

I noted his figures, and the percentage of increase that he gave was about 25 per cent in one case and 30 per cent in the other. These increases may be typical. Figures disclose that Canadian consumers spent \$1,200 million for automobiles and electrical goods in 1948, and the honourable member from Churchill pointed out that in that year Canadian consumers paid \$3 million more for these two classes of goods than did the American consumers. The reason is obvious. It is because of our general economic structure. If it develops that prices in the whole field of primary goods should become the American prices plus 10 per cent, the result will be an almost intolerable condition which will have terrific social consequences. I want to emphasize the seriousness and the ramifications of this condition—and I am sure there is only one answer to it and that is to have increased competition.

Hon. Mr. Horner: I would point out that a duty is paid on Canadian cattle entering the United States.

Hon. Mr. Robertson: Yes, that is true, but I am hoping that under the arrangements which are to be made this duty will be lessened if not withdrawn entirely. I am sure that my honourable friend from Blaine Lake (Hon. Mr. Horner) is also hopeful of this. It is a perfectly natural way to feel, and I know that I would like to see the duty removed from every product that is exported to the United States from Nova Scotia. Again I say that in my opinion there is only one solution to this problem, and that is the greater production of economically made goods or, in other words, greater competition.

As the honourable gentleman from Toronto-Trinity (Hon. Mr. Roebuck) and the leader opposite (Hon. Mr. Haig) pointed out, the measure before us is only temporary and palliative, and is being introduced for the purpose of trying to curtail too much purchasing at a particular time. I think the answer is to have sufficient goods to go around. So far as the members of the Atlantic Pact are concerned, the solution is to remove as quickly as possible the obstructions to the free flow of trade between themselves.

Hon. Mr. Horner: In your opinion the answer is not a 40-hour week?

Hon. Mr. Robertson: The 40-hour week really has no significance here. The object of those who want a 40-hour week is not to be restricted to working 40 hours a week, but to get a higher rate of pay for any time worked over the 40 hours.

Hon. Mr. Horner: But surely fewer goods are produced in a 40-hour week?

Hon. Mr. Robertson: It does not necessarily follow that because a 40-hour week is adopted a man cannot work more than that length of time. For instance, it is immaterial whether a farmer work 365 full days a year or only lives on his farm two weeks in the spring and fall and spends the rest of his time—as I have been told is the case with one farmer from southern Saskatchewan—in a comfortable hotel suite. Some farmers are wealthy; some are not. Some run their business one way and some in another. The important factor is to have the greatest possible competition, and I suggest that for one reason or another competition has not had a chance in the last five years.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Arthur W. Roebuck: Honourable senators, the advantage in closing a debate is that the speakers who proceed you cover most of the ground, but there are one or two points that are worthy of mention at this time. My honourable friend from Rosetown (Hon. Mr. Aseltine) was concerned about the farmer who might want to purchase agricultural implements on time, and he expressed the hope that such buying would not be prohibited under this Act.

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: How do we know it will not be?

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: We do not know. Paragraph (b) of section 2 of the bill reads as follows:

"Consumer goods," means any goods or class of goods declared by the Governor in Council to be consumer goods for the purposes of this Act.

In other words, as long as they are goods to be consumed, they are considered to be consumer goods and may be so classified under this Act.

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: What does consumption mean?

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: I suppose it means to use up. The goods of the particular type to which my honourable friend referred are usually described in financial circles as producer goods. It would be unheard of for producer goods to be included as consumer goods under a bill of this kind. Producer goods were not included in the last Act, and I am sure they will not be included in this one. The honourable member from Rosetown wants to know what steps are to be taken under this bill. I should like to know that too, if it were possible.

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: I think we should be given some information about it.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: Well, I can assure my honourable friend that none is available.