

by the committee and disposed of this evening. How best to approach the matter is simply a question of procedure. My anxiety, and that of my honourable friend opposite, I take it, is to clear the good name of the Senate.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I think I have made clear my desire to co-operate with my honourable friend.

The Hon. the SPEAKER: It is moved by Hon. Mr. Willoughby, seconded by Hon. Mr. Robertson, that a special committee be appointed—

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: If Your Honour will permit me, I would suggest that the mandate should not be a formal one.

Hon. Mr. WILLOUGHBY: No. I do not care how informal it is.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: It is not necessary for His Honour the Speaker to put the question. We can go into an informal conference.

Hon. Mr. WILLOUGHBY: I suppose the Clerk will require some official record.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: We shall report.

Hon. Mr. WILLOUGHBY: I think we had better proceed in the regular way.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: My honourable friend must not forget that the Senate cannot take any position officially, because there is nothing before it. We are expecting that there will be something before us, but just now there is not; so our procedure is somewhat informal, and I am ready to confer informally.

Hon. Mr. WILLOUGHBY: We will assume that the honourable gentleman is going to attend.

The Hon. the SPEAKER: Shall I put the motion?

Hon. Mr. WILLOUGHBY: No.

SAINT JOHN HARBOUR LOAN BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. Mr. WILLOUGHBY moved the second reading of Bill 134, an Act to provide for a further loan to the Saint John Harbour Commissioners.

Hon. W. E. FOSTER: Honourable members, even at the risk of incurring the displeasure of honourable members for taking up the time of the House at this late date, when they are eager to get away, I take this opportunity to place upon Hansard some of the advantages which the port of Saint John

offers to the shippers of Canada. At the same time I desire to place upon record what in my opinion is ample justification for the appropriation of some \$10,000,000 under this Bill.

Before dealing with the subject-matter of my remarks, I wish, on behalf of the people of the city of Saint John and the surrounding territory, which I have the honour to represent in this House, to express appreciation of the many kind messages and expressions of regret received from all parts of Canada following the disastrous fire that visited the city of Saint John and swept away a large portion of the harbour front, on the western side of the harbour, the construction of which entailed the expenditure of much money and the sacrifice of much time.

This Bill, honourable members, provides moneys for the reconstruction of at least a portion of the harbour front. I understand that it is the intention of the Commission to use \$5,000,000 of the amount for the reconstruction of a portion of the burnt-over area, and to expend \$5,000,000 towards the completion of a program laid out at the time of the formation of the first Harbour Commission, of which I had the honour of being the chairman. I trust that the shippers of Canada will take note of the decision of the harbour authorities to have the reconstructed area ready for business, and capable of accommodating that portion of Canada's trade which naturally would go through the port of Saint John, by the time the waters of the St. Lawrence are frozen over and its harbours lose their usefulness for some five months.

I congratulate the Government upon the introduction of this measure and the prompt manner in which it has dealt with what I regard as a matter of national importance. Its promptness emphasizes the fact that it has recognized that the port of Saint John is one of Canada's national ports, and as such should be equipped in such a manner as will insure the proper and efficient handling of a large part of the products of the manufacturers and agriculturists of this country.

Unfortunately Saint John has not always been recognized as one of Canada's national ports. During the Confederation overtures it was stated that not only would rail communication with the Maritime Provinces be established, but the ports of those provinces would be built up and proper facilities installed in order that the products of Canada would flow through Canadian ports instead of through Boston, Portland, Baltimore, and other American ports on the Atlantic. During the discussion of the Confederation pact very