

It is the kind of contract which in the ordinary course of business would lead to lawsuits and the necessity of interpretations by the courts. Already there is a wide divergence of opinion as to the meaning of several of the clauses. Is an agreement subject to a variety of interpretations likely to bring about closer empire relations? Such a contract is what one might expect to find in business, but is it good for members of a family to be bound together by a covenant—in this case a very indefinite covenant?

Are we doing right to bind succeeding governments to terms of three, five or ten years? Time makes for change and I submit that we should be in a position to take advantage of any changes and to negotiate new agreements if necessary. All we have in this regard is article 23 of the agreement which, in my opinion, holds out nothing but trouble for future governments.

What will be the effect when Great Britain appears before our tariff board? When the bill was introduced we were told that the tariff board would be a partisan body, and I have no doubt that it will. Is it likely to adopt tariff measures out of keeping with the policies of this government? Are the decisions of the board to be subject to change overnight by regulation and order in council as have the measures of tariff passed during the session? If this is to be the case then I submit that the British businessmen appearing before the board will lose confidence in the board. There will be friction with a resultant loss of business both to Great Britain and to Canada.

No attempt is made in this agreement to deal with the evils of dumping duties and fixed rates of exchange. The removal of these powers would go a long way towards stabilizing trade, and yet all we have in the agreement is a promise that as soon as the finances of Canada will permit, something will be done. With declining trade, with declining revenues, all we can look forward to is another gloomy budget to be presented by the hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. Rhodes).

The Prime Minister closed his address with these words:

Wider still and wider
Shall our bounds be set
God who made thee mighty
Make thee mightier yet.

Did the empire become great by building around herself an economic wall? Did the empire become great by forcing tribute from the rest of the world? Has the link which has bound the empire together been created through preferences by tariff? Certainly not.

[Mr. Gray.]

The bonds which have held us together are the preference which we have in our hearts for the motherland; and though some hon. members may shout disloyalty from the house-tops, whether we be representatives of the Conservative, the Liberal, the Progressive or the Labour party in this house, and regardless of what may be said by Mr. Neville Chamberlain, we are all—

Children of Britain's island breed,
To whom the Mother in her need
Perchance may some day call.

Mr. E. E. PERLEY (Qu'Appelle): Mr. Speaker, I would think it is quite apparent to the members of the house, and no doubt to the Canadian people, that we have had almost enough discussion on the resolution introduced by the Prime Minister (Mr. Bennett) to approve the trade agreement between Canada and Great Britain. I would not venture to enter the debate at this time were it not for the fact that certain hon. members opposite, and particularly some from the province of Saskatchewan, have endeavoured to make it appear that nothing good can come out of these agreements for the Canadian people or even for the producers of western Canada. I feel it my duty, having the honour to represent in this house a rural constituency in Saskatchewan, to say that before coming to Ottawa I made a pretty thorough canvass of my riding, and I did not find a single businessman or producer who was not anxious that as soon as possible after parliament met, we should pass these agreements and see if we could get increased markets for our products.

I have noted with surprise the inconsistencies of the speakers opposite. The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Weir) referred to this last night. It has been a surprise to me to observe some hon. gentlemen opposite contradicting themselves, even in their own speeches, and to listen to some making statements the direct opposite of those made by their colleagues. To demonstrate this it is only necessary for me to refer briefly to the speech of the leader of the opposition (Mr. Mackenzie King) and to that made by his colleague, the hon. member for St. James (Mr. Rinfret). The leader of the opposition laboured hard and long to prove that Canada had coerced the mother country into these agreements, while the hon. member for St. James took strong objection that Great Britain had coerced Canada into these agreements and that we were being dictated to by an external government, such dictation, as he said, being wrong.