

Combines Investigation Act

laudatory terms about the amendment before the committee put forward by the hon. member for Burnaby-Richmond. I must say that I think the amendment is a satisfactory one. It meets very well the point raised in committee by the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate. There is every reason to be pleased that this amendment is being included in the bill at this stage.

There are two points to which I wish to address myself particularly tonight. One has to do with the importance of the export trade to this country. In his remarks early this afternoon the minister, in putting forward this amendment or giving notice of it, made a reasoned statement on the subject and rightly emphasized the importance of that subject to Canada. It is particularly timely that we should deal with this subject tonight in view of the *Daily Bulletin* of the dominion bureau of statistics which has just been delivered and which is dated Monday, July 25, 1960. It is volume 29, No. 142. That *Daily Bulletin*, under the subheading "Exports in June..." goes on to say as follows:

Canada's commodity exports to all countries in June were valued at \$457,400,000, a decrease of 11.4 per cent from the monthly all-time peak value of \$516,300,000 in June last year—

Then a little bit further down it goes on to say this:

Exports to the United States in June fell to \$257,100,000 from \$318,800,000 in the corresponding month last year—

That sharp drop in our exports in this past month as compared with those in the corresponding month in the previous year shows the timeliness of any action that can be taken at this time to assist the export industry.

Mr. Pallett: Will the hon. member also read the rest of the report which compares this year's to-date export trade with last year's to-date export trade.

Mr. McIlraith: Yes. I can read the rest of it. It goes on to point out the effect of the cumulative total for the six months and it points out that the figures are up. If the hon. member wishes me to read it, I can do so.

Mr. Pallett: I think it says that there is an 8 per cent increase over last year.

Mr. McIlraith: Yes. I can give the hon. member the precise figure, if he wishes to have it.

Mr. Pallett: It is 8 per cent, is it?

Mr. McIlraith: It is 8.4 per cent.

Mr. Pallett: An 8.4 per cent increase over last year?

Mr. McIlraith: That is right. This decline points up the difficulties there are in this field as well as those difficulties indicated by the minister this afternoon when dealing with the subject, namely the difficulties owing to external forces over which this country has no direct control. I refer, of course, to what appears to be a trade offensive by the U.S.S.R. and the possible trade activity on the part of China. There are other factors in this field which cause grave concern to this country and among them is the whole question of the regrouping of the European countries for trade purposes. The policy of the government with regard to this whole subject of trade has not been one to encourage the confidence of exporters from this country.

There is no doubt that great damage was done to the export industry by the precipitous action of the Prime Minister of Canada in announcing that he was going to divert trade from the United States and then his subsequent denial of this announcement, although it is on record in newspapers right across this country and had been impressed on the minds of television viewers who saw the Prime Minister on television and heard him make that announcement of policy.

Then there was the policy of the government in refusing to find out what the United Kingdom had in mind when they said they were prepared to discuss free trade with Canada at the time plans were being completed for the economic conference. The announcement was made at Mont Tremblay, and the Canadian government has remained strangely silent since with the result that it has not been ascertained just what the British authorities had in mind, whether they meant immediate free trade, free trade in the long term future or whether, in fact, they meant freer trade. In any event, it is to be regretted that the government has refused to find out what the United Kingdom had in mind on the subject and, in consequence, made it impossible for this country to decide whether the effect would be beneficial to us.

Then, of course, we had the unreasoned action of the Minister of Transport in cutting out Canadian shipping to the West Indies at a time when the West Indies were just developing their form of government into a federated body and when there was every indication that trade with that area would increase sharply. It has been obvious from speeches of the Minister of Transport in this chamber that he did not understand the implications of his action on that occasion. It is particularly interesting, for example, that he did not consider what might be the