

Dominion Succession Duty Act

wealth, namely that it is something that should be limited strictly to protecting the rights of widows for instance, who are left with families to rear and children who still must have their education and their start in life. Beyond that, however, society owes no debt whatever to any young man or any young woman. A young and healthy man or woman who has been trained and educated has then received from society all to which he or she is entitled.

Mr. Nicholson: Over the dinner hour, Mr. Chairman, I consulted the library and found "The History of Canadian Wealth", volume 1, by Myers. I, too, was interested in the comments this afternoon of the hon. member for Okanagan Boundary when he said he felt we would really take away an important incentive from the youth of Canada if we were to act upon the suggestions of my colleague the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway when he suggested that the British proposal to acquire 85 per cent of an estate, say, of \$5 million, would be a step which the Minister of Finance should consider.

The hon. member for Okanagan Boundary thought that 85 per cent was a very large amount to take, but my colleague from Kootenay West emphasized that it was not so much the amount of money taken that mattered, in a situation of that sort, but how much was left, and I think that a family which inherits an estate of \$5 million should not complain too much about having \$750,000 left. I suggest this amount will be enough to provide the hon. member for Okanagan Boundary with the indemnity he gets as member of parliament for 75 years, though he might not be able to live that long.

I think we should look at the legislation which is before us. It does provide that if an estate of \$5 million is left the amount is taxed as an initial rate on the aggregate net value of 20 per cent and then an additional 34 per cent. That would be 46 per cent for the estate, so if a deceased person had a widow and nine children, which, it is true would be quite a large family, they would be left with \$2,300,000 to be distributed—\$230,000 for each of them—and it would seem to me we should not lose too much sympathy on the dependants of Canadians who inherit that sort of an estate.

As I look through the "History of Canadian Wealth" I find chapters on the Hudson's Bay Company, the landed proprietors, the railroad promoters and so on, and I find that many of these fortunes have been created by special legislation passed by parliament. In this modern world, there is no self-made person; there is no one who acquires an estate of \$5 million as a result of hard work and savings.

I notice that some 80 years ago Sir John A. Macdonald made some remarks of which the present Minister of Finance might well take note. As reported in this "History of Canadian Wealth", a Mr. Donald A. Smith was accused in parliament of using his position as a member for the personal benefit of himself and his associates. Sir John A. Macdonald accused Smith of more warmly and strongly advocating a lease bill "which is in his own interest and which will put money in his pocket" than the minister who introduced it. Macdonald termed it a fraudulent measure. More opposition came from another house member, Mr. White, who said:

There seems to be a party in this house—a very prominent party—who cares more for the Hudson's Bay Company, the Montreal Bank and private matters than for the interests of the people of Manitoba

It is a mistake to think that any one person, as a result of skill and ingenuity, can create a great fortune today. I think we should remember that the wealth of this country, and of any country, is created as a result of the efforts of all the people in the country, and I think it is a mistake to assume that because one individual, as a result of special legislation, obtains control of a huge fortune his children and his grandchildren should escape the responsibility of having to make any useful contribution to society.

Just two years ago we passed through this house the famous pipe line legislation. There is no doubt that whoever is writing the history of Canada 50 years from now will be able to look back on that act of parliament and say that a Canadian parliament then made it possible for certain individuals in Canada to become rich at the expense of those who use the natural resources of this country.

Mr. Patterson: That is not true.

Mr. Nicholson: I am sure the hon. member who interrupted me, and particularly the member for Lethbridge—

Mr. Blackmore: I said nothing.

Mr. Nicholson: Well, I am sure some of his colleagues who have children and wish to prepare them to make the greatest contribution for the greatest good, will not wish to share the views of the hon. member for Okanagan Boundary who took exception this afternoon to this legislation which will result in all the people of Canada sharing to a greater extent than in the past these large fortunes being passed on to succeeding generations.

Resolution reported and concurred in.