

statement he made to the House, that there would be no substantial reductions in the general tariff.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. The hon. gentleman will find he is mistaken. I placed before the House a list of items numbering scores in which the general tariff was reduced.

Mr. WALLACE. And scores of items in which it was increased.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. That is not the question. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Wallace) is also in error there, but that is not the point.

Mr. CLANCY. Does the Minister of Finance state that if he unloads on one class of goods and increases the tariff on another class, that that is a general reduction? I tell the hon. gentleman (Mr. Fielding) that when he completed the general tariff leaving it entirely to the operation of the preferential tariff he left the general tariff infinitely higher than he found it.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. The records will show that there were reductions on a great many articles in the general tariff. As to the effect of lowering the duty on one and increasing it on another that is a fair matter for debate, but I said the general tariff was reduced on scores of items, and any argument based on the assertion that the only reductions were to be found in the preferential tariff is certainly a mistake.

Mr. CLANCY. I tell the hon. gentleman that he is on record in the most unmistakable form, because he is always clear in his utterances; and I will read what the hon. gentleman said on that occasion.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. The tariff speaks for itself.

Mr. CLANCY. But did not the hon. gentleman speak for his party? Are his declarations to be taken for nothing? On that subject the hon. gentleman said:

Now, Mr. Speaker, having thus stated the guiding principles in the matter, I propose to invite your attention to the general tariff, and in doing so I wish to be distinctly understood that, as I have already explained, the duties are considerably higher than we intend they should be as applied to countries which are willing to trade with us. And if, as I read the items, hon. gentlemen think that the rate upon any of them is too high, I beg them to believe that before I close I shall have something to say which will show that in respect of our relations with Great Britain and in respect of our relations with any other country that is willing to meet us on equal terms we shall be prepared to offer a measure of tariff reform of the most substantial character, which is not contained in the tariff which I am now going to read.

Is that plain enough?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. My hon. friend asks a question; does he wish the answer?

Mr. CLANCY.

Mr. CLANCY. I do.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. The hon. gentleman is reading from a speech of mine which I have not at hand, but of the substance of which I have a general recollection. I said that in addition to what reductions there might be in the general tariff, although some of the items in it might be high, the preferential tariff to which I would call attention later on would give a very substantial measure of tariff reform. The hon. gentleman attempted to show that in fact no reductions were made in the general tariff. I did not say that, and if I had said so, it would have been absolutely untrue.

Mr. CLANCY. I am not charging the hon. gentleman with having said that there were absolutely no reductions. What I am pointing out is that the hon. gentleman went into a system of changes, and that the whole tariff when he left it was higher than when he took it up. I do not say that there was no reduction in anything; but I say that if there was a reduction in one quarter, there was an increase in another, and the tariff was higher as he left it than it was before. Later on the hon. gentleman said:

But with the exception of those articles to which I shall refer as I proceed I have to tell the House that it is not the intention of the government, speaking of the question generally, and not with reference to any particular article, to propose any great reduction in the tariff as applied to those countries which are not disposed to trade with us.

What did that mean? That meant that 70 per cent of the goods coming into Canada were not to be the subject of any reduction, because there was to be no reduction in the general tariff; but all the reductions were to come through the preferential tariff, which does not apply to the 70 per cent mentioned. Therefore, I say that 70 per cent of the goods imported into Canada come under a tariff infinitely higher than existed before hon. gentlemen opposite came into power. The hon. gentleman was going to give to the people of Canada the boon of a lower tariff, and he said, If you have objections, I have the remedy later on. Where is the remedy? The question is whether this preferential tariff has been a benefit to Canada? I am persuaded that it is not a benefit, that it has not cured or lessened the evils which the hon. gentleman complained of, but that it has intensified the burdens of the people, especially of the poor, because it makes a straight horizontal cut of the duties on both the luxuries of life and the necessities of life. Was that the fulfilment of the pledge which the hon. gentleman read to this House before he announced his tariff changes, namely, that the tariff should be so adjusted as to make the necessities of life free or nearly free, and that luxuries should be taxed? That was the announcement which the hon. gentleman made; but this tariff makes a horizontal cut on the luxuries of