

for the purpose of contrasting the policy embodied in it with some policies of the present Government which to my mind are worthy of a great deal more commendation than this. As has been said, this Bill is intended to carry out the policy announced during the last election. A few days ago, when my honourable friend introduced the Bill providing for a treaty with Australia, I indulged for a moment the hope and the belief that it indicated a change of mind on the part of the present Government in regard to the tariff. In my opinion that treaty with Australia points the way to the best solution of Canada's economic difficulties. I hoped that the policy exemplified by that treaty would be chosen in preference to the policy enunciated in the present Bill. Increasing the tariff to the extent that it is done in this measure is not to my mind a happy way of dealing with the difficulties of the present situation. I think that the more closely world conditions are examined, and the more intensely the result of high tariff in other countries is studied, the more apparent it becomes that the building up of high tariff barriers will not solve the present economic situation of the world or the problems of Canada.

The motion was agreed to, and the Bill was read the second time.

THIRD READING

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON moved the third reading of the Bill.

Hon. Mr. BUREAU: Before the Bill is read the third time I should like to ask a question of the Minister. Did I understand him to state that goods now shipped to Canada on a through bill of lading, in a British bottom, got the benefit of the preferential tariff? Does he claim that that is new legislation?

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: Yes, I think the clause refers to the possibility of goods shipped on a through bill of lading, and transhipped from one port to another, coming through to a Canadian port.

Hon. Mr. BUREAU: That has always been the law.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: Oh, no.

Hon. Mr. BUREAU: Let me read the law as it is given in the note to the Bill:

Section 5. "(2) Goods entitled to the benefits of the British Preferential Tariff shall be entitled to the discount authorized by this section, when such goods are shipped on a through bill of lading consigned to a consignee in a specified port in Canada, when such goods are transferred at a port of a British colony or possession not enjoying the benefits of the British Preferential Tariff, and conveyed without further transhipment into a sea or river port of Canada."

Now the words "of a British colony or possession not enjoying the benefits of the British Preferential Tariff" are changed to the words, "in a British possession and conveyed without further transhipment into a sea, lake or river port of Canada." That is all the difference. It has always been the law, except for a slight change of the wording.

The motion was agreed to, and the Bill was read the third time, and passed.

OLD AGE PENSIONS BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON moved the second reading of Bill 136, an Act to amend the Old Age Pensions Act.

He said: Does my right honourable friend want any details?

Right Hon. Mr. GRAHAM: My wants in regard to details are never supplied.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: This Bill makes only one change in the law that has been in effect for several years, since 1926 or 1927. Up to the present time the Federal Government, in co-operation with the Provincial Legislature, has undertaken to pay fifty per cent of the cost of old age pensions. By this measure it is proposed that the Federal Government shall bear seventy-five per cent of the total cost.

The reasons for that change are simple and need no lengthy explanation. Honourable members of the Senate, as well as members of the other House, are familiar with the provision of the Old Age Pensions Act, under which the authorities of a province, by accepting the terms of the Act, make it effective in that province and undertake to pay one-half of the cost. Two of the provinces, I think, apportion their cost jointly with the municipalities. Some of the older provinces, usually referred to as the Maritime Provinces, where persons over seventy years of age represented a much larger proportion of the total population than in the newer Western Provinces, found they were quite unable to bear the fifty-per-cent load that would be placed upon them by the operation of the Old Age Pensions law. Each of those provinces passed legislation which was, I believe, to become effective by proclamation, but they felt that they could not proclaim it until the Federal Act was somewhat changed to lighten the burden that would be placed upon them, and to make it correspond more closely with the burden resting on the newer provinces, with their smaller percentage of people seventy years of age or older.