

tion spends it, and we should reflect, before we come to the idea of a port doing everything, that we must dredge the river St. Lawrence to make a port at Montreal. We dredged the St. Lawrence and made the port, and they get the honour of the whole thing because they carry on the immediate necessities of the port itself. I hold the view that, after the port is put in proper shape, it should be managed locally under local engineers and everything done in a first class manner, but the commerce and shipping of the world should be as free as possible. I am in favour of free ports, and I do not want to be taxing shipping at all, because it is in the interest of this country that our ports should be free. I am sure, if things were better after the flood than before the flood, during the flood, at all events, all the ports were free.

Mr. BALLANTYNE: The hon. member for Guysborough (Mr. J. H. Sinclair) has made a most effective reply to the leader of the Opposition, so that really I have not much to say. The hon. member for Guysborough has shown that he has a very thorough knowledge, not only of the ports of Canada, but of the ports of the world. I wish, however, to say in reply to the leader of the Opposition, that whether our ports are nationalized and operated by a local harbour commission, appointed by the Governor in Council, or whether the improvements in the various ports are carried out by the Department of Public Works, the Government in both cases is the owner. Everything within the boundaries of the ports of Montreal, Quebec, and Vancouver which are under commissions at the present time, belongs to the Government, and the lands are Crown lands. I agree with the leader of the Opposition in so far as he goes in that direction, but where I would differ from him, in all friendliness, would be when he thinks that the improvements in those ports can be better carried out by the Department of Public Works than by a local commission appointed by the Governor in Council.

The personnel of these boards has been of a very high order. Our commissioners at the ports of Montreal and Quebec are among the leading citizens and most successful business men of those cities. It is also necessary at our big seaports for our commissioners to have a staff of the most highly skilled technical and engineering experts that can be obtained. With all due respect to the engineers of the Public Works Department, I say that there is not an engineer in that department to-day who

[Mr. McKenzie.]

has as full a knowledge as is necessary of the development of ports to see that the improvements are of the character that the port demands, and that the work is properly carried out. When I had the honour of being one of the Montreal Harbour Commissioners during the big development years of that port we had to send to England and bring out an engineer from the port of Bristol to supervise the carrying out of the large plans. I am thoroughly convinced that when the harbour commissioners are appointed, if we get the proper men, and we have so far, the public interest will be better safeguarded and the work will be carried out more in keeping with the demands of the ports than if the work were done by the Department of Public Works. Some of the ports of Canada could tell a sorry story about the facilities that have been decided upon rather hurriedly without proper thought, but I will not go into that. I have, however, a very intimate knowledge of the mistakes that were made at the port of Montreal and other ports by the Department of Public Works, and to avoid such mistakes being made in the future I am a thorough believer in the Government appointing harbour commissioners to look after our ports. I am therefore in thorough accord with my hon. friend from Antigonish (Mr. Sinclair).

Mr. BURNHAM: I should like to correct the impression which will probably go out to the country, coming as it does from the hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Clark), that the expenditure of money on our harbours is necessitated by the policy of protection. When a nation or the public assume a burden for the benefit of a private interest, that is protection. In England all the taxes in connection with the development of the ports of London, of Liverpool and of the Manchester ship canal, for instance, have been assumed by the public for the benefit of the shipping industry. It is a bonus or subsidy to encourage the shipping companies. Steamship companies are subsidized. Now that is pure unadulterated protection.

Mr. M. CLARK: I am delighted to find that my hon. friend from Peterborough is in perfect harmony on this shipping question with the hon. gentleman who leads the Opposition, but I have the gravest possible doubts whether the two gentlemen combined will be able to commend their views to this House and the country after a careful study of the methods by which