

My reason for the inquiry is simply to ask this Government whether they have any intention of creating a Dominion Trade Commission to meet similar conditions in Canada. The necessity for commissions now-a-days is at once conceded for the reason that business generally has become so complex, that with the growth of the country, it is impossible for the Treasury Board to give them as much time as would meet all the situations as they came up. We know what the Railway Commission has done and I believe there is not a person in Canada found unwilling at this moment to pay all the necessary costs which it incurs.

In looking over the latest census for 1911, I find that the manufacturing interests of the Dominion has \$1,247,583,609 invested, and that 19,218 persons are engaged in the work of manufacture, producing \$1,165,975,635 worth of products and employing 515,203 persons, paying in all for wages and salaries \$241,008,416. This is a very large interest to be dependent altogether upon half a dozen Ministers of the Crown, and it may possibly be shown that with such an enormous amount of money invested, with all its ramifications, and such a valuable and essential asset as it is to the Dominion of Canada, it ought to have a commission of the very best men to be found so as to see that no injustice or unfairness is done between buyer and seller and between capital and labour and with business going on for the benefit of the people as a whole throughout the Dominion.

The first recommendation in the United States to secure the results now sought to be achieved through the Federal Trade Commission, appears to have been made in 1900 and which reads as follows:

The larger corporations—the so-called trusts—should be required to publish annually a properly audited report showing in reasonable detail their assets and liabilities, with profit and loss; such reports and audit under oath to be subject to Government inspection. The purpose of said publicity is to encourage competition when profits become excessive, thus protecting consumers against too high prices and to guard the interests of employees by a knowledge of the financial condition of the business in which they are employed.

Their final report had also the following, to wit:

That there be created in the Treasury Department a permanent bureau the duty of which shall be to register all state corporations engaged in interstate or foreign commerce; to secure from such corporations all reports needed to enable the Government to levy a franchise tax with certainty and justice, and to collect the same; to make such inspection and examination of the business and accounts of such cor-

porations as will guarantee the completeness and accuracy of the information needed to ascertain whether such corporations are observing the conditions prescribed in the Act and to enforce penalties against delinquents; and to collate and publish information regarding such combinations and the industries in which they may be engaged, so as to furnish to the Congress proper information for possible future legislation.

The publicity secured by the governmental agency should be such as will prevent the deception of the public through secrecy in the organization and management of industrial combinations or through false information. Such agency would also have at its command the best sources of information regarding special privileges or discriminations, of whatever nature, by which industrial combinations secure monopoly or become dangerous to the public welfare. It is probable that the provisions herein recommended will be sufficient to remove most of the abuses which have arisen in connection with industrial combinations. The remedies suggested may be employed with little or no danger to industrial prosperity and with the certainty of securing information which would enable Congress to protect the public by further legislation if necessary.

In view of the passage of this Act, which has now become law and providing for it, the excerpt from the platforms of the different parties who sought the suffrages of the people at the last presidential election are very interesting, for example the Democratic party said:

A private monopoly is indefensible and intolerable. We therefore favour the vigorous enforcement of the criminal as well as the civil law against trusts and trust officials, and demand the enactment of such additional legislation as may be necessary to make it impossible for a private monopoly to exist in the United States.

We favour the declaration by law of the conditions upon which corporation shall be permitted to engage in interstate trade, including, among others, the prevention of holding companies, of interlocking directors, of stock-watering, of discrimination in price, and the control by any one corporation of so large a proportion of any industry as to make it a menace to competitive conditions.

We condemn the action of the Republican administration in compromising with the Standard Oil Company and the tobacco trust, and its failure to invoke the criminal provisions of the anti-trust law against the officers of these corporations after the court had declared that from the undisputed facts in the record, they had violated the criminal provisions of the law.

We regret that the Sherman anti-trust law has received a judicial construction depriving it of much of its efficacy, and we favour the enactment of legislation which will restore to the statute the strength of which it has been deprived by such interpretation.

At the Republican National Convention, the following was declared by its last platform:

In the enforcement and administration of Federal laws governing interstate commerce and enterprises impressed with a public use