

here is a radical change in our policy, the enactment of a principle contrary to the very policy of the government, as announced and propounded last session; and that change has been made in this session when parliament was sitting, when it would have been the easiest thing possible for the minister to consult the representatives of the people. I wish one of the colleagues of the minister were here, I wish the Minister of Marine and Fisheries were here, so that he could repeat those words of denunciation which he thundered so eloquently against the Conservative government because, forsooth, they had dared to purchase one million of dollars' worth of arms in Great Britain while parliament was in session. Is this another one of those principles for which the Liberal party attacked the Conservative government, but which they now advocate?—with this difference, that in the case to which I refer it was simply a question of the expenditure of money, whilst in this matter it is a question of a change of policy, a change of attitude on the part of the government, contrary to the attitude which they took last year; and without consulting parliament, whilst the representatives of the nation are assembled here, they meet in a closed chamber and frame a policy which they announce to the country, and say that we must support it.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. Do we understand that the hon. gentleman goes back on his record concerning payment for arms in 1895?

Mr. BOURASSA. No, I denounced it in 1895, and I denounce it to-day, whether done by a Conservative government or by a Liberal government. Now one of the arguments used by the hon. minister was this: He said, we are devoting most of our energies and spending most of our money in the British islands because we have found that it is the best field for immigration, and because the people of Great Britain, knowing that Canada is a desirable place to live in, want to come here. Sir, if the people of Great Britain want to come to Canada, what is the use of giving \$5 a head to booking agents to send them here? But let us accept the argument, let us suppose it is necessary to have agencies in Great Britain to bring over a desirable class of immigrants is that a reason for passing an order in council to induce people to come from Norway, Sweden, Holland, Denmark, Hungary, Russia, France, Belgium and Switzerland? If the argument of the minister is good, if the government have changed their policy because circumstances have changed and circumstances have changed in such a way that the people of Canada are entitled to see that their money is well employed by spending it in Great Britain, then why has the government adopted an order in council that allows them to spend money in foreign countries where it is so difficult to carry

on a propaganda? Now on this question of propaganda, the hon. gentleman says that the order in council is far different from any past order, because according to the present order in council nothing will be paid to agents who work against the laws of the country in which they are operating. Either this restriction in the order in council holds good or it does not. If it holds good, then this order in council is nothing but a copy of the contract with the North Atlantic Trading Company, because in that contract the government introduced the very same clause that the agents of the North Atlantic Trading Company were not going to do anything contrary to the law of the nations in which they were operating. If the North Atlantic Trading Company's contract was a bad one, because it brought those agents into conflict with the laws of the land in which they were operating, this order in council is equally bad because it is based on the same principle; it is the same policy, except that here you are dealing with individual agents instead of with a company.

Now with regard to this aspect of the question, I am open-minded, I am ready to be convinced that it is better to deal with agents than to deal with a company. But I am surprised that that argument should come from the minister, because last year when he announced to the House that the contract with the North Atlantic Trading Company was to be cancelled, what did he say? He referred to some writings or some letters from Sir Charles Tupper, saying that it was better to have arrangements of that kind made with companies than with individual agents, and the hon. gentleman took credit for the government in the fact that they were now paying bonuses to a company and not to individual booking agents. He said:

Now, to whom did our hon. friends on the other side pay the bonuses? They paid them to individual booking agents—so their letters show. To whom did this government pay in the years preceding the contract with the North Atlantic Trading Company? They paid to individual booking agents.

To whom do they pay now? Not to any individual booking agents, but to the North Atlantic Trading Company, a collective interest of booking agents. And do they get value for their payments? Judged by the standard laid down in the letter of Sir Charles Tupper, they do. And any man of common sense, not warped by political bias, will agree that that is the main question. . . . I know they are engaged in the business of booking emigrants to Canada, and I know that they work under better conditions to-day as a company, than they did when they worked as individuals, and are sending more emigrants to Canada. That was the purpose of the change from payments to individual agents to payments to this company.

Here we have, in the words of the minister himself last year, the statement that we had better adopt the policy of paying a company than of paying individual booking