

sion appointed in 1920, of which the ex-Minister of Finance (Sir Henry Drayton) was chairman, and which toured the country from coast to coast, a real tariff commission. Well, personally I do not call that investigating body a tariff commission; I call it a tariff committee. And more than that, the evidence which that commission took was not of such a character as a properly constituted commission, such as I have in mind, would hear. Hon. gentlemen should not confuse the work of a real tariff commission with the investigations of these committees that have been appointed at various times. Both Liberal and Conservative governments in the past have appointed committees that have toured the country for the purpose of ascertaining the feeling of the people with regard to possible tariff changes; and the very fact of such investigations have shown the need of something of the kind. We have had governments appointing commissions that have travelled around the country at much expense, and this very fact is an admission on the part of those governments, both Liberal and Conservative, of the need of an investigating organization of this character. There is no question about that.

Mr. HARRIS: Is it a fact that the leader of the Progressive party in the Upper House vigorously opposed the tariff commission in this House in the session of 1911-12, and still holds the views he expressed then?

Mr. ELLIOTT (Waterloo): I suppose the hon. member is right; but I am not responsible for the views which any other hon. gentleman either in this House or out of it may hold.

Mr. HARRIS: Is the hon. gentleman a member of the party to my left which is led by the hon. member for Brandon (Mr. Forke)?

Mr. ELLIOTT (Waterloo): Mr. Speaker, in my campaign of 1921 I accepted the Progressive platform with certain reservations. On every platform on which I stood up to address the electorate I advocated the appointment of this tariff commission for two or three reasons. And since then on various occasions, whenever I have had an opportunity, I have never failed to stress the importance of the matter. I have taken this ground, that I was opposed not only to an increase but also to a decrease in the customs tariff until the whole question should have been referred to a properly organized commission. And the views I expressed in that regard at that time I hold to-day. I have received great encouragement from the different organizations within my riding in connection with this matter; I have letters

[Mr. W. Elliott.]

from the Chamber of Commerce of the city of Galt, from the Trades and Labour Council of South Waterloo, and from the Town Council of the town of Preston, besides, as far as I know, from every organization within the south riding of Waterloo. They have all endorsed my position on this question. Moreover, I have resolutions from the Brantford Trades and Labour Council as well as from a great many other bodies throughout the province of Ontario endorsing the stand I have taken. I am convinced therefore that there is great need of such a tariff commission as I suggest, and without doubt the people are realizing that need as they have never done before. I hope, then, that the government will take my advice, although I do not suppose that they will; they never do. If they will take my advice they will immediately proceed to form such a commission, and I feel safe in saying that a bill for the purpose would be supported by a large majority in this House. I have been particularly insistent in emphasizing my position for several reasons. One is that my party's platform contains the following clauses:

That all corporations engaged in the manufacture of products protected by the customs tariff be obliged to publish annually comprehensive and accurate statements of their earnings.

And:

That every claim for tariff protection by any industry shall be heard publicly before a special committee of parliament.

That calls practically for just what I have been advocating for a great many years. In fact the demand has been coming from all over the Dominion, for the great mass of consumers are realizing the importance of this question. Therefore, I hope the government will deal with it as I have suggested, and I think such action would be received very gratefully throughout the country.

I do not wish to detain the House any longer. I have spoken very hurriedly and have tried to present my views in as few words as possible. I repeat that I have on many occasions voiced my opposition to an increase or a reduction in the tariff until the whole question has been referred to a properly organized commission. I am still of that opinion, and therefore I do not see how I can support the budget as brought down by the government.

Mr. JOHN HUBBS (Prince Edward): Mr. Speaker, I see very little in the budget proposals that will be of much interest or advantage to the people; on the contrary, I think in the main they will be detrimental to the best interests of the nation. It is true