

in Canada and Canadian manufacturers in general reduced their employment by 32 per cent. As a result, the 1929 level of employment was not regained until the early 1940s. But the textile industry reduced employment by only 8 per cent and had regained the 1929 level by 1934. When war was declared in 1939, Canada was indeed fortunate to have a textile industry and the equipment to supply the sudden demands for the armed forces and for our civilian population. In those days, as I know from my own experience, we supplied the Canadian Forces and the Canadian people and we were also able to supply various items needed by many of our allies. In fact, when the United States came into the war they were not as well equipped to take care of the sudden demands made on their textile industry as we in Canada had been, and we were able to supply a number of articles they needed. I mention this to show the importance of the industry to Canada and to point out that it is not unreasonable to suggest that in these uncertain times a nation is wise to encourage the maintenance of an industry which is capable of transforming itself almost overnight to take care of wartime requirements in addition to those of the civilian population.

In 1939, the textile employees, realizing the country was at war, responded eagerly to the new demands made upon them. They worked willingly in the national interest. Of course, they were paid extra for doing so but the fact remains that they were willing to do whatever they could to gear the industry to wartime demands. In many instances they worked more hours than the law allowed, but since it was wartime it was not too difficult to get permission from the Government to do this.

Honourable senators, there are people who will oppose this bill, and I suppose one cannot blame them for that. You will hear it said, as I have heard, that the Canadian textile and clothing industry is not up to date. This is absolutely wrong. The vast majority of textile and clothing manufacturing plants in Canada are as up to date and have as modern machinery as you will find anywhere in the world. The industry has the know-how and is capable of turning out goods equal to anything that can be produced anywhere, and I say this without fear of successful contradiction.

In making these remarks I am not suggesting that all textile products should be excluded from Canada. There are a number of textile products that can be used, and which in the past were used in Canada, but there are also many items entering this country that can be manufactured here. In many cases such items manufactured here are equal and sometimes superior to those coming in.

I spoke earlier today to a businessman of long experience, who is also a member of the Senate. I suggested that perhaps the quality of the imported fabric itself might be as good as that manufactured here, but the workmanship, the fit, and the finish did not compare. He immediately replied, "I question very much if even the quality of the fabric is equal." He went further and said that on rare occasions he had purchased some of these items, and had reached the conclusion that Canadian

manufactured articles in the textile and clothing industry were second to none in the world.

I am referring to a man who has had a good deal of experience in this field, my good friend the honourable senator from Halifax-Dartmouth, Senator Isnor, who has been in the textile business for many years. He and I have many things in common. We have never agreed on politics, but that has been his fault and not mine. All he had to do was to change his party and we could have agreed on that point. However, I was never able to convince him to do that, and I do not think he ever tried to persuade me to change.

It has been said that the textile and clothing industry is over-expanded. Such a view is not correct. It is true that in the last 15 or 20 years the industry has introduced a good deal of new and modern equipment, but even so the capacity of our textile mills has not increased in comparison with the increase in our population over a similar period.

One could say a good deal about the valuable effect that this bill will have on Canada's future economy. As I said earlier, many of these points can be discussed equally well in committee. I do not know to which committee the bill will be referred, but I hope honourable senators will give it serious consideration because I firmly believe that it affects one of our best industries.

I repeat, I am not suggesting that all textile goods should be excluded from Canada. A number of items are useful to our everyday requirements. When I mentioned this to Senator Isnor this afternoon he replied "Name a few of them," and there and then we had a little argument. When the matter is before the committee, I am sure that all honourable senators will reach the conclusion that this industry is worthy of our wholehearted support.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Sparrow, debate adjourned.

STATUS OF WOMEN

REPORT OF ROYAL COMMISSION—DEBATE CONCLUDED

The Senate resumed from Tuesday, March 2, the adjourned debate on the inquiry of Hon. Mrs. Casgrain calling the attention of the Senate to the Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada, dated 28th September 1970, and tabled in the Senate on Tuesday, 8th December 1970.

Hon. Paul Martin: Honourable senators, when the honourable Senator Casgrain was directing our attention to the report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women she expressed the hope that there would be an extended discussion on it, and that there would be at least an interim statement made on behalf of the Government with regard to it.

I now rise to make a few remarks about the report. I am sure that all honourable senators appreciate the initiative that has been taken by those women senators who have participated in the debate and by other honourable senators who have directed their attention to the findings of this important royal commission.

[Hon. Mr. Blois.]