

17th. November, 1949.

Arthur Laing, Esq., M.P.,  
Ottawa, Ont.

Dear Art,

What has the investigation under The Combines Act and its discussion in the House done to the business people throughout the country? Men in the same line of business are afraid to talk to each other.

Is it morally wrong for men who have the interests of their business and the country at heart to sit around a table to discuss the problems of their industry, seeking better ways to improve not only the operations of their firms but also the working conditions of the men in their employ? Although industries of the same nature have varying costs, the difference, one might assume, would not be great. If a fair price for a product were arrived at and an agreement amongst them made to sell at this price, giving a fair return to the industry concerned and making it possible to pay fair wages and have favourable conditions for the employees, is this not better than cut-throat competition bringing with it all the ills of decreased earnings, lower wages and unemployment?

In discussions with many people since the McGregor report was aired in the House, it seems to be the majority opinion that The Combines Act should be over-hauled. Frankly, Art, business men are afraid to discuss their mutual problems today.

We have been having extremely mild weather, although plenty of rain of late. However, it is still lovely but the fuel men don't like it.

Best regards to Gerry, Linda and yourself,

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

HS/IG.