

*Combines Investigation Act*

by the laws of our country, that we are not providing any obstacles, even if only psychological obstacles, that can easily be removed.

When I made that statement I was authorized to speak, and was speaking, on behalf of my friends here in the house. That was the position, after very careful consideration of this very ticklish and difficult problem, that the Liberal party had decided to take on the matter. We had decided to take the view that even though there might be some slight risk—and we recognize there might be some risk—that such combinations for the purpose of promoting Canadian exports might become a cloak or might have effects in the domestic market which would by themselves be undesirable, for the greater good of the country and indeed the greater good of a majority of consumers, in view of the tremendous extent to which the income of the Canadian people, particularly of the people in certain provinces, is dependent upon our income from exports, that balancing the two, one against the other, it was in the national interest to move such an amendment.

Now, sir, I am glad to say that the arguments we put forward there and, perhaps more than the arguments, the knowledge that the Liberal opposition had taken this up officially as its policy, caused the government to change its mind. Let no one be under any illusion about this matter. The amendment we are now considering, for which we intend to vote and which I admitted quite frankly yesterday is better drafted than mine was, would not have been offered at all if it had not been for the stand I was asked to take in the banking and commerce committee on behalf of the Leader of the Opposition and our party on the last day the committee sat on this bill.

In view of some of the things that were said yesterday, and in view of the obvious efforts of certain members opposite to get on this band wagon and try to make it appear that in some way this was their doing, I think the record ought to be set straight.

**Mr. Fulton:** The hon. member has made what he alleges to be a statement of fact, and I wish to say at once and immediately following what he has said that his statement of fact is not correct. It is not the case that this amendment would not have been offered had it not been for the motion made in the committee by the Liberal opposition. It is true that I had indicated in the banking and commerce committee throughout that I was concerned as to the appropriateness of offering an amendment while a case was still under discussion before the commission and up to the time I had last previously spoken in the

banking and commerce committee I had not been able to see my way around the difficulties.

But I had indicated clearly that we were considering the matter. I was considering the matter. I had discussions with a number of our own members, and I told them that the government and the minister were prepared at any time they could come to the conclusion that an amendment could be drafted to submit one to the house. I repeated that on the day the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate has referred to, Monday, July 18. It was not by any means simply because he had presented an amendment that we came to the conclusion that an amendment could be drafted and that we were justified in drafting and submitting an amendment at this time.

My hon. friend probably will not accept my assurance on this point. No more do I accept his statement or interpretation of why this amendment is now before the house. But hon. members on this side, with whom I had discussions both before and after he offered his amendment, will know perfectly well the truth of what I say, and they will know that it is a gross exaggeration, and immodest exaggeration for the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate to say it is simply because he moved this amendment that the house now has one before it from the government.

**Mr. Pearson:** Mr. Chairman, may I ask the minister, who now so passionately claims the parentage of the idea of this amendment, why, having regard to the months, indeed, the year or so when they were drafting their amendments, this idea did not appear in the bill when it was submitted to the house after all the consideration that was given to the matter by them?

**Mr. Fulton:** This and all sorts of other ideas occurred to us.

**Mr. Pearson:** You did not put it in the bill.

**Mr. Howard:** Mr. Chairman, from the activities of both the Liberals and the Conservatives I know they are very excellent band wagon climbers, and therefore it is doubtful whether the accusation of the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate should be treated too seriously. However, I think he did place some of the facts before the banking and commerce committee in a little different light. Trade is an extremely important matter because we depend so much upon it; but because we have been in so much difficulty since approximately the middle of 1957 in our trading relationships with other countries I hope the Conservative government and its supporters will not think that the change now being made in this legislation is a cure-all for our trade problems. I trust they will not