

Combines Investigation Act

In other words, these gentlemen wait until the Canadian companies determine their prices, and then they sell.

Then, on page 293 of the proceedings of the committee on banking and commerce is set out the methods by which the Russians deal in the lumber industry. Mr. Nicholson giving evidence before the committee had this to say on that subject:

Prior to the war, and in fact up until 1954, Canada was Britain's leading supplier of soft wood products—lumber, shingles, and material of that kind. That is, as late as 1954 it was the leading supplier. By 1957 Canada's share of the United Kingdom imports had dropped to 14.7 per cent and Canada's position was that of fourth place supplier of products to the building industry in Britain. We had been replaced successfully by Sweden, Finland and Russia. During this period when the Canadian sales were dropping off, the Soviet of Russia had increased her sales from one-tenth to one-fifth of the total of the United Kingdom's soft wood importation. In the case of the Swedish and Finnish importers they were trading at a profit. Their objective was to make a profit, but their operating costs were lower because wages were lower. That was not so in the case of Russia, when they came in and took that market. I am reliably informed by an official of the Department of Trade and Commerce—this can be checked by reference to the minister or other officials of that department—that the Russian technique in invading the British market is that they will come in with a particular type of lumber which is in demand and, even though the lumber may be needed at home in Russia, they will quote to supply the whole demand at a price that is better than the Canadian price for a particular kind of lumber. It is even better than the Swedish and Finnish prices in some cases. Then if you repeat the order they will give you a further reduction. That is not done by any cartel. That is done by a government trade agency.

Now we see the two methods of competition we are up against in our export trade and we are caught between our desire to protect the Canadian consumer from monopolies which may work within Canada and our desire to give our manufacturers full freedom to compete in the export trade which is so essential to the growth of our country. It is becoming increasingly apparent that something must be done to promote the ability of our companies to compete on international markets.

The hon. member for Skeena has said it is not a matter to be dealt with in this bill. Perhaps that is so. It is a matter which could perhaps be dealt with by other methods but this bill should not be used so as to hamper their task of exporting goods to all parts of the world. Therefore I believe that for the good of this country, without lessening the protection we have provided to our consumers, we should give all the help we can to those companies which export goods abroad. Perhaps another bill to this end might help in this direction.

Mr. Pickersgill: Are we to have this parliament turned into a farce at a time when we are being asked to work 56 hours a week?

The Chairman: Does the hon. member rise on a point of order?

Mr. Pearson: I have just one observation to make, and I should like to address my remarks to the minister. In view of the fact that the government has moved this amendment, that it has been accepted by the opposition and that the C.C.F. has made its position known, does the minister not think that we might now pass this bill through committee so that the house might tonight consider a resolution designed to improve the situation of old age pensioners?

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Pearson: How can the minister explain this filibuster against this bill which is being conducted by his colleagues.

Mr. Fulton: I assume I can answer the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition.

The Chairman: I would think that the only way the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition would be in order would be if the hon. gentleman had risen on a point of order. I must say I cannot find that his remarks are relevant to the amendment before the committee.

Mr. Fulton: I suppose they would have been in order if the Leader of the Opposition had put his question in another form—if he had asked, perhaps, when we expected that the committee stage might be concluded and whether we would ask for third reading of the bill tonight, and that sort of thing. That would have been quite in order, and I take it that is what he had in mind. I should like to answer him by saying that I thought when one or two members had concluded their observations on this amendment and on the question of Canadian export trade I might then make a comment or two in reply and express regret that the C.C.F. party had not been able to accept the amendment.

I do not know why it should be suggested by the Leader of the Opposition that there is no right of speech to be enjoyed by government supporters. It is really a very extraordinary suggestion. I think it is proper for me to observe that government members, by and large, have been very restrained in this committee, both yesterday and today, in the use they have made of their right to speak, especially in the light of the extraordinary and unreasonable strictures that the opposition have expressed with regard to this bill. Our members have shown a remarkable restraint and now, on one of the most important