

ernment in the form of a resolution in respect to the tariff.

Now, many members in the House may desire to speak upon this amendment. As I have said, I do not intend to do so except to point out its nature and its effect if it should be adopted by the House. I do not desire to chide the member for Brome. This is a free House, and no one stands more than I do for freedom of opinion and its expression, even in war time. But may I say to him in all seriousness that I think he should have regard for the critical condition of the world to-day; for the fact that the war is not yet at an end; that we are in the midst of war conditions, that we are labouring with the vast problem of bringing back the soldiers who have upheld the honour of Canada in the field abroad. By far the most important thing we have before us is to get these men back, to re-establish them in civil life, and to maintain conditions in this country under which there will be confidence, and such stability as can be created in this trying period. It is, to say the least, inadvisable that my hon. friend should at a time like this bring forward a want of confidence motion the only purpose of which can be to obstruct or to embarrass the Government. Speaking for myself, I do not believe this is the time in which that policy should be pursued. But hon. gentlemen opposite are not taking advice from me in matters of policy and I am the first to admit that my hon. friend or other hon. gentlemen opposite should take such a course as may seem to him or to them advisable.

As this discussion will probably go on, may I suggest that when it does go on, regard should be had to the conditions which exist in Canada and outside of Canada to-day. What I mean to say is that the discussion should be carried on in the light of those conditions. The war is not yet at an end. In the matter of international trade, many nations which have been engaged in the war have to-day restrictions and prohibitions upon imports. Although London used to be the great money centre of the world and sterling exchange was nearly always at a premium, sterling exchange is to-day down from \$4.86½ to \$4.65, due to the unsettled financial conditions of the world and the effect of the war upon Great Britain and European countries. Then we have the fact that the Peace Conference which is sitting at Paris will not only consider the terms of settlement, so far as boundaries and governments are concerned, but deal with most important economic questions

[Sir Thomas White.]

including duties. It is quite possible, even probable, that all existing treaties may be denounced and new treaties entered into amongst the Allies and others who may be parties to the League of Nations. Any discussion which takes place upon tariff matters in this Parliament to-day must, it seems to me, be conducted in the light of those existing conditions.

The Government will bring down the Budget, I hope, early in April. My view would be that if it be possible to wait, it would be advantageous that the Budget should not be brought down until conclusions have been reached by the Peace Conference, and while I would not be disposed to defer the Budget too long on that ground, it is desirable that the international situation should be cleared somewhat before it is brought down. I fully realize the importance of the question of the tariff; no man in this House realizes it more fully than I. I know that differences of views exist with regard to it; that there are extreme views on the one side and extreme views on the other side. The Government has given and will continue to give the closest attention to this most important matter. I believe, Sir, that when the Budget is brought down, and the financial situation disclosed, and the policy of the Government announced, that policy will have the support of the great majority of the members of this House and of the people of Canada. We shall have tariff proposals for the present session and we shall have an announcement to make as to steps to be taken looking towards a revision of the tariff when conditions become more normal.

I fear that all of us are prone to overlook the fact that this is a war year and that our expenditures this year may be greater than last year. We have brought down Estimates involving the expenditures of a vast sum of money, a considerable portion of which will be spent upon national improvements which will afford employment during this very critical period. In that respect I think, Sir, that Canada is in a particularly favoured position to-day. In addition to the Estimates, I have given notice of a resolution involving the provision of a sum of no less than \$350,000,000, which must forcibly direct the attention of the House and the country to the fact that this is a war year. We are not spending immense sums of money for ammunition as we did last year, but there are hundreds of thousands of men not yet demobilized. Their pay has to be provided as well as the