

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: There are some rules that apply to ordinary courtesy, and my hon. friend ought to know them.

Mr. MEIGHEN: The hon. gentleman had better hold his own followers to that rule.

Mr. LAPOINTE: I have nothing to complain of concerning what my right hon. friend has done or said; it is like him, absolutely. He cannot induce me to say anything against the late Sir David Watson. The committee understands how delicate the subject is under the circumstances, so I will confine myself to stating again that I think no minister of the Crown, on whatever side of politics he may be, can, in his capacity as head of a department, co-operate with a deputy minister or the chairman of a board under his jurisdiction when these officials are assailing each other every morning in the newspapers, politically or otherwise. It would simply be stupidity to take any other course than was taken, and were I placed again in the same position I would act exactly as I did.

Now, my right hon. friend, in his very insinuating way, has said that he does not know about the commissioners of Montreal because he has not yet moved for the correspondence. Let me tell him that as soon as this Government took office the harbour commissioners of Montreal sent in their resignations. They did it in a very courteous way, and they were pleased to welcome the new commissioners who were appointed by this Government.

Mr. MARCIL (Bonaventure): Did not the chairman of that board previously resign to become a candidate in St. Antoine?

Mr. LAPOINTE: The chairman had resigned to become a candidate for my right hon. friend in St. Antoine, and the two other commissioners resigned as soon as this Government took office. The Montreal Gazette, which is a respectable organ of my right hon. friend and has always been a Conservative newspaper, had something to say about that. The Gazette certainly does not share the opinion of my right hon. friend as to the co-operation which should exist between the Government or the Minister of Marine and Fisheries and the harbour commission of any port. Here is what the Montreal Gazette said in an editorial in its issue of February 1, entitled "The Harbour Board," in which it welcomed the appointments made by the Government:

The office of Harbor Commissioner has always been political in the sense that its occupants come and go with the changing governments at Ottawa, and in view of the intimate relation between the port and the Government there can be no objection to this procedure. Montreal is the national port of Canada. Physical conditions have made it such, and on the progressive development and capable administration of the port depends not a local but a Dominion-wide interest. For progressive development it is desirable that the Harbor Board should be persona grata to the ministry at Ottawa, a fact of which no one is more conscious than the recently resigned commissioners after a period of exceptional progress, and good service.

I would not go as far as the Montreal Gazette did.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Neither would I.

Mr. LAPOINTE: But I still maintain that when the chairman of a harbour commission is not only a strong political partizan, but takes an active part in political warfare; when he is the publisher of a newspaper which attacks the Government every morning, and when he assails the Minister of Marine and Fisheries under whom he is supposed to act—that is a condition of things which nobody in the House and nobody in the country would tolerate. I would not have been true to myself; I would not have been true to the position I occupy, had I been willing to permit such a condition to continue.

Mr. MARCIL (Bonaventure): I do not want to assail the present Harbour Commissioners of Quebec, but I think the right hon. leader of the Opposition might complain if he were in my position. The first appointment made by the new harbour board was that of Captain Ambroise Landry as harbour master of the port of Quebec. Captain Landry was the man who sought to be my opponent in Bonaventure county four years ago. He was actually in the running; his nomination papers had been prepared, but he was pulled off by the Quebec committee, and

Mr. Philippe Furois put in his place. I think the new harbour board of Quebec must be pretty liberal in their views when they appoint as harbour master a man who had been willing to be a Conservative candidate in the constituency.

Mr. MEIGHEN: He is not a commissioner.

Mr. MARCIL (Bonaventure): No, but he acts under these gentlemen who have been appointed by the present minister.