

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: Only altered in language, perhaps.

Hon. Mr. MacARTHUR: No; I would say that to "fix" a thing is more positive than to "determine." The word "determine" would mean that some consideration had been given to it; "fix" would mean an arbitrary act.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: That may be my honourable friend's interpretation.

Hon. Mr. MacARTHUR: That is the general interpretation.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: It has occurred during recent years that almost all countries in the world except Canada have been increasing tariffs and increasing protection to labour and industry in their respective countries. Canada has been travelling in the opposite direction until a great many industries have found themselves unable to carry on competition with goods imported from other lands where living standards and wage standards were a great distance below those in Canada.

Some honourable member a little while ago referred to Japan. I know of an instance where a certain large concern, I think a departmental store, imported some 6,000 dozens of a certain article at a cost price quite below the possible cost of production in Canada; yet those goods were sold and are being sold today to the consumers of Canada in competition with the goods that are being manufactured in Canada, with the result that the manufacturers are being crowded to the wall and must of necessity give up the ghost unless they get relief. The consumer has not benefited. The Canadian manufacturer is well-nigh destroyed, and the foreign manufacturer, with his labour costing probably one-third that of the workman in Canada for similar service, is getting the business. So the proposal is that the Governor in Council, when the Minister of National Revenue finds such conditions existing to the detriment of Canadian trade and Canadian workmen, shall have the power to adjust the matter and fix the value so that at least the competition will be more nearly equal. I am sure that is a fair explanation, in a few words, of the purpose of this alteration.

With reference to tariffs generally, the fact remains that tariffs have suddenly or gradually been lowered in Canada, and I quite agree that such changes as were made in the post-war period were perhaps a mistake; but there were causes for them which I think we all appreciate. Inasmuch as the tendency has been growing worse from the standpoint of Canadian industry and Canadian employment, it became a question of national interest during the past few months, when the election

campaign took place. The leader of the present Government made positive declarations to the people of Canada as to what he would do if he were authorized by the people of Canada to put his policies into effect. Wisely or unwisely, the people of Canada approved his policy, and he is proceeding without delay, and as rapidly as is reasonably possible, to implement those promises, in the expectation and hope that he is going to assist in reviving industry and try to provide with employment thousands of people who are now out of work. So there are before this House proposals with respect to amendments to the Customs Act for the purpose of eliminating as far as possible unfair competition, and proposals for the purpose of encouraging industry to be more active than it has been.

The Prime Minister has gone a step farther and has launched upon a new idea, and is giving it effect: he proposes to protect not only the labourer, and the producer of natural products, but also the Canadian workman, and, last and most important of all, the Canadian consumer. He has obtained definite, clear-cut written declarations from producers that if they are given the opportunity to make Canadian products, prices will not be advanced. It is a great experiment, the results of which we cannot foretell until it has been tried out.

Surely it is evident that something different from what has been the case during the past year or more should be tried, because of the continued depression, and reduced prices in other countries of the world, which are dumping their goods into Canada and thus constantly decreasing the purchasing power of our people through depriving them of employment. It must be realized that the purchasing power of a nation depends upon the earning power of the people. So it is proposed that the people of Canada shall be given an opportunity to increase their earning power by increased employment, and that the consumer shall not be exploited.

Those are the principles that lie behind the legislation of this Bill and the Tariff Bill that is yet to come; and I suggest that it is the wish of the people of Canada, as expressed by the electorate recently, that those policies should be tried out and made effective. If they do not bring about the cure that is anticipated, then the Government itself must assume responsibility and realize that it has failed in its mission. I am convinced that it will not fail. I am convinced that, given the Canadian market, the Canadian manufacturer can supply the goods that the people use in their everyday life, just as Canada