

Mr. BENNETT: I am doing that, but I am seeking an answer to pertinent questions raised by the right hon. gentleman. These questions were raised in this house yesterday, and now I ask an answer. I ask you whether or not you believe in this protection that has been afforded to Canadians, or do you believe in affording to those who manufacture so cheaply that our people cannot compete with them, facilities that they would not otherwise enjoy?

Mr. REID: What about the cheap wages in this country?

Mr. BENNETT: I put this to the hon. gentleman. Only last week we had to deal with a problem of great magnitude, great in one sense but not in another. Rubber and cotton and other things go into the production of tennis shoes. They are made in very large quantities in Czechoslovakia. There you have one of the greatest, if not the greatest, shoe-producing industries in the world, the original proprietor of which was killed, as hon. gentlemen may recall, in an airplane accident. They have a branch now in England. Bear in mind this fact, that rubber is not indigenous to Czechoslovakia, cotton is not indigenous to Czechoslovakia. Therefore they were producing tennis shoes in Czechoslovakia under substantially the same conditions as to importing the raw materials to produce them as Canada, and they were putting them into this market at a few cents a pair, relatively—the exact figures I do not carry in mind. Were we to allow that to continue and destroy Canadian industry? Does the hon. member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Howard) believe that that should be done? Do hon. gentlemen opposite believe that this foreign manufacturer should be permitted to strike Canadian industry under such conditions, or do they believe that we should take adequate steps to protect Canadian labour from that form of competition. They have to buy their raw products; we have to buy ours, and let me say that there has not been a day when the Canadian rubber industry has taken advantage of the full extent of the tariff. Everyone knows that.

Now shall that shoe industry in this country be destroyed or not? This government gave long and careful consideration to the matter.

Mr. DUFF: What about the consumer?

Mr. BENNETT: The consumer? Well, there would not be any consumers if you destroyed every possibility of production. That is the answer.

[Mr. Ralston.]

Mr. DUFF: And there would be no producers if there were no consumers. You have the horse by the wrong end.

Mr. BENNETT: They condemn provisions against dumping, against depreciated currencies and against these other things. But I say, Mr. Speaker, that we have taken the only course provided by our institutions to protect Canadians. And yet I hear these means reviled in this house, spoken of as barriers to trade. Yet the League of Nations says that barriers to trade naturally have increased during the last few years. Can the Canadian people of ten and a half millions be sacrificed as an example to all the nations of the world? That is the problem.

I have indicated this so frequently that it is not desirable for me to do so again beyond making this simple statement, that I have never believed in high tariffs.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh.

Mr. BENNETT: I have never believed in high tariffs except when we use them as an emergency measure to prevent this country from becoming insolvent, and we did use them that way. We have recorded our belief with respect to tariffs. We have recorded it time and time again. I could not in the broadcast addresses discuss the question of tariffs. Why? Because we were then carrying on our negotiations with our great neighbour to the south, and there is not an hon. member here who does not realize that we could not discuss these matters at such a time without injuring our case. There are many, of course, who would like to see our case injured, and judging from the speeches made in this house I would say that a good many of them will be found on the other side of the chamber.

Mr. DUFF: Why didn't you put to a vote the resolution that I moved last session? You were frightened to put it to a vote.

Mr. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, I think possibly the hon. gentleman might keep order. I have concluded what I desire to say with respect to that matter. I shall only add this, that it has never been the custom in this or any other country to discuss publicly a question that may have a prejudicial effect upon the negotiations the country is carrying on. Usually all parties are agreed upon that, and the very nature of the matter was such that I have refrained from any specific discussion of these matters for months, during which time we have been carrying on these negotiations.

Now may I refer to two other matters that I regard as of some importance because they