

I need not remind hon. members of what I said during the course of the short session as to what would be the effect of my hon. friend's action at the Imperial conference. Inasmuch however as some of his remarks and the comments of others have been capable of being taken as meaning that it was due to some action or lack of action of the present British government, the Labour government which is at present in office, that my right hon. friend was unable to get anything done at the Imperial conference, I feel I ought to read to the house exactly what I said to him before he left for England as to the fate of any course such as the one he in fact adopted. The Prime Minister I repeat was doomed to failure as far as the Imperial conference was concerned, before he left Canada at all, having in mind his proposals and the methods which he intended to adopt. The quotation which I am about to give will be found in revised Hansard for September 9, at page 37, and in the unrevised Hansard at pages 41 and 42, where I am reported as having spoken as follows:

My hon. friend seems to have very little faith in voluntary agreements. Let me say to him that when he goes to London I think he will find that the only things he will be able to accomplish or that any government will be able to accomplish in the matter of trade as between the different countries of the British Empire will be by voluntary agreement, by cooperation. He will find it very difficult to get very far along on any other path.

Does my hon. friend believe he has a mandate from the Canadian people to-day to blast his way into the British market? Is that the mandate he has? What is the position? Is he, in the measures he is about to bring down, to increase the tariff against Britain as well as against other countries? That was the statement he made, that he was going to put up the tariff against Britain as well as against other countries. Is that the step he proposes to take in advance of proceeding to an Imperial economic conference? Does he believe he is going to strengthen his hand in that fashion?

After making his speech about blasting his way into the markets of the world, my hon. friend when taken to task said that after all it was not blasting he meant so much as it was blazing, that it was not the warrior attitude so much as the crusader attitude which he was adopting, that all he was claiming was to be first in the long line of great men who have helped to blaze the path of Canada and of the empire. Then when he went on to explain what he meant by "blazing," he came to the term "bargaining," and said that some bargaining process was the only way he was going to trade, whether with other parts of the world or with other parts of the British Empire.

What does that mean? According to his own statements it means putting up the tariff in this country, to begin with; that is to be the first part of it. And then on the other hand, so far as the other countries of the British Empire are concerned, it means that

they are to be obliged to change their fiscal policies in order to make them accord with the fiscal policies of this country. My hon. friend knows very well that the British Empire is founded on self-government, and that as far as self-government is concerned, it means autonomy in everything and in nothing more than in the matter of fiscal policy. If he is proceeding to England with any idea of trying to influence the parties in Great Britain in the matter of their fiscal policy, his time would be very much better spent at home. If he expects to make a bargain counter out of the council table at Downing street, he will not get very far in serving the interest either of Canada or of the British Empire. I say he should tell us very plainly what his particular policies are going to be, and his attitude with respect to the questions which may come up at the Imperial conference.

When that statement was made to my hon. friend, when, as leader of the opposition speaking to the leader of the government, I indicated that we at least believed that if he were going to make a demand which involved a change of fiscal policy in Britain, if he were going to try coercive methods, he would get nowhere, I say that if those were the things he intended to do, he should have taken parliament into his confidence and given the house and his own followers an opportunity to express their views on a procedure of that kind.

On September 17 I again referred to the futility of hoping to extend trade within the empire by tactics such as the raising of the tariff against Britain on the eve of the conference, or of extending the market for Canadian wheat by any process of bargaining or "blasting." I think what was prophesied at the time has turned out to be true, pretty much to the letter. These were the remarks I made to my right hon. friend; they will be found in the unrevised Hansard for September 17, 1930, at page 340, and in the revised Hansard at page 315:

I have only one further word, and that is to repeat with emphasis what I said a moment ago about this legislation being introduced on the eve of the Imperial conference. The Prime Minister well knows that there is no problem quite so serious for Canada at the present time as that of the marketing of our western grain and of surplus farm products generally. He knows that the purchasing power of the middle west, in the last analysis, will determine the extent to which other branches of industry will thrive, and that this depends in very large part on the degree to which we can secure a market overseas for the grain of western Canada. He knows that many of the markets which we formerly had are closed or are being closed against us to-day, for instance, the markets of France, of Germany and of Italy. He knows also that protection is no cure for unemployment. He has only to look across the border in the United States, the most highly protected country in the world and see how extensive unemployment is there, to know that protection