

this or any other character should be willing to submit to public view every fact in connection with the administration, the earnings and the profits derived therefrom. Without the utmost publicity all governments will be subject to proper condemnation for interfering with taxation in the interests of privileged classes. Unless that publicity is given the people will not be satisfied that the privileges granted are justified.

Ever since the history of tariffs began there has been a clear division and cleavage of public opinion. There are men who because of a certain array of facts think that a high tariff is advantageous; there is another group who are agreed that a certain measure of tariff for revenue purposes may be acceptable; then there is a third group which is against tariffs in any form whatever, they regard the principle as uneconomical and unsound. How does the Prime Minister propose to bring together, even in a judicial board of this character, the opposing views of those who follow Henry George and of those who follow the right hon. gentleman himself? How is he going to coordinate and bring down to a point of compromise the viewpoints held by private industry and those held by sound economists every one of whom is opposed to a high tariff and who contend that the principle of protection is uneconomic in character?

I find it impossible to support this bill in its present form. I submit to the Prime Minister that if he is sincere, if he wants to convince this house or this country that he has in mind solely a board to ascertain facts in the national interest, then that board should not be selected by himself and his cabinet but either by this house or by a non-partisan committee of the house. I have no confidence either in the board or in the bill.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Mr. Chairman, my remarks will be very brief because I voiced my opinion on a previous occasion in connection with the appointment of this tariff board for a period of ten years. I want to reiterate that I have no complaint to make in connection with a board to advise. I am convinced that if the present government had appointed such a board they would be in a much better position before parliament and before this country than they are at the present moment. They have made increases in the tariff purely and simply for the benefit of special interests, and, so far as I am able to ascertain, without obtaining the viewpoint of the people who must pay for those increases. I am in favour of a

[Mr. E. J. Garland.]

tariff board but I am not in favour of a board which will be of a character to perpetuate itself upon a group of individuals who may secure the majority vote of this country at some forthcoming elections. The present government has, in my opinion, a perfect right to increase the tariff. They informed the electorate they were going to do that, but I have very grave doubts that the electorate ever anticipated that such drastic increases would be made. This government have received a mandate to carry out a certain policy, and they are doing it.

Supposing the government should submit to this new tariff board the five or six hundred items of the tariff which they have increased so drastically, and the board recommend in certain cases that drastic decreases should be made. I am confident that a proper board would discover that increases had been made to an unprecedented degree and that the consumers of this country were being bled white by such increases. Think what an awful position the government would be in? They would be in a much more embarrassing position than they are to-day in respect to the Stamp report on grain. The board must of necessity be in sympathy with the policy of the government which appoints it. I do not share the enthusiasm of the hon. member for Wetaskiwin in regard to this matter; this board will be composed of a group of men whose convictions are favourable to the government. Supposing at the next general elections the appeal is made, as it undoubtedly will be made—I shall make it if I am spared to be a candidate—

An hon. MEMBER: We suspected that.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I have not changed my opinion simply because this government happens to be in office. That has happened quite frequently in Canadian history; we have had reverses and I am confident there will be reverses. Then imagine the position we shall be in as a Liberal party taking their advice.

Mr. SPENCE: The hon. member will not be one of it.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I have just as good a chance as has my hon. friend of being elected. I know how zealously some of my hon. friends pleaded in connection with the potato question, hence the change in the order in council. They got too much tariff on that occasion and they will get too much tariff on many other occasions as they will discover when they go to the electorate to get their votes the next election.