

Since the hon. gentleman spoke on that occasion he has become a member of this government; and hon. members rejoice that the expenses of the government have risen from \$339,000,000 to \$391,000,000 per annum. This expenditure has been saddled upon the tax payers. This additional impost is equal to \$5.36 per head, which means an extra contribution of \$26 or \$27 to be made by the average family living in this country. This expenditure has to be made to meet the extravagance of the government which is in power to-day.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Robb) says that he has reduced taxation. He has reduced the tax on telegrams and transportation; the people who are wealthy enough to occupy compartment or sleeping berths have been given a 10 per cent reduction. But how about the sales tax? This tax affects the great mass of the people of Canada, and it is a burden upon the working people. This government upon coming into office, raised the tax from 3 per cent to 6 per cent. The sales tax could have been removed long ago had the government practised the economy which they are talking about at the present time. Twenty million dollars is remitted by the reduction of 1 per cent in the sales tax, but had the government practised economy that tax would have disappeared at least two years ago when an amendment to the budget speech was moved by the then leader of the opposition (Mr. Guthrie). The government was asked to remove the whole tax, but I suppose the Minister of Finance is holding back that 2 per cent and next year he can hurl out the news that there has been a 50 per cent reduction in the sales tax. Just before the next general election he will be able to tell what he is doing for the poor people in the way of remitting taxes.

The government still manage to retain the excise tax on matches. This article is of prime necessity in every household throughout the length and breadth of this Dominion, but the government still retain that tax which more than any other affects the poor. When the government were in opposition they were always preaching that they were the friends of the poor; in office they have become the friends of the rich and wealthy plutocrats and the big organizations to the detriment of the poor people of this country. They talk about the prosperity of Canada, and we are all delighted with the degree of prosperity there is at the present time. It has been rather interesting to sit on this side of the house and listen to some of the hon. gentlemen opposite; especially to some members of the government—to listen to the Minister

of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Malcolm) bringing forth the specious argument that the people of Canada are prosperous to-day. One of the arguments used by the minister is the stock argument which has been advanced by every member sitting on the Liberal side of the house. They all go to the bank reports, the reports of the big moneyed interests, the big trusts, the big mergers and the big combines and endeavour to show from the annual statements of those corporations that the people of Canada are wealthy to-day. Unfortunately that picture of general prosperity is not a true picture of what is actually taking place. Every one knows that the farmers are not as prosperous as they should be at the present time, and everyone knows that the wage earners have not been enjoying that general prosperity which is supposed to be abroad throughout the Dominion. So far as the farmers and the wage earners are concerned, that general prosperity is always just around the corner and a little bit away from them. It is a difficult thing for the average individual to understand why the government does not go to the working man and find out whether or not he is prosperous; why they do not go to the farmer and cite his case to show that the farmers are actually prosperous. The former leader of the Liberal party did not pursue the same method in trying to show whether or not the people were prosperous. The late Sir Wilfrid Laurier said that if the people were prosperous it was not necessary to cite statistics; that when the man in the street, the average working man, put his hand in his pocket and when the average housewife went to her pantry or larder they knew by what they found there whether or not they were prosperous.

Under this administration the farmer has never had a square deal. When our American cousins enacted the Fordney tariff, which was aimed against the farmers of this country, this government, in place of giving protection to the Canadian farmer, took that blow lying down. They were absolutely spineless; they never attempted to retaliate in any way or to protect the interests of our farmers. Every one knows that the American duty against Canadian farm products going into the United States is two or three times the Canadian duty against American farm products coming into this country. This government has allowed that situation to exist during its whole tenure of office. That is absolutely unfair to the Canadian farmer and has reacted against his best interests.

Not content with that, this government made a treaty with Australia and by order in council allowed that treaty to be effective