

would have been willing in return to reduce the price substantially this year and to follow that up by further reductions. The real essence and need of protection is that we protect the home market. All we want in return is a fair price and it can be given in some other manner than that adopted by the government of the day. If we are going to build automobiles, let us build them in Canada. We may not be able to build them as cheaply as they can be built in other countries; but let us build them as cheaply as we can and build them in our own country. The same thing applies to any other legitimate industry which is or could be established in Canada.

We have a Tariff Advisory Board. I am reminded that a short time ago a deputation came to Ottawa protesting against a reduction in the duties on automobiles without having the question referred to the board. I listened carefully to the presentation of their statements; I observed the able manner in which they presented their case to the cabinet, and I heard an eloquent speaker on behalf of the veterans, many of whom were employed in that industry, say to the Prime Minister: "Mr. Prime Minister, when you were in Oshawa shortly before the election I, as a supporter, was invited to your platform. I heard you say that no act of yours would be injurious to any industry in Oshawa; I heard you say that before any reduction in duties would be made there would be a reference to the new tariff board that would be created, the fullest right would be given to them to present their case and a decision would be made on the merits of the case. All I am asking to-day, Mr. Prime Minister, is not that you restore the duties to their former level but that you refer this question to the board that you have appointed; in other words, that you keep the promise you made to the electors of Oshawa before the election." Was that not a reasonable request? It was presented in a most fair and gentlemanly manner.

Has public life in this country reached such a level that a deputation of 3,000 people must come here to ask the Prime Minister of the Dominion of Canada to keep a promise that he made a few days before the election? Yesterday we had a debate on the merits of which I do not intend to touch in any way; but it was a simple request on the part of a citizen of Canada, who claimed that he had suffered an injustice, to present his case to the House. A point of order was raised by the Prime Minister and an attempt was made to prevent that petition from being

received. Have things come to such a pass that a citizen of this free country, complaining of an injustice done him by one of the officers of this House is not to be allowed to present his case? The only defence, or substance of a defence, was summed up by the hon. member for West Middlesex (Mr. Elliott) who said in effect that this petition should be rejected because the government before they received it had decided that they did not intend to grant it. Those were not the words but that was the effect of his explanation.

If there is anything that we should cherish in our parliamentary institutions, it is the pledges and promises that we as public men make when we appeal to our electors for support. Time after time during the past four or five years have mushroom promises been made to be almost immediately and callously broken. So we have the spectacle of almost daily occurrences such as I have cited and the government, guilty of this, appealing to the House and the country for continued support on a policy of expediency instead of on a sound, business policy in the best interests of this Dominion.

We have the admission of the government when the duties were reduced on automobiles, that this was done in response to sentiment. We have the further admission to-day from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Robb) that that sentiment was supported by newspaper clippings that he had before him on his desk. This fully substantiates—I do not need to look for anything further—the charge I have made that this is a government of expediency, determined to cling to office by any method at its disposal instead of on sound, business principles. When the automobile deputation were told that sentiment was of no value; that the only requisite was argument and solid facts a principle was laid down, but when the government wants to take action, sentiment or newspaper clippings or prospective votes, or anything in the world will suffice. What this country needs most of all is change of government and an announcement to the world that we intend to think and act as Canadians; that we intend to safeguard and protect our citizens and our industries; in a word, a true National Policy. This and this only will restore confidence and hasten national progress and prosperity in Canada.

Mr. WILFRID GIROUARD (Drummond-Arthabaska) (Translation): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Norfolk-Elgin (Mr. Stansell), and previous to him, a number of members of the opposition spoke of the in-