

of money, and I understand that our western friends are asking that still greater sums be expended to construct this railway. In my opinion, and I have some knowledge of the matter, this undertaking should never have been started in the first place, and it would be a mistake for this government to spend one dollar on the Hudson Bay railway. It is regrettable, but still true, that every dollar spent by either this government or any previous government in endeavouring to build a harbour at either Port Nelson or Fort Churchill has been absolutely wasted. By reason of currents and the condition of the bottom of that large bay; the millions of dollars that have been spent in dredging since operations were first started have been practically wasted. I have some knowledge of this locality because I have been at the mouth of Hudson bay as far as Mugford and Nain, and it is impossible to get ships into the bay for any lengthy period. They may get in for four weeks out of the whole twelve months of the year, and no shipping man will send a vessel there unless he gets a higher freight rate, because he has to pay higher insurance. But what is the use of spending millions of dollars in building a railway to Hudson bay when it is impossible to keep the ports open on account of ice and the conditions that prevail at these places? I think it is about time that the people of the West, while we are all in sympathy with them, realized the futility of asking the government to spend money for the purpose of building the Hudson Bay railway when it can never be a success. Even if the railway were built, very little shipping would come to these ports.

I think I have said about as much as is necessary in regard to this matter. I feel that if this government is given a chance to prove its worth it will satisfy the taxpayers of the country that it is endeavouring to do its best under very trying circumstances. The government has been in power only a year, and it is impossible for any government to do very much in that time. We should bear in mind that when the Liberal party was in power from 1896 to 1911 this country was very prosperous. And I would remind my friends from the western provinces that any relief in the matter of taxation that has been given by the governments of this country has been given by the Liberal party when in office. That party went down to defeat in 1911 in an effort to provide some relief not only to western agriculturists but to all the people of Canada, when the present Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) and the late Mr. Paterson tried to get through a reciprocity agreement.

[Mr. Duff].

I think that we should at the earliest moment try to negotiate with the United States another treaty of that kind. I am not scared of the bogey of one hundred millions swallowing nine millions. Now, the people of the Maritime provinces are all good Canadians who believe in confederation, but unless some relief is given them, I fear to contemplate the future. Thousands of people have left those provinces during the last year, and if something is not done to retain the present population the Maritime provinces will lose thousands this year and next year as well. I do think that our western friends should unite with the members from the East in an endeavour to find some solution for the problem of the Maritime provinces. If that solution lies in a lower tariff and it can be provided without any injury to any of the rest of the people I am with the western members. But I do not think that this is the right time to move an amendment such as has been submitted by the hon. member for Springfield (Mr. Hoey). The leader of the Opposition (Mr. Meighen) in his speech the other day said that this tariff was 2½ per cent higher than it was when the government of which he was leader went out of power. I always take with a grain of salt anything the right hon. gentleman says, and I shall not dispute his words now; I could not, perhaps, hold my end of it in a controversy with him.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. DUFF: I beg pardon? I would try it, of course, if necessary. I want to read an extract from an editorial published in a Tory newspaper. The right hon. leader of the Opposition has said that the present tariff is higher than it was when the Union government, or the National Liberal and Conservative government, was in power. Nobody has any doubt about the politics of the *Mail and Empire*, a journal which is published in Toronto, the great home of Toryism, and is regarded generally as a loyal Tory newspaper. In an editorial which devotes a good deal of attention to the hon. leader of the Progressive party, the *Mail and Empire* says, referring to the hon. member for Brandon (Mr. Forke):

Does he regard the present tariff of Canada as a highly protective one, considering the fact that it is the lowest tariff Canada has had in a generation?

These are the words of the Toronto *Mail and Empire*, yet the right hon. leader of the Opposition said a few days ago, and I think he repeated it yesterday, that the present tariff was higher by 2½ per cent than it was when his government went out of power. I leave the matter to the right hon. leader of the