

May I open my references to the report by referring to one feature of it or, shall I say, a philosophy which runs through the whole of the report, to which I think all too little attention has been paid. On the second reading of the bill now before the house for third reading I made rather extended and detailed remarks with reference to this feature. At the moment I shall content myself with merely mentioning the point. It will be recalled, sir, that in the preparation of the report certain chapters were introduced leading up to the more practical features of it. I wish to quote again to-day a paragraph which I quoted previously and then, using that as a foundation, to give expression to certain views in regard to the matter. At the opening of chapter III, headed "Concentration and the Corporate System of Business" we have these words:

The evidence before us ... has shown that a few great corporations are predominant in the industries that have been investigated; also that this power, all the more dangerous because it is impersonal, can be wielded in such a way that competition within the industry is blocked, the welfare of the producer disregarded, and the interests of the investor ignored.

As the hearings into various forms of economic activity were carried on, it has been difficult not to be impressed by the fact that the corporate form of business, not only often gives freedom from legal liability, but also facilitates the evasion of moral responsibility for inequitable and uneconomic practices.

And one other paragraph:

The net result of this combination of flexibility and rigidity is that unregulated competition no longer guarantees efficiency and maximum production at fair prices. Competition degenerates sometimes into economic warfare where victory may go to the strong, rather than to the efficient.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): What page is that?

Mr. STEVENS: Pages 12 and 13. I read these words for the purpose of indicating that there is a new orientation of business. I enlarged on that the other day, but I am going to speak for the moment as a member of the Conservative party in this house. I was elected as a Conservative, and I take it that the very essence of the economic policy of the Conservative party is to be found in what is known as the national policy. Through all the years the Conservative party, as the representative of a large body of opinion in this country, has taken the principles of the national policy as its guide and lead in matters economic. I wish to say, sir, that in holding the views I do now, in the light of the studies revealed in this report, I am not departing one iota from the economic principles of the Conservative party. I took the trouble to

[Mr. Stevens.]

look up some quotations and I am going to read them, briefly, in order to indicate and to impress upon the minds of hon. members on this side of the house—and hon. members opposite to the extent that they will do me the courtesy of listening—that when the national policy was launched in Canada in 1878 it was never contemplated that that policy would lead to the development of industry to a point where a monopoly would dominate within any particular branch of industry. It is not pertinent at this point to debate what they should have foreseen, or anything of that kind. I shall deal only with the historic facts. Sir John Macdonald, speaking in 1878, is reported at page 859 of Hansard of that year as follows:

It should consist—

Speaking of his new policy—

—of a judicious readjustment of the tariff which would benefit and foster the agricultural, the mining, the manufacturing, and other interests of the dominion; a judicious readjustment of the tariff will, mean, to a certain extent, an increased duty upon certain articles.

Note, Mr. Speaker, that this was a policy directed towards the development of the interests of agriculture, mining and manufacturing, as well as other interests. Then I read from a speech by Sir John Macdonald delivered at St. Catharines, in which he used these words:

We have, however, readjusted the tariff, reducing the duties on articles of necessity and raw materials, and increasing those on what is required for home manufacturing, this being a direct encouragement to artisans and mechanics.

Here we have the second feature of this policy which was in the mind of its great framer, namely, that throughout it should protect or redound to the advantage and interest of the workers in industry.

I now turn to another quotation. In the year 1878, at a meeting in Toronto the Liberal Conservative Association of Ontario declared on this subject. This was the pronouncement by a meeting of the Conservative association:

We are satisfied that the welfare of Canada requires the adoption of a national financial policy which, by a judicious readjustment of the tariff, will benefit and foster the agricultural, mining and manufacturing interests of the dominion.

It was not, sir, for the creation of monopolies or for the creation of powerful corporations to operate without law and with a selfish disregard for the rights of others—no, not that, but for the fostering of agriculture, mining and manufacturing.