

know that competition is often blunted; I know that there are such things as price agreements; I know that there are such things as near-monopolies. I say, and I wish that every business friend of mine could hear me say, that we who believe in the private enterprise system have to see that there is real competition, and we should be prepared to say that in these cases—there are some, such as the telephone business where a monopoly or a near-monopoly is probably the sane and sensible thing—there should be regulations. We cannot have it both ways.

I wish to say also that I think we should be assiduous, astute and careful to find every way we can to produce real competition. I am not denying that it is not difficult. I am saying that those of us who believe in competition, must accept what I think Herbert Morrison once said in England: "We want private enterprise, not private unenterprise." Those of us who believe in competition should agree with that. I agree with it.

The other day I was struck by a speech of the late Sir Alfred Mond, which he made in the British House of Commons twenty-five years ago in an interesting debate with the late Right Hon. Philip Snowden. I commend it to hon. members. He said he had been told by an American business man when speaking of the efficiency of large combinations, that when one of them was unscrambled into its relative parts the relative parts had been able to do a more profitable job than had been done before; they were more efficient because they got rid of the deadening red tape and the overhead which were involved in the huge combinations. I was interested in that; and the other day I was interested and pleased to read that cost figures do not show that the largest companies have the lowest cost figure. I read a responsible publication—I am sorry I have not it here today—which showed that cost figures would indicate that it was the companies of moderate size which had the lowest cost. Therefore I say that there is no reason for those of us who believe in freedom, those of us who desire the largest possible area of free economy in the country, to feel that it cannot be efficient. If you look back on the record I suggest that any fair-minded man will admit if it can be kept free, if we can have competition, if we can have a system whereby individual energy and all the other incentives that can be applied, can be brought to bear and put to the fullest use along with regulations where they are necessary, that is where we get the incentive; that is how we shall get the production; and then we shall get the social security that we all desire.

[Mr. Macdonnell.]

Mr. BONA ARSENAULT (Bonaventure): We have listened to an able speech from the hon. member for Muskoka-Ontario (Mr. Macdonnell), but I am afraid that it is pretty hard for me to share some of his views on the subject. Last week the hon. member for Stanstead (Mr. Hackett)—I am glad to see him in the house this afternoon—challenged Quebec members representing rural constituencies to accept the control policy of this government. I am proud to say that I was one of those who rose and accepted the challenge, and I am glad to be permitted today briefly to express my view on this measure which provides for the continuation of certain orders and regulations of the governor in council for a limited period during the national emergency arising out of the war.

In spite of what we have just heard from the hon. member for Muskoka-Ontario, I am one of those who firmly believe that the Canadian people do not want to go back to the year 1921 and its wholesale price index of 225 with the cost of living index at 200. The Canadian people know that we cannot go back to 1929 and its miserable crash; that we cannot go back to the thirties and that awful period of economic crisis, of total unemployment and of shameful starvation for tens of thousands of Canadian people in a country of plenty. The Canadian people know that we cannot go back even to the year 1939 with its 700,000 unemployed Canadians. Therefore I am one of those who firmly believe that the horse and buggy days are over. If we are not to go back to these tragic years, then the hon. member for Stanstead or any of his colleagues who oppose this measure will have to devise a better means than that provided in this bill in order to protect the interests of the common people of Canada before I am convinced—and that also applies to my constituents—that I should not heartily support this bill. Whether we like it or not, that means holding on to the controls, and holding on to them as long as is essential for the common good of the Canadian people.

I will go farther than that. Not only does it mean the retention for the time being of such controls as we know to be beneficial to the Canadian people in order to hold and stabilize our post-war economy, but in many cases it also means the reimposition of some of the controls which have been lifted. I shall go still farther—and I am in good company, along with the hon. member for Quebec South (Mr. Power) and many other hon. members—and say that I believe it is possible—it should be possible—to devise some means