

ment as he is to vote for or against any other matter that may be submitted to the House.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh.

Mr. FIELDING. If any hon. gentleman takes exception to that statement, I do not know on what ground the exception can be taken. We cannot give effect to this agreement by any act of ours. All we can do, is to present to the House that which we believe, as we believe this to be, for the best interests of the great masses of the people of this country, and present it to the House with the best information and the best argument we can bring forward, and then await the judgment which the House may give. Agreements of any kind are not usually made out on the public street. Whether they be agreements of business or diplomacy or agreements of any kind they are necessarily made by conference between the parties interested, and all that the parties concerned in this matter can expect is, that the results of such conference will be presented to the people's representatives and that the people's representatives shall have a full and unqualified right to pass judgment upon the scheme that has been submitted to them. That is the position with regard to this agreement; that is the position with regard to every treaty and every agreement that is made anywhere. There have been reciprocity treaties and other treaties in times past. To hear hon. gentlemen opposite talk about this thing having been made in secret, one would imagine that all the treaties made in bygone years, had been made on the public highways. The thing is ridiculous. Every treaty is made by conference between the authorized representatives of the countries concerned, and this agreement, though not a treaty, though less formal than a treaty, has been made in the same way. The hon. member for South York (Mr. Maclean), again and again said: Never again—and he emphasized it in ringing tones—never again will this parliament have a right to deal with a tariff matter. How can the hon. gentleman and those who agree with him, expect the people of Canada to be influenced by such statements as that? and it is only a specimen of hundreds of things that they are saying day after day. What says the document before them? I do not suppose my hon. friend from South York ever took the trouble to read it.

Mr. MACLEAN (York). I heard it explained by the hon. gentleman.

Mr. FIELDING. I am obliged to assume that the hon. gentleman never read it—

Mr. MACLEAN (York). Yes, I read it.

Mr. FIELDING

Mr. FIELDING. Or never listened when I read it.

Mr. MACLEAN (York). Yes.

Mr. FIELDING. That is the most charitable view that I can express, because if the hon. gentleman read or heard it read and explained, and if in the face of that he makes the statement which he made to-day, then I am afraid I would have to use language of a harsher nature than I would like to use with reference to my hon. friend, and harsher than you, Mr. Speaker, would permit me to use. On the very first page of this agreement we have the statement that the government of the two countries hope that this arrangement will be found satisfactory, and that it will be continued because it will be found satisfactory; and then we have this further statement—and if anybody can make it in stronger language than is contained in this passage, I would like to hear them:

Nevertheless it is distinctly understood that we do not attempt to bind for the future the action of the United States Congress or the Parliament of Canada, but that each of these authorities shall be absolutely free to make any change of tariff policy or of any other matter covered by the present arrangement that may be deemed expedient.

And with that on the first page of this agreement, the hon. gentleman and friends of his on that side of the House, and men in the press representing them, go on day after day telling the people of Canada that we are bound hand and foot by this agreement. Now, the suggestion was made by the hon. member for South York that we ought to have an appeal to the people on this subject; but I did not find that that suggestion was received with the wildest enthusiasm on the other side of the House. I do not know how many years or how many months we may be from an election, but it cannot be very long before the people of Canada—

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. FIELDING. I hope that it will be noticed that hon. gentlemen, spurred up by my gentle suggestion, have said that they want it now.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. FIELDING. Very well, let it go on record; it may be useful by and by. But at some time, before very many months—it is a matter of opinion how many—we shall have an appeal to the people, and we have no reason to doubt that the government which has successfully appealed to the people in bygone years will appeal with greater strength than ever by reason of this agreement. I have had occasion to be associated with many public matters in this House, and I say that there never was a public