

and the opposing points of view that may be had with respect thereto. My right hon. friend goes on to say:

Not denying that parliament has always the right to repeal legislation, I submit that it is undesirable to create vested rights with respect to legislation; and the undesirability of such a policy can never be more apparent than it is in this particular measure.

May I appeal to my right hon friend's sense of fairness and justice with regard to what he says in that statement? He says: "Not denying that parliament has always the right to repeal legislation, still, I think the business of binding a subsequent parliament is wrong." As I said the other day, should a change of government occur the situation will be quite different, with respect to this legislation from what would be the case were circumstances then to accord with what my right hon. friend, in the passage I have just quoted, has said would be probable. The government of the day, were a change of administration to take place, could not always repeal the legislation. I speak feelingly, because when the Liberal administration came into office in 1921, for many years thereafter we passed through this house measures which we thought were in the public interest, only to discover that those measures had encountered defeat in another chamber, because my right hon. friend's friends were in the majority there. I believe as matters stand at the present time the parties in the other chamber are politically about evenly divided. I know that during the whole term of the Liberal administration, covering a period of eight or nine years, there was not a time during which parliament was in session that we had a majority of our own friends in the other chamber. My right hon. friend starts now with his appointments to the other chamber where the numbers are more or less equally divided politically, and I assume he is going to appoint those who share his protectionist views and who will do what they can to maintain protectionist principles and ideals. This means that if the present administration were to go out of office, and an incoming Liberal administration were to seek to repeal this legislation, they would be entirely at the mercy, with respect to that repeal, of what might happen in the other chamber. That is not fair; it is not just, and when under such circumstances my right hon. friend makes this provision for ten years, he creates, as I have said already, a suspicion in our minds, and, I believe, throughout the country as a whole, as to the real objective he has in view.

It would seem as though the Prime Minister were determined at all costs, regardless altogether of the will of the people as expressed

at a general election, and regardless also of what the House of Commons may wish, to see that some body is in existence that will maintain the protective principle in the tariff. That, I think, is distinctly wrong. My right hon. friend can relieve that suspicion in a moment by indicating his willingness to alter this clause with respect to the tenure of office being ten years and providing that the appointments shall be at pleasure. Let him credit those opposed to him with the same good faith towards the board as he himself professes concerning those who are to be his appointees. I will say to him quite frankly: If any board he appoints does its duty in an impartial manner, in a manner that will command the approval of those who are his opponents today, there will be no disposition to change the personnel of the board should his opponents come into office. But I say with equal emphasis that if the trend of decisions given between now and the time there is a change of administration should be of a character to indicate that those who comprise the board are not in sympathy with the new Liberal administration, returned as it will have been by vote of the people, any such administration could not afford, as I have already said, to ask parliament to continue to vote salaries to keep in office those whose views were politically opposed to its own.

My right hon. friend goes on to say:

I cannot but think that the principle involved—the principle which the right hon. gentleman when in opposition always contended should be applied—is the soundest possible principle with respect to the expenditure of public money. No parliament should create a condition which leaves a succeeding parliament under the necessity of either repealing existing legislation with respect to which vested interests of rights may have arisen, or of carrying on regardless of the views of that succeeding parliament, simply because the preceding government has done what is being done in this case.

Could I, if I searched the world over, for what would support my present contention, discover any argument stronger than that presented by my right hon. friend in his own words which I have just read? In the light of his own expression of principle, which I think does him great credit and is very sound, let my right hon. friend, in all good faith and giving to the language no wider meaning than that which he intended it to have at the time he made it, reconsider this matter. Let me read again this latter part, which says:

No parliament should create a condition which leaves a succeeding parliament under the necessity of either repealing existing legislation with respect to which vested interests or rights may have arisen, or of carrying on regardless of the views of that succeeding parliament, simply because the preceding government has done what is being done in this case.