

Right Hon. W. S. Fielding, Minister of Finance, justifies me in laying bare all facts that I believe the people of Nova Scotia should know with regard to the hon. gentleman who has the honour to have a seat in this House. Now my hon. friend wants to know also what the two members for Halifax were doing in this parliament for the last two years—that they never let a yap out of them.

Mr. DOUCET: We are hearing the yaps now.

Mr. FINN: Yes, quite a few yaps. I would like to say to my hon. friend that before I had the honour of a seat in this House, when I was in provincial politics and moved into a larger field, where I would be expected to assist in advancing the interests of the port of Halifax. I, as a member of the government of Nova Scotia, interested myself in and studied the freight rate question. As a result of my work—and I do not say this as a compliment to myself, but in vindication of my position which was assailed by the junior member for Halifax—I was asked by a representative delegation of forty gentlemen from the provinces of New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, to accompany them and be their spokesman in the presentation of their case to the late government of which the right hon. leader of the opposition was prime minister. That delegation arrived in Ottawa, and at twelve noon on June first, 1921, we met the Prime Minister of Canada, and every member of his government I think but one. A meeting was then arranged by the then Minister of Public Works, the Hon. F. B. McCurdy, and I presented to the government the situation in reference to the Maritime provinces, both the grievance and the remedy. I may say that prior to doing that, in the legislature of Nova Scotia in the session of 1921, I moved a resolution which was seconded by the leader of the opposition then, Mr. Laurie Hall, K.C. I went up to Fredericton, and discussed with the government the advisability of securing a resolution of the same character from the legislature of New Brunswick. That resolution was drafted by myself, discussed with them and no change was made. It was moved by the Premier of the province of New Brunswick and seconded by the leader of the opposition, Mr. Baxter, who now has the honour of a seat in this House. That resolution read as follows:

Now be it hereby declared to be the sense of this House of Assembly of the province of Nova Scotia that the faithful observance of the terms and conditions of the compact of confederation and a generous national spirit require that the convenience, accommodation and welfare of the people and of the in-

[Mr. Finn.]

dustrial interests of the Maritime provinces be steadily kept in view as the primary purpose to be achieved in the administration of the Intercolonial railway:

And that such railway having been constructed to serve a special purpose should be administered upon principles adapted to affect such purpose and as a separate system, giving such advantages in freight and other rates to the people of the Maritime provinces as will afford them access to the markets of other provinces of the Dominion upon such terms as will admit them to a fair competition.

And that adherence to the spirit of confederation requires that such change in the administration be made at once as will remove the conditions disadvantageous to the Maritime provinces which at present exist.

That resolution was passed unanimously, as also was the resolution by the legislature of the province of Nova Scotia, in the year 1921, some three years ago. Two years before that I appeared before the Railway Commission of Canada presenting the views of the province of Nova Scotia, I was associated with the hon. Minister of National Defence (Mr. Macdonald) in representing the interests of the Maritime provinces, and I think he represented the province of New Brunswick at that time. There are just two paragraphs of my submissions to the government that I am going to read.

These, Sir, are some of the reasons that move the people and governments of the Maritime provinces to come to you to-day and ask you to preserve our rights to allow us to participate in the great industrial development of Canada by enabling us to secure markets in central and western Canada.

And I closed by saying:

These are some of the reasons that I submit for your consideration. The matter is one which is in the heart and mind of the people of the Maritime provinces. We are a unit in this thing. We are not representing any party or any creed or any race, but are asking that the terms of confederation, which were guaranteed to us in 1867, be carried out. Thus shall we go on and work out our destiny, which I believe to be great; and I am sure the people of the Maritime provinces will appreciate any effort on your part, Mr. Premier, and the part of your government, to give to us in the Maritime provinces that which we deserve, that which is our right, and that which we intend to hold fast and tenaciously.

I am going to state what the Prime Minister, now the hon. leader of the opposition, said in reply to our presentation. He said 11 p.m. that it opened up a new avenue to him of thought. There were some things that he had not known in the presentation which were food for thought. He said unfortunately that he had to leave immediately for England to attend the Imperial Conference, and that the thing that worried him was "to find the right and do it".

I will be fair to the leader of the opposition and will admit that he did not retain the office of Prime Minister for any length of time, so that perhaps he had not an opportunity of