is an altogether different question.

Mr. BENNETT. The hon. gentleman has not denied that there was an agreement. I will put it another way.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. I do not think you can put it on this vote.

Mr. BENNETT. In the event of this grant being made for Digby this year, does the minister think that it will be beneficial to the municipality that the municipality should enter into a contract with any member of parliament to use his efforts to induce the government to make a grant, or does he think it would be to the interest of the country that a member of parliament should place himself in the position of a suppliant at the door of the department urging them to make a grant? An investigation has been conducted in the Public Accounts Committee as to the affairs of the Collingwood Dry Dock Company. From the papers produced there it is quite plain that the member for North Simcoe (Mr. L. G. McCarthy) is promoting the interests of that company for the purpose of gaining a subvention of \$300,000. Will it be to the interest of that company to still engage the services of the law firm of which the hon. member for North Simcoe (Mr. L. G. McCarthy) is a member, in order that the company may secure a continuance of that grant?

Mr. FISHER. I do not think the hon. gentleman should discuss another item, which will come up later, on this item. I am not going to express an opinion on a supposititious case. When there is a case in concrete form before the House I will certainly be ready, as a minister, to express an opinion, but not to express an opinion on a supposititious case, and I am not going to express an opinion on another case under this vote. I do not think he should discuss the Collingwood dry dock under this item.

Mr. BENNETT. I am discussing the Digby grant.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: In committee we can only discuss what is referred to us, and this refers to the Digby vote.

Mr. FOWLER.

Mr. BENNETT. This will be particularly well ventilated on the public platform.

Mr. SPROULE. I rise to a point of order. I think any member is quite within his rights, in connection with the harbour improvements and repairs—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. At Digby.

Mr. SPROULE. On harbour improvements and repairs at Digby, he is quite within his province and his rights in discussing it.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. But not at Collingwood.

Mr. SPROULE. But at Digby.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. Yes.

Mr. SPROULE. I understood the hon. member was prevented from discussing this question because he had been referring to something that occurred in the past. The member for East Simcoe (Mr. Bennett) was quite within his rights in discussing anything in connection with that harbour.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. We are in committee on certain items.

Mr. BENNETT. I ask the minister whether it will be to the advantage of the town of Digby to employ that hon. member, or some other hon. member from that province or another province, to fee and pay the member for Simcoe? He will not be making any contract with the government at all, there will be no violation of the Independence of Parliament Act. It may be a question of public ethics whether a municipality seeking a grant from the government should think it necessary to go to a member of parliament and ask his assistance. So far as I am concerned, I will give the public every opportunity of learning the facts, which are admitted, that the people of Digby thought that it would be to their interest as a municipality in asking a grant to fee the member a very substantial and handsome sum of money in order that the claim might progress through the department. If the minister thinks that is right, it may be well for other municipalities to know it, so that they can act accordingly. We have the Digby case right under the vote.

Mr. FISHER. No, it is not.

Mr. BENNETT. Is it not a Digby vote?

Mr. FISHER. Yes, but my hon. friend for Digby (Mr. Copp) has said that there is no such contract, and the hon. member for Simcoe (Mr. Bennett) has to accept his statement.

Mr. FOWLER. He did not say that.