

enjoy special privileges not extended to private corporations, such as exemption from taxation and, in some cases, from industrial legislation.

This quotation is the considered opinion of the research department of the Canadian chamber of commerce and it is my considered opinion and, I believe, that of a great number of Canadian people. Canadian industrialists and other Canadians who believe in private enterprise are looking with grave apprehension upon the government's apparent policy of edging its way further and further into the realm of manufacturing, procuring and constructing, and into the realm of private enterprise. I believe that in this measure we are going farther than we have ever gone before, and with less justification. There may be some justification for crown companies even in the manufacturing business, if we take as an example the atomic energy plant at Chalk River. There can be some justification for the manufacture of military material which must be produced on an ever-expanding scale during war time, and in other non-competitive fields. That will probably include Polymer, the synthetic rubber plant at Sarnia. But for the government to take unto itself the role of manufacturing, ordinary everyday requirements of life, with special privileges over and above that of private enterprise, without the responsibility of having to pay municipal, educational, excess profits or corporation taxes, means that we are being unfair to private enterprise in which so many of us believe. I know that some of my friends of the C.C.F. party are strong believers in government enterprise. It is their privilege to have that opinion; but we must face the issue and decide whether or not we believe in government enterprise.

There are many things in this bill that we should consider. I do not believe that the Companies Act, either of the dominion or of the provinces, was passed with the intention of permitting a government to create a company and obtain possession of all the shares through the medium of the legal farce—that is about all I can call it—of issuing shares to four or five men, whom we call directors, upon condition that they endorse the shares and hand them back to a minister of the crown so that he can act on them if, as, and when he sees fit. The purpose of an incorporation is to put the responsibility upon the shareholders of the company and through them upon the directors to manage the corporate enterprise. I do not believe it was ever meant to issue certificates and have them endorsed and not put on the books of the company but held in escrow so that an

[Mr. Boucher.]

officer's resignation could be accepted if and when desired, without his having any financial responsibility either as a share holder or as a director to the company he is managing. Nor do I think that any officers or directors of any company should have the say as to whom they shall hire or fire or whether or not they shall provide the employees with superannuation or retirement allowances at the expense of the people of Canada. I do not think the people who believe in the Civil Service Act see in this proposal any advantage other than that of political preference in a partial way being exercised against the servants of the dominion.

The Civil Service Act has to a great extent been responsible for giving security to civil servants and for the high standard of service which the Canadian people have received from them. If we are to continue, as this government appears to desire, to have employees to all intents and purposes working for the government but not under the Civil Service Act or under the Civil Service Superannuation Act, and with the privilege that the officials of a crown company can deal in their own peculiar way with their employees so far as superannuation is concerned, it will be injurious to the welfare of the civil servants of Canada, if not to the employees of the company. In other words, so far as this company is concerned under this bill it can make any arrangement it likes by way of superannuation for its employees, probably different from any other superannuation arrangement we know of.

Personally I am anxious to see the doctrine of superannuation or retirement allowances spread throughout the country. The great need of the people of Canada is the establishment of superannuation or retirement allowances for the employees of industry. There are many Canadians who have not the benefit of superannuation and retirement allowances. The Canadian people are not going to welcome the fact that parliament is allowing the Canadian Commercial Corporation, which expires sixty days after the 1949 session, to set up superannuation benefits for its officers and employees until that time, irrespective of the Civil Service Act. Under the Civil Service Act civil servants must over many years contribute to the superannuation fund before they can get any value out of it. Today we are discarding the whole principle of the contributions; because how can the employees of a crown company, subject to the whim and fancy of its officials, get any greater benefit under the superannuation scheme than they would get under the Civil Service Superannuation Act.