

given an opportunity to place their views fully and repeatedly before the Committee. The statement contained in the two newspapers and the comments which Mr. MacNeil apparently made at the Convention with regard to the Chairman of the Board are unjustified, unfair and unwarranted, and should be resented.

What is meant by the last part of the paragraph I do not know:

Mr. MacNeil said he thought the members of the pensions board were obstructed in their duties, and held nothing personal against the members.

I have tried to understand that, but have failed, and am consequently not in a position to deal with it.

I am sure every member of the Committee will endorse all I have said on this matter, and will join with me in protesting against the statements referred to being made and published in the papers mentioned.

## AUSTRALIAN TRADE TREATY BILL

### MOTION FOR SECOND READING

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND moved the second reading of Bill 238, an Act respecting trade relations with Australia.

He said: This Bill provides:

The Minister of Finance is authorized to enter into an agreement with the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia under which Australia shall grant to goods the produce or manufacture of Canada when imported into Australia the benefits of the reduced rates of duty set out in Schedule I to this Act, and Canada may in return therefor grant to goods the produce or manufacture of Australia when imported direct into Canada the benefits of the rates of customs duty set out in Schedule II to this Act.

The first attempt to arrange an agreement with Australia was made in 1893, when the Hon. Mackenzie Bowell, Minister of Trade and Commerce, went to Australia. His instructions were to confer regarding possible trade alliance and also to arrange for better telegraph communications.

These negotiations were entered into because the Canadian Government had, in 1889, authorized a subsidy of £25,000 for steamship service and in 1893 Swan & Hunter, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, offered to enter into a contract.

The Minister visited Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania and the Hawaiian Islands. No formal agreement resulted from the visit.

In 1906, Mr. Deacon, as Premier of Australia, brought before the House of Representatives a proposed trade agreement with Great Britain. There was no mention of Canada in it, and on being asked why Canada was not included, he said that he had received no reply from Sir Wilfrid Laurier

to a letter which he had written. Sir Wilfrid cabled apologizing, stating that his letter had been filed by mistake, but expressed a willingness to proceed with the arrangements.

Before any arrangements could be entered into the Bill was defeated in the House and the Deacon administration went out of office.

On the 3rd May, 1913, the Right Hon. Sir George Foster, as Minister of Trade and Commerce, reported to Sir Robert Borden that, following the invitation of the Minister of Trade for New Zealand, he had several conferences with Hon. Frank G. Tudor, Minister of State for Trade and Customs, Commonwealth of Australia, and Hon. Francis M. B. Fisher, representing the Dominion of New Zealand. Out of that conference nothing definite emerged, save that a conference was arranged between the Dominions, including South Africa, whereby it was hoped that more uniformity in customs matters could be achieved.

In February, 1922, Senator Pearce, of Australia, visited Canada and made certain representations to the Dominion Government respecting a reciprocal tariff between Australia and Canada. The Senator made two proposals, neither of which went far enough, and the Canadian Prime Minister cabled to the Prime Minister of Australia suggesting that the simplest and most convenient arrangement would be to exchange the Canadian British preference for that of Australia.

Negotiations were carried on during the summer of 1922 and the Canadian Prime Minister then suggested to Mr. Hughes, Prime Minister of Australia, that negotiations be carried on through the High Commissioners in London. Mr. Hughes declined this, and on the 2nd of September extended an invitation to a Minister of the Canadian Government to visit Australia and negotiate directly with the Australian Minister of Trade and Commerce. On September 25th Mr. Mackenzie King cabled to the Prime Minister of Australia that the Minister of Trade and Commerce would sail from Vancouver on October 20th, 1922. Arriving in Australia, Hon. Mr. Robb found that the Australian Government was on the eve of a general election, and apart from two interviews with the Prime Minister, Mr. Hughes, all his negotiations were carried on with the Australian Tariff Board. In view of the unsettled political situation, no definite agreement was then achieved.

In 1923 Senator Wilson and Major Oakley, Director General of Customs, visited Canada, when negotiations were further advanced. As a result of these negotiations an agreement has been arranged on the following lines: