

# Maritime Provinces Support Protective Tariff

Farmers Present Arguments for Tariff Reduction at Most of Hearings, However—Statement by Thomas Cantley on Coal and Steel Industries—Sessions in Charlottetown, Halifax, St. John and Moncton

**H**EARINGS of the tariff commission were renewed in Charlottetown, P.E.I., on November 4. On November 6 and 8 the commission was in Halifax, on November 9 in St. John, and on November 10 in Moncton. From the latter city it left for Quebec province.

Prince Edward Island is chiefly agricultural, in fact, it was pointed out that only 2 per cent. of the population are engaged in manufacturing. The evidence was therefore favorable to lower duties. The case for the farmers was presented by Hon. Walter M. Lea, commissioner of agriculture; M. H. MacGregor, J. A. Dewar, M.P.P., of New Perth, president of the United Farmers of the Province, and Edgar G. Godding, of Murray Harbor, president of the Central Farmers' Institute. Mr. Dewar submitted a written memorial. The others gave verbal testimony.

Agriculture received the most attention from the commission, the chairman asking many questions, and there was an interesting discussion between the commissioner of agriculture and himself. Mr. Lea declared that it was possible to increase the annual earning power of the island farms, which he estimated at thirty million dollars, to double that amount by more intensive cultivation and the use of more fertilizers. Mr. Lea said that as mixed farming prevails on the island a great variety of agricultural implements were required. The duty on these should be reduced, in order to increase production. As the island has very few manufacturers, there is no opportunity of encouraging home industries, as goods have to be purchased elsewhere. The manufacturers of Canada largely get the benefit of the present tariff, not the government.

Senator MacLean presented a memorial from seven starch manufacturers. The memorial said that the mills had a capacity of ten thousand tons, that they are not operating now because the farmers will not supply potatoes at the price offered—60 cents per hundred pounds—and that the starch industry on the island was in danger of being wiped out owing to cheap Japanese starch being dumped into Canada at a price below the cost of potatoes here. The prohibition of Japanese starch, it was urged, might be considered by the commission.

## Coal and Steel Industries

"A specific duty of \$1 per ton on all coal would so stimulate production and distribution as to make Canada within 10 years independent of all outside sources, and add enormously to the wealth of the Dominion," said Col. Thomas Cantley, chairman of the Nova Scotia Steel and Coal Co., addressing the commission in Sydney on November 6. "The effect would be widespread, giving a long column of long haul business to the Canadian National and other Canadian railways, while the annual food requirements of the mining population, say \$35,000,000, would all go to the farmers of Canada. Clothing and all the other necessities of life required by these miners, assorted labor and families would be supplied by Canadian manufacturers. The adverse trade balance with the United States would be materially reduced, with all the advantages accruing to Canada from such a condition. If the Nova Scotia coal companies granted the increased wages recommended by the Royal Commission, the cost of coal would be increased \$1.50 a ton."

Dealing with the steel industry, Col. Cantley said: "Nova Scotia blast furnaces and associated steel plants are wholly dependent upon Wabana, Newfoundland, ore, a considerable portion of which is won from submarine areas at a point one and a half or two miles from the surface hoisting plants. This ore, freighted by sea to North Sydney and Sydney, is subject to an export tax levied by the Newfoundland govern-

ment. The ore averages about 50 per cent. metallic iron and is used wholly in the blast furnaces of the Scotia and Dominion companies without the admixture of other ores, the product being pig iron, conveyed in a fluid state to basic open-hearth furnaces for conversion into steel ingots.

In conclusion, Col. Cantley appealed for "a revised tariff which would provide, by way of increased duties and the total abolition of the free list steel items, a substantial amount of protection to the coal, iron and steel industry of Nova Scotia, which has contributed so largely to the development and wealth of Canada, with but a very small return to shareholders."

## Varied Views in Halifax

Groups of representatives of the manufacturers, the fishing interests, the farmers, and the retail and wholesale merchants presented stated cases to the commissioners in Halifax. Nova Scotian farmers, represented by D. L. Taggart, president of the United Farmers of the Province, expressed themselves as being in favor of a substantial reduction in tariff on articles necessary to agriculturists. Mr. Taggart attributed the "languishing" of the agricultural industry and the depopulation of farms in part indirectly to a protective tariff which favored certain industries, enabling them to offer better wages and shorter hours than did the farms.

W. D. Piercey read the manufacturers' brief, which opened with the direct assertion that "the manufacturers (of Halifax and other parts of Nova Scotia), as a class, believe it to be in their interests, in the interests of the working men, of the consumers and the nation as a whole that a policy of protection, such as has been enforced since 1879, should continue to be the policy followed by the government of Canada."

A. H. Brittain, of Montreal, vice-president and general manager of the Maritime Fish Corporation, urged the case of the fishing interests. "The best interests of the Canadian consumers, as well as those of the fishermen, will be served by the continuance of the present duty on fresh fish. It will enable us to develop plans for marketing so as to make fresh fish available at reasonable prices to practically all communities in Canada," reads an extract from Mr. Brittain's brief.

## New Brunswick Hearings

In St. John, on Tuesday, representatives of several New Brunswick industries, including the fisheries, presented pleas for the maintenance of the present tariff, urging that in many cases large capital investments would be wiped out by the influx of United States surplus goods placed on the markets of Canada at lower-than-cost prices to drive Canadian industries to the wall. It was held that this could be done in many cases despite the Canadian dumping laws. Representatives of the farmers were also heard. These put forward the tariff planks in the United Farmers' party platform, urging the reduction or elimination of duties on implements of cultivation and necessities of life.

W. S. Fisher, on behalf of the manufacturers of New Brunswick, presented a statement in favor of continuation of a policy of adequate protection in Canada. It opened with the assertion that, to provide a home market for the agricultural products of the province, which, being the products of mixed farming, were not so readily exportable as the grains of the west, it was necessary there should be industrial expansion in the province. So, too, it was set forth that the natural resources here furnished scope for activity for many citizens, but to secure the capital for development had always been difficult and would be more so if there was a likelihood of a departure from the policy of adequate protection.