

*Combines Investigation Act*

increased greatly during and since the war. In view of the fact that a great number of these companies operate branch plants in Canada and have large investments in this country it is reasonable to suppose that the same state of affairs exists in this country.

Certain hon. members, particularly those of the Progressive Conservative group, have expressed a desire to return to the so-called free enterprise as it was known years ago. In my opinion that is a completely unrealistic approach to modern economic development. I give hon. members due credit for their sincerity, but the free enterprise that they envision is a thing of the past that has gone forever. Under our modern industrial and commercial civilization monopolistic development is inevitable and must be faced.

With the large amounts of capital required for the building up of industry, with the demand for natural resources, with the large number of employees employed and with the desire to establish assured markets, it is inevitable, and the course of events proves my contention, that monopolistic development has occurred in various fields, is occurring and will continue to occur.

We in the C.C.F. are concerned about monopolies, and in this we differ from our friends to the right. We realize that monopolies exist and are inevitable. We do not look backward to the return of so-called free enterprise and we face the situation from that point of view. We contend that monopolistic development under our present system of capitalism lacks social objectives. We admit that in many cases they produce efficiently, they prevent waste and things of that sort, but we submit that they must have social objectives.

They must come under the control of those who are responsible to the people rather than of those who are responsible to a board of directors and a group of shareholders. If that procedure is not effective, they must be brought under public ownership. Our objection to monopolistic development as it exists today is that on the whole it is based on the profit objective and usually lacks any form of social objective. We maintain that the first consideration in all economic development should be human needs rather than profits. We see the result of the profit objective in the development of our country. We have seen ghost towns created by the monopoly control of natural resources, the exploitation of timber and mines without any consideration for the future. We have seen monopoly control drive competitors out of business possibly by selling at a lower price for a temporary period. We say these

practices are wrong and not in the interests of the Canadian economy or the Canadian people as a whole.

I am quite willing to admit, and my associates in this group admit, that monopolies are necessary in certain fields. They are necessary in the field of transportation. You could not have a dozen railroads operating across Canada. They are necessary in the field of communications. Even under private ownership, no one would suggest that we should have some ten or fifteen telephone companies operating within one province. They are necessary in hydroelectric development. They are necessary in the development of basic industries such as steel, and in the development of pipe lines and transmission companies of that type. It is admitted they produce efficiently in many cases. They prevent waste and overlapping and develop a certain sense of security for a particular group of people within the national community.

Our main objection towards monopolies and combines is that to date the motive has been largely a profit motive without a social objective. We in this group believe we cannot long allow a few people to have such wide powers in the development of our natural resources and the direction of our economic activities, responsible as they are only to boards of directors and shareholders. Therefore we advocate public ownership of monopolies where it is clearly to the advantage of the Canadian people. We advocate public ownership of certain monopolies where they will be controlled by people responsible to the people. I want to say that we do not claim there is any particular merit in socializing any portion of our economy just for the sake of socializing it. We do not believe in socialization for the sake of satisfying some doctrinaire point of view or doctrinaire conception. We simply say that public ownership should come into effect when it is obviously necessary and desirable, and is to the advantage of the Canadian people.

This is our approach to the question of monopolies and combines in Canada at the present time. We of the C.C.F. group, having in mind our natural resources and our ability to produce, believe that the Canadian people have a right to a secure and satisfactory standard of living. The C.C.F. group believe that every child born in Canada is entitled to the education that it is capable of absorbing, the education that it requires for the development of its talents and personality, to enable it to play the part it is capable of playing within the nation. We believe that the working people of Canada are entitled to secure and