

The Address—Mr. Coldwell

of the government and of this parliament to review all our commercial policies with a view to protecting the Canadian economy against the difficulties which are almost certain to arise when this aid ends. In spite of the search for alternative markets for Canadian products, our best and most stable market for our wheat, fish, fruit, lumber and a good many other surplus commodities, both now and in the future, is bound to be in the United Kingdom. As we have been reminded during the last few hours, the position of that country has changed fundamentally because of the loss of overseas investments and of shipping in two world wars, a condition to which both the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Drew) properly referred. If we are to market vast quantities of Canadian goods in the United Kingdom, it is vitally necessary that we increase our imports from that country. Under the new circumstances that have arisen, we cannot expect the United Kingdom to buy some \$700 million worth of goods in a twelve-month period, while we, Canada, take from her in return less than \$400 million worth of imports in the same period. The United Kingdom cannot find the dollars unless of course we are prepared to accept sterling, freeze it, or invest it in the sterling area or the British colonial possessions.

With regard to our imports of British goods, over the week end we have seen some steps taken by the United Kingdom to enable her to market more goods in North America. I am not going to discuss them now because they will be before us in more detail tonight. I presume, when the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) speaks. A great deal of discussion has taken place recently in Canada and the United States with regard to the increased cost of production of British goods and the necessarily higher prices charged for them abroad. If this is true, it seems to me that, apart from the currency matter, attention should be given by this parliament to a drastic reduction in Canadian tariffs against United Kingdom commodities in order to promote the exchange of goods between our two countries on a more even basis than in the past. For after all the old contention that Canadian industry requires protection from cheaper British goods, if it were ever valid, no longer has any basis in economic fact if the statements made regarding the costs of British goods are in any sense correct. We therefore urge the government to consider at this session a drastic reduction of tariffs as a major step in promoting Canada's trade with the United Kingdom.

I note that the speech from the throne speaks with a great deal of satisfaction about

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the international wheat agreement. Coming from the prairies, I welcome that particularly, and I believe that it should be welcomed by every hon. member of this house. But, when we see these agreements, they bring before us in a very concrete form the new pattern of world trade which is emerging among the nations. The old system of unplanned, unregulated, competitive and so-called multilateral trade has passed away, and a new form of trading relationship, based upon planning and co-operation among the nations, is taking its place. It is difficult sometimes to understand the interpretation placed upon that term, "multilateral trade", in this very modern and new setting. To some it seems to mean the old-fashioned laissez-faire system which some people think existed before the war, when indeed it did not exist. Yet the people who advocate in our country and elsewhere such a policy are often those who within the confines of their own countries and within Canada demand protection against foreign competition, and who have often succeeded in stifling all competition within their own domestic economy by building nation-wide monopolistic enterprises. In no country is this more true than in Canada. In the United States they have the Sherman anti-trust law. We have nothing comparable to it. It is true we have the Combines Investigation Act, but it is not in the same class as the anti-trust legislation in the United States. As those of us who were in the last house and saw the reports made by the commissioner of the Combines Investigation Act know, we have no effective means of dealing with combines and with monopolistic practices in our own country.

In the speech from the throne the government emphasizes the necessity for international trade, and yet at the same time, for example through its tariff protection, and as of July 1, through its restoration of certain tariffs against British cotton and rayon piece goods, it aids powerful industry, and is endeavouring, it seems to me, to promote a certain type of national self-sufficiency. This policy, incidentally, was followed in the United States, which because of its wide and varied resources, enabled that country to establish self-sufficiency, an example which is being followed in many other countries of the world. Therefore it is the duty of this parliament to give close attention to economic policies which will expand rather than restrict our ability to trade with other nations of the world.

As the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) pointed out a few moments ago, there is no country in the world so dependent, because of the peculiar type of our production and of