

duction or wiping out of the duty on some of their raw material and what machinery they may desire to import. The reduction or wiping out of the duty on raw material may be of benefit to those who are not manufacturers of this raw material, but it will cut out from under the feet of those who do both weaving and knitting a profitable part of their business, and will do no one any good. While as for machinery, there are few mills who have not now more machinery than they know what to do with; instead of wishing to buy they are in the market to sell, and there are no buyers, and the result is it will have to be sacrificed, which means pretty nearly a total loss.

What will be the effect on the wool industry of the country as a result of the proposal in the budget to admit free yarns? The sheep industry has had hard sledding for years. Statistical tables show that the sheep population has been almost constantly dwindling for many years, and that the per capita sheep population in Canada is many times less than that in other countries where sheep thrive no better than they do in Canada. What do Canadian sheep farmers think of this? The farmers' cry, in so far as there has been a distinctive cry from that class, has been that the government has been more solicitous for the weal of the urban industries at the expense of the farmer. Surely if ever there was justice in this contention, this government has gone out of its way to give absolute proof that after all the government's pretended care for the farmer is only a pretence.

The amendment proposed by the hon. member for St. Lawrence-St. George expresses regret that the measures proposed by the government do not provide for increased employment in Canada, nor prevent the continued emigration of our people to the United States, and that they do not make provision for the preservation of our domestic markets for Canadian farm and dairy products, nor for the effective development of our national resources, nor for the early abolition of the sales tax. As I believe the arguments hitherto presented in this house are conclusive proof of the statements in the amendment, I am in hearty accord with his amendment, and shall have pleasure in voting for it.

There is, however, another subject which has a strong appeal to me. It is not in any sense a criticism of the government except in so far as it may indicate a line of inaction on the part of the government. I must premise what I am about to say by stating that I have not consulted my chief or any of my colleagues on the subject, and that my statements which follow will be as new to them as to any other

member of this house, and it necessarily follows that what I have to say is only my personal view and is not in any way binding upon a single member of this chamber.

I have, however, long meditated on the subject. I know that it has been mooted elsewhere, but that is about as far as it has got. It has been pooh-poohed and ridiculed, but that is no argument in itself. It has been brushed aside as something entirely subversive of all economic ideas held hitherto as almost sacred, but I have failed in my reading to come across any reasoned and convincing argument against it.

While not denying that some inconvenience will result, still if it could be accomplished without too great an interference with economic conditions, the result would be well worth striving for. If the experiment is not fraught with too great dangers to warrant the attempt necessary to secure the accomplishment of the project, I am sure every one will agree that the project is well worth the consideration of parliament.

We heard from the hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Speakman) and the hon. member for Last Mountain (Mr. Fansher), and we have heard and shall hear from many other members of that school of thought, that because certain kinds of taxes were imposed during the war—such as income tax, sales tax, business profits tax—these should be retained unaltered so long as any part of the war debt remains. What is there so sacred about the income tax, or the sales tax, that they must not be touched? At the time of the war the need was great and the government of the day saw these ways for raising money and adopted them. Others might have found other or additional ways. That is not the question.

I look upon Canada in its financial aspect after the war as just like a mutual fire insurance company. Everyone knows that the members of a mutual fire insurance company share the losses of those who suffer loss in proportion to the size of their several risks. Our country was in deadly jeopardy. Had we lost the war to Germany, it cannot be seriously contended that Canada would not have fallen into German hands. Our property would have been actually confiscated, or if not, we should have been so taxed by the Germans that confiscation would have been preferable. The war debt is a debt of the nation and should be paid for by those whose property was salvaged in direct proportion to the risks involved, exactly as in the insurance case mentioned. It is easy to say that the debt is a debt of the nation, but when it comes to payment it is not the artificial