

The Address—Mr. Balcom

I must accept it as my government and bear it allegiance, as I do. However, I would find it extremely difficult to pay my respects to a government that was elected otherwise than in the manner in which it has been elected. I respect my government because it has been elected in a free election. Let this parliament protect the political rights of our Canadian citizens and put its foot down on anyone, big or small, who will play with dynamite in our midst.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, may I refer to the sentence in the speech from the throne which reads as follows:

Much remains to be done before there can be permanent and durable peace in the world.

I regret that in this speech there is nothing to indicate that this government realizes the significance of that sentence. I regret that in his amendment the Leader of the Opposition fails to admit that free enterprise is a thing of the past.

Today we have monopoly enterprise. The issue today is who shall control monopoly enterprise. We cannot ever go back to free enterprise, no matter how much you wish it. It is a thing that belongs to the pages of history. The issue today is this. Shall the people, through their freely elected parliament, control the major industries of the nation in their own interests, or shall they be left to the whims of those who happen to have the management of the investment savings of the people and who claim those savings as their own and operate big industries therewith while paying a mere 3, 4, 5, or 6 per cent to the owners of life insurance policies and so on, yet who claim they are justly entitled to profits away over and above that. That is the issue today.

Here is a perfect example. I notice in the Canada Year Book, the issue of 1952-53, page 1132 and the pages immediately thereafter, a list of fire insurance companies registered with the dominion government. There is a list of their net premiums collected and the net claims they have had to pay since the year 1880. That is a long time, a period of 73 years. I must admit that not every year is given. For a long period only every fifth year is given. But for the last 11 years every year is given.

The statistics there show that not once have the companies, taken as a whole, sustained a loss. The consumer has always taken the rap. For the year 1951 the percentage of claims to net premiums paid was 38.71 per cent. If I may be permitted to do so I will leave out the odd numbers and speak in round figures. Out of \$134 million of premiums paid there were claims of but

\$52 million. If you take from the net earnings the refunds that they made to the policyholders; if you take off their income tax, and if you take off all other forms of tax on these companies, they still had left a net profit of over \$33 million. They had a net profit of \$33 million after income taxes and refunds to the policyholders. Before income tax, other taxes and refunds to policyholders they had a profit of \$46 million. Net claims paid, \$52 million; gross profits, \$46 million. There are 277 insurance companies in business. Where is the free competition? Where does the consumer get the break?

Mr. Speaker, I am now going to conclude. Canadians now know that there is no need for any of our citizens to be in want. Canadians also know that for the sake of our jobs, for the sake of our farms, for the sake of each and every one of us, and for the sake of world peace, our products must move in ever increasing quantities and with ever increasing speed to the hungry markets of the world.

Mr. S. R. Balcom (Halifax): Mr. Speaker, in entering the debate on the address in reply to the speech from the throne I shall endeavour to deal with the problems concerning my own constituency, namely Halifax, as briefly as possible. The problems are many, but I shall not speak on all of them today.

I should first like to join all those who spoke before me in congratulating the mover (Mr. Hollingworth) and the seconder (Mr. Villeneuve) of the address in reply to the speech from the throne. I am sure the people back in the constituencies of York Centre and Roberval must have been highly elated when they read the splendid, thought-provoking speeches of the two new members.

I should also like to congratulate those members of the house who have received promotions during the year. I might perhaps be forgiven if I single out our own minister, the hon. member for Queens-Lunenburg (Mr. Winters), who is now Minister of Public Works, and the hon. member for Shelburne-Yarmouth-Clare (Mr. Kirk) who has taken on the status of parliamentary assistant in that extremely important department, the Post Office.

The speech from the throne, which covers so much that is essential, to my mind has one omission that is too important to overlook. There is no reference to a Canadian merchant navy. I believe it was the speech from the throne at the 1911 session of parliament, which opened on November 11, which contained a proposal to establish a Canadian navy. At that time, as some hon. members will recall, reciprocity was more to the