

and that the senators serving on it will not leave all the investigating to the members of the House of Commons. I hope they will get all the facts before them, so that if and when the combines legislation comes before us they will be able to tell us what they have learned.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Gordon B. Isnor: Honourable senators, I should like to approach this debate from the standpoint of one mentioned by the honourable leader of the opposition (Hon. Mr. Haig), namely, the retailer. I, too, have read this interim report several times and have done so with a great deal of interest. I wanted to find the definition of such things as the maintenance of resale prices by the individual supplier, and to study the presentations made by the various organizations or individuals who appeared before the MacQuarrie Committee.

Before dealing directly with the resolution and the material contained in the interim report, may I compliment the acting leader of the government (Hon. Mr. Hugessen) on his selection of twelve members to represent the Senate on the proposed joint committee? The procedure in selecting them was different from that followed by the government in setting up the MacQuarrie Committee. The Honourable J. H. MacQuarrie, a member of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia, appointed as chairman of that committee, is a man held in high esteem in his native province. I had the honour to sit with him in the Legislature of Nova Scotia from 1928 to 1935. We in the Maritimes have a great deal of respect for his judgment, integrity and honesty. There is no doubt that the other members of the MacQuarrie Committee are also men of high character and judgment, but they are all more or less of the professional class. None of them could be exactly termed as being in the commercial field—experienced retailers, wholesalers or manufacturers—and therein, I think, lies a weakness in so far as the report is concerned. On the other hand, as I mentioned a moment ago, I am very pleased to note that the acting leader of the government chose not only four barristers—I suppose it is always necessary to have legal advisers in the membership of a committee—but in addition chose two farmers, two lumber operators, one machinist, one businessman, a manufacturer, and one whom I would term a business manager.

Hon. Mr. Hugessen: May I interrupt my honourable friend for just a moment? I do not want to take credit where none is due. It was not I who was responsible for naming the members of the committee.

Hon. Mr. Isnor: I can only go on the fact that the honourable acting leader presented the resolution in which the committee was named. If credit is due to someone else I know he will be good enough to pass along my comments in that connection.

Now, honourable senators, in a country as large as Canada, where manufacturers sell from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the cost of operating is naturally much greater than in a smaller area with a larger population. I think it is recognized as a common business maxim that it is easier to sell to a nearby community than to one that is far distant. With this in mind, I think it would be safe to say that in the two central provinces, Ontario and Quebec, with their combined population, amounting to 66 per cent of the total population of Canada, and with their concentrated buying power and their industrial life, a manufacturer would be able to sell to better advantage than if he extended his activities to the extreme east and west of the country. I mention that as a background because I propose to show that that is a factor in the resale price maintenance policy.

Briefly, my remarks are based on the fact that manufacturers in central Canada, by fixing resale prices, are extending to the eastern and western sections of the country a business arrangement which places these sections on an equal basis with the central provinces. While this object may be achieved in some other way, I think this is one factor in favour of the price maintenance policy.

As before stated, our domestic trade is broad and complicated, including as it does the transportation and distribution of goods within the country through the media of railways, steamships, and wholesale and retail stores. Such operations, even if they do not produce material goods, add substantially to the national income. The distribution of goods at both the wholesale and retail levels and the production of those services which cater to Canadians as consumers constitute a phase of our economy in which increased interest is being shown. I think that is very definitely indicated by the representations that were made to the MacQuarrie Committee, and by the representations which, I gather from a statement of the Minister of Justice, were made by people who wish to have this matter referred to a joint committee of both houses.

I should have thought that any legislation covering matters so vitally concerned with our domestic trade and the relations between the manufacturer, wholesaler and retailer, would have been withheld by the government until the 1951 census was completed. That