

That was sounding the death knell of protection just as the Minister of the Interior meant the words when he used the phrase the other day. I make this assertion in his hearing and he applauds it. No more tariffs based on the principle of protection—as set forth in the resolution of the Tory party, moved in this debate too late to be accepted—but a tariff based on the principle of revenue.

That was "our policy" in the past—the Laurier-Fielding policy. The words can have no other meaning. That is our policy to-day—the policy of the Liberal party—proceeding step by step towards the goal of greater freedom in matters of trade, never imposing a duty for protection's sake, but always acting on the principle or the basis of a tariff for revenue and revenue only. I repeat this statement in the hearing of hon. members and before this country, this is the position of the Liberal party. We believe in proceeding step by step. We believe when it comes to a question of imposing a duty in having duties framed on a tariff for revenue basis and not on the basis of protection.

One reference to a word which has been much called in question in this debate. A great deal has been said about the Right Hon. Mr. Fielding's reference to stability in his budget speech of last year. I notice that hon. members, when they attack the government either in reference to the Laurier-Fielding policy or in reference to stability, give to the phrase or the word their own meaning, and then tell us that we are putting a false meaning upon it. I contend you cannot take any word and separate it from the context in which it is used, and I say the right hon. Minister of Finance did not mean by tariff stability, any such thing as immobility, finality, stagnation or permanency. One hon. gentleman said something a day or two ago to the effect that the Minister meant the tariff should be permanent. Had he meant so he would have said so. Mr. Fielding was very careful to say that of all the things in the world that could not be permanent the one thing was the tariff. It had to be changed. There had to be adjustments to suit the needs of the time. He made that very emphatic. But after he had spoken hon. members began to take up the word stability and to use it for partisan political ends, to make it synonymous with finality. Before the debate was over I had occasion to say a few words on Mr. Fielding's reference to stability. My statement was made in the presence of the right hon. the Minister of Finance. I made it standing here while he was at my side, and he never questioned the interpretation I put upon his use of the word. My words were said with a full knowledge on the

part of my colleagues that they would be said. They were stated in order to make clear to the people of the country the meaning intended to be attached to that word, and I claim, Mr. Speaker, I had some right in the name of the Liberal party to say what meaning should be attached to that word. My words will be found on Hansard at page 3052 of the debate of May 23, 1923, as follows:

Stability does not mean finality. I notice that some hon. gentlemen opposite have sought to combine the two words. If there was one thing above another which the hon. Minister of Finance was most careful to emphasize when he spoke of stability, it was that as regards all legislation, and in particular as regards the tariff, there was no such thing as finality. He spoke particularly and specifically of the probable need for change as respects some items of the tariff affecting consumers and in relation to the necessities of production.

Elsewhere, I pointed out that Mr. Fielding could not have meant by stability no change for he had concluded his speech by saying that at the very first moment the party had the opportunity, they would go to the country on reciprocity, which meant a change in tariff all along the line.

But I have something that is even more authoritative as illustrating the significance and meaning to be allotted to the word. I have Mr. Fielding's own words where he uses the word "stability" in reference to the tariff changes. It was a word that Mr. Fielding was fond of using, that he had used many times in the course of his public life in addressing audiences. When he was speaking in the House of Commons in 1907, when he was bringing in the budget of 1907 that made the changes in the tariff that I have read to the House to-night, the reduction on implements and the like, he made use of the phrase "tariff stability" in relation to the period of nine years which had preceded it. If hon. members will look at Hansard of May 22, 1906, at page 3839, they will find that Mr. Fielding used the following words, speaking of the inquiry which he and certain of his colleagues had had with a view to a subsequent revision of the tariff, and of the revision which he intended to make, but which had not yet been made. This was in 1906:

We hope, during the recess, if this session does not extend to too great length, to take up that work...

That was the revision of the tariff.

...and at the November session, unless there should be delays in the present session, to cause a change in that programme, we hope to bring forward a revised tariff—not one which will make any great changes, perhaps...

Hon. members will notice that he says not great changes, but small ones; we shall see what these small changes were.

...but one which will meet such new conditions as have arisen; and we hope that we shall have the same mea-