

ciple as laid down by the Prime Minister, yet it seems to me, in view of the specific provisions in the statutes setting up those harbour commissions, that before it will be practicable to adopt that principle of making our ports free, or making them cheaper, in order that they may better compete with American Atlantic ports, it will be necessary to do some recasting of the whole harbour commission administration. I presume that the finances of the country, at the present time at all events, will not allow of such a thing; but let us hope that the principle that has been laid down by the Prime Minister may be put into operation in future years, so that the ports of Saint John and Halifax may reap the advantage from decrease in the rates, and become more attractive thereby.

I should like to point out that I have had numerous inquiries in regard to the cost of providing facilities in the port of Saint John. I have been asked to explain why the cost of a wharf or pier in the harbour of Saint John is greater than at some other points. This, of course, is due to the rise and fall of the tide in the Bay of Fundy. The necessity of providing about 25 feet of additional height to allow for the rise of the tide increases the cubic content of such a construction. But the variation in the level of water in the Saint John harbour, as between the low and the high water, is no greater than that which prevails at some ports in other parts of the world; and when the plea is put forward that it is a detriment to shipping, we can only make comparisons with some other places.

I noticed that an honourable gentleman in the House stated the other day that the Montreal Harbour Commission had paid its interest every year. I am sure we all fully rejoice in that statement, but I would point out that the cost of providing a channel to the port of Montreal would naturally be based on the necessary provision for the shipping getting into the harbour. If the cost of construction in the harbour of Saint John is greater than it may be in Montreal, it is offset in various ways.

I have also heard the complaint that the rise and fall of tide that I speak of are detrimental to shipping, and I should like to place on record the fact that, though there is a considerable variation in the tide at Saint John, the disadvantages of such a variation are not confined to Saint John, for at Bristol there is a variation of 42 feet; at Avonmouth, 40 feet; at Newport—Bristol Channel, 38 feet; at Cardiff, 36½ feet; at Barrow Pier, 28 feet; at Liverpool, 27½ feet; and at Saint John, 26½ feet. I have already mentioned the

fact that while the rise and fall of the tide are considerable, they are more than equalled in other places. It will be observed from the figures I have given that the rise and fall of the tides at Saint John are not greater than those prevailing at some of the world's largest ports. They are practically identical with the variation at Liverpool.

I notice that some criticism has been made in the press of the provision in the Harbour Commission Act for the repayment of a certain amount of money to the City of Saint John. I should like to read a statement from a newspaper published in one of the large centres of this country. I have been too long in public life to find fault with newspapers. One of the functions of an editor is to give expression to his views. He has the advantage of reaching very many more people than can be reached by ordinary mortals, and therefore he should be more careful in his statements. I had something to do with the drafting of the provisions of the Harbour Commission Act, but I do not want to deal with this newspaper comment except to say it is misleading and unfair. It says:

The smoke had not cleared from the ruins of the fire-swept St. John, N.B., terminals before the spirit of the Maritimes asserted itself. A ringing call went out from the great winter port for the press of Canada to rally to the aid of the stricken port and persuade the Government to replace the structure destroyed by the conflagration. And accompanying that call was a heart-rending story of how St. John had fought, bled and died to attain its supremacy as the greatest political port in Canadian history.

It appears that the city actually did some building on its own account and at its own expense. It is declared that it spent \$3,000,000. At least that is the amount recovered from the Federal Government when the port was nationalized three years ago. And the industry and zeal displayed in recovering that sum was worthy of the best traditions of the Province down by the Sounding Sea.

Now, not only the buildings and wharves sold to the Government are gone, but all the structures since built by the Government as well. And St. John sorrows for the loss of what may prove to have been years of misspent political pull.

As I have already pointed out, certain facilities were provided by the port of Saint John at a critical period of time. I sometimes wonder what the pork packers and the munition workers in some parts of Canada would have done during the war period if the City of Saint John had not gone down into its pockets and expended that \$3,000,000. I want to make it clear that the interest on that sum has not been paid by Canada, for the Harbour Commission has up to the present provided the interest and sinking fund upon that amount out of the revenues of the