

opment of their skill and their labour, produce the goods which will enable Canada to trade its way back into a complete, full and permanent prosperity; and that objective is the very essence of the proposals which have been submitted here.

Trade with Russia is very largely a matter for Russia herself. She was invited to attend the conference at Geneva. She ignored the invitation. That of course is her right. In looking at the European picture today I find one point of special significance. We hear a great deal of talk about the iron curtain which separates eastern Europe—Russia and her satellites—from western Europe. I have a feeling that in the end economic forces will triumph over these manifestations of political nationalism. Why do I say so? East of the iron curtain in Europe are the great food-producing areas of that continent; west of it are Europe's great manufacturing areas. Sooner or later these satellite countries of Russia will be more and more interested in trying to exchange their products, agricultural in character and in the main such as we produce, with the countries which can furnish them with the manufactured goods they need if they are to raise their standards of living.

I fully agree with the suggestion of the government leader that this resolution should be referred to committee, where we can get more information about it.

I conclude with this remark; that in these troubled days nothing is more important than that we should promote in every friendly way we can the closest intercourse possible, in matters of trade, travel and otherwise, between our country and the other countries of the world.

Hon. ARTHUR W. ROEBUCK: Honourable senators, I would feel that I had been negligent if I did not express my pleasure at the resolution which has been moved and the subject-matter of which we are proposing to refer. All my life I have been a free-trader; I have maintained that position in the great stronghold of protection, the city of Toronto, and have never allowed the light to go out.

I remember the hard times through which we passed when I was a very young boy on the farm, and which were due to a change of the United States tariff which shut out, among other things, our barley and our lambs. There were hard times on the Canadian farms in those late eighties and early nineties. My mind revolted against the unfriendly attitude of our great neighbour to the south of us, which brought poverty to my household and to our neighbours, because it prevented us

from shipping abroad. It was not until later times that we developed our ability to ship to the European market. Later, like my honourable friend from Churchill (Hon. Mr. Crerar), I read the literature on this subject. I too read the *Life of Cobden*, and I remember being greatly impressed with the writings of Adam Smith; but clearest, and most incisive of all, was Henry George on protection and free trade. The clearness with which these masters of economics proved their propositions impressed my mind; and I have always felt an impatience at those seductive fallacies of protection whereby people lift themselves by their own boot-straps, make themselves prosperous by tying their own hands, increase their standard of living by shutting out the goods of other people, and look upon trade as an offensive operation, and the sending of the commodities of other nations to our country as an unfriendly act. I have been a free-trader because I believed in freedom in the broadest possible way, and because the philosophy of free trade seemed so appealing, so clear, so obvious, and so full of good will.

I look upon this step, though a short and maybe a halting one, as a great change in the viewpoints of the people of the world.

I listened yesterday to the remarks of the leader of the opposition, speaking on behalf of the Conservative party, and when he got through I told him I intended to propose his name for membership in the free trade league. He did not fall for that. He was just led away by the enthusiasm of the moment to say a lot of things which were true, but, as a party leader, he hedged immediately, because his party has always pandered to the private special interests that gain advantage by a partial bondage of their fellow-men.

In the 1911 election I, as a young man—certainly younger than I am now—took as great a part as I could, and for six long weeks spoke afternoons and evenings in advocacy of free trade, or freer trade as it was proposed at that time. Today, with the leader of the government, I marvel at the inconsistency of a leader of the Conservative party talking at this time about the right of the Canadian farmer to sell in the markets where he can get the highest price, but either hedging, or saying nothing about buying in foreign markets where goods are offered at the lowest price; as though the one were not the natural corollary of the other.

My honourable friend from Churchill voiced regret that general principles relating to freedom of trade are not expressed in the documents before us, which consist for the most part of changes in tariff schedules. I too