

Dominion that hinders production, and that is the high cost of living. That is what is preventing production of agricultural commodities in western Canada to-day. That is why we are year after year voting millions for an immigration policy for the purpose of bringing in more dupes to take our places in western Canada as we are squeezed off the land. These are the conditions that face us out there; this is the evil the government is expected to confront and to remove at this time. It is to be hoped that the government, with the encouragement it has had in the matter of tariff reduction, will now lose no time in removing some of the unjust taxes which are at present levied particularly on those things most needed for the maintenance of health and vigor in this rigorous climate, namely, food and clothing. With increases in many lines of production, with exports and imports showing improvements, surely a cut in taxation is due. I would urge the government to maintain the income tax as it stands to-day; it is the fairest means of raising revenue we have ever found. We should remove the import penalties and the sales tax from the necessities of life most needed by the workers of the nation. These things must be reduced.

Perhaps one of the greatest injustices which the people have ever had heaped upon them we had to face last summer in western Canada, particularly in that area that grows less of fresh fruit and vegetables than any other part of the Dominion, at least for a shorter period of the year. The Minister of Customs last summer saw fit to impose upon tomatoes, peaches and pears such a valuation as increased the duty from 100 to 180 per cent. There are about 1,000 crates of tomatoes in a carload. We used to pay some fifteen cents per crate on these tomatoes, making \$150 a carload. Reading some of the Liberal party's own election propaganda, I saw that the valuation was so increased as to result in a duty not of \$150 but of \$355 per carload on tomatoes, while peaches and pears were increased proportionately. I cannot understand how any government or any man would so trade on the rights of the people, particularly those on whom the burden bears heaviest, as to make their food so much more expensive. Why is it done? One gentleman in the United States a little while ago said that the tariff was always a dicker between the politician and the man who thought he would like to be protected. What does that imply? It implies that this is done for a consideration. The Minister of Customs last summer increased the duty to the extent I have mentioned—for whose benefit? Who got the benefit of that increase? The

[Mr. Evans.]

raiser, the producer? No. It is entirely a distributor's measure from beginning to end, and I say from my place in this House to-night that it passes my comprehension how any man or any government can trade on the rights of citizens in this way without a consideration of some sort, either in the way of campaign funds or otherwise. Such is the tariff and such it will always be, bringing our public men under suspicion year after year until the name of politician has come to be something to be suspected. These are evils we want removed.

Two of the greatest evils we have to face are the tariff and liquor. Smuggling has gone on to such an extent that we are trying the friendship of the country to the south, which has always been at peace with us. It seems to me that unless the people take the thing in hand the liquor traffic will ultimately control the Dominion, as indeed it is very largely controlling it now, so much so that the new Minister of Customs this last summer was appealed to to do things which otherwise I am sure he would not have done. Even the sacks used in connection with the liquor traffic were allowed to go free of duty just so that bootlegging might be facilitated, and for the convenience of the bootlegger himself. Not only did the Minister of Customs break the law of the land in doing so, but he also violated the spirit of a treaty we entered into with the United States. These things ought not to be.

Then let me deal with another discrimination, the grading of grain in western Canada. The seasons of 1925 and 1926 were unique in the history of Canada for fickle weather, and a tremendous quantity of damp grain has been coming forward. In 1925 we found that the grain commission was not equipped to deal with the situation as it then existed. The government, or the grain commission, I do not know who was responsible, denuded the laboratory in Winnipeg of its equipment and staff and left the chief in that city without even a charwoman to look after his office. When this damp grain came forward in such volumes there were no moisture testing machines or experienced men to deal with it, with the result that dissatisfaction exists to-day all over western Canada. This is only another way in which the west is being bled, we are losing thousands and thousands of dollars in every community because of improper grading.

I have just one further word, and this time it is dealing with the word "status"; I am not confusing this with the word "stature". A good deal has been said regarding our status in the empire. I am not so particular about