

this trade question it has become a joke, and I fancy the people throughout the country are laughing hilariously over it all. I want to say that to some extent if we were not up against the situation we are at the present time, I would throw in my lot with the free trade party in the West. In fact I may find it desirable to do so later on.

Mr. MOLLOY: If you get a chance.

Mr. RICHARDSON: How delighted my hon. friend seems. I did not say with the Grits, but with the free trade party. He misunderstands the whole thing.

Mr. MOLLOY: Any old party for you.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I respect most of these western men who announce their inability to support the Budget. I have talked with many of them quite freely, and I know that they recognize that this Government has carried immense burdens during the last two or three years and has wrestled with many difficult problems. I have no doubt they intend to continue as supporters of this Government, but they realize that on this tariff question, which is such a live issue in the West, if they did not take the position which they are taking, this Parliament and this country might have to deal with men who will be much less reasonable later on. I am not sure but that the Canadian people may yet have great cause to rejoice in the fact that an organization may come out of the West which will help solve many of these trade questions, bring relief to that western country and, in a measure, to Eastern Canada as well, and constitute a genuine low tariff party as distinguished from the old Laurier party.

One of the griefs which I have over this issue is the fear of a permanent division between the East and the West. The West has a great future. It is a great and productive territory but it has laboured under many handicaps. However, it is indissolubly united with the rest of Canada and a solution ought to be found to appease the West and bring harmony between it and the east. In my judgment the tariff should not be in politics. It should not be a political question at all but should be settled by a board of experts, a board of economy men, the best masters of economics that we could find. Let us invite men even from other lands if necessary to study the question and help us solve the tariff issue in this country. It seems a pity that the West should be divided from the East. It has always appeared to me most unfortunate that the people of

[Mr. Richardson.]

this country should be divided into hostile political camps over the tariff. The division is not real for the reason that the question is not thoroughly understood, and we should have competent experts to consider the tariff question with a view, if possible, of removing it from politics.

Mr. ARCHAMBAULT: I would like to know if the hon. member is in favour of free trade in fruit.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Absolutely. If there is one thing in the West that we need it is free fruit. In the old days, let me tell my hon. friend, the farmers used to trade a whole bushel of wheat for a dozen bananas. I have a brief here on the question that I had intended to bring before the House to-night but I cannot afford the time, before the division? I had to make up my mind to sacrifice this point, but I am delighted that the hon. member has asked me the question because it gives me an opportunity—

I have still another point to deal with on the tariff. I would not say anything to offend the sensibilities of my hon. friend the leader of the Opposition, because I have learned to like his personality. But in addressing some remarks to the House on this question I desire to buttress my arguments as far as possible, and I may be allowed to read a letter which I recently clipped from the Ottawa Citizen. It reads:

Things seem to be going from bad to worse in Canadian Parliamentary conditions when the leader of the Liberal Opposition declares—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. It is not in order for the hon. gentleman to read anything from a newspaper or a letter commenting on or dealing with anything said by a member of the House.

Mr. R. L. RICHARDSON: May I give the purport of it? I would put it this way—

Mr. McKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I have no objection to the hon. member reading the letter in question if it will be any consolation to him.

Mr. SPEAKER: It matters not whether the hon. member objects or not. I wish to see the rule obeyed.

Mr. R. L. RICHARDSON: The rules of this House are far greater than either the leader of the Opposition or myself and I am perfectly willing to abide by your ruling, Sir. But I had the idea that that was one of the things that one could do. I recall Senator Edwards many years ago when he used to sit next to Sir Wilfrid Laurier in the House, and I remember how he used