

The Minister of Finance was one of those eighteen, and I am delighted to see that he has got over the nightmare he had then, and has now no fears of the Canadian farmer becoming disloyal if he sells his wheat in the United States. What has brought about the change in my hon. friend's views? Economics has nothing to do with the change. What did the Solicitor General say on this question last year? Closing the debate on the resolution I had moved in favour of free wheat he said (Hansard, 1916, p. 1068):

I have always believed, and never more than now, that at least ninety per cent of this free wheat issue is purely political, while, for the other ten per cent it is economically unsound.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Was there a war on then?

Mr. TURRIFF: Yes, the war was on.

Mr. MEIGHEN: It is ninety-five per cent political now.

Mr. TURRIFF: My hon. friend says that ninety-five per cent of the agitation is political. For once in his life he has told the absolute truth, because I am sure that ninety-five per cent of the reasons that actuated him in putting wheat on the free list were purely political. His object was to save the party. Will my hon. friend, who said last year that ninety per cent of the agitation for free wheat was purely political and the other ten per cent mistaken economics, tell us what has made him change his mind? Why has he insisted on the Minister of Finance putting wheat on the free list? Will my hon. friend give us his reasons now?

Mr. MEIGHEN: I said that the attitude of my hon. friend would indicate that ninety-five per cent of his talk was purely political.

Mr. TURRIFF: I say that ninety-five per cent of the motives that actuated my hon. friend in getting wheat put on the free list were purely partisan. His object was to save himself and the Government.

Mr. MEIGHEN: What is actuating your indignation at the present time?

Mr. TURRIFF: I am trying to tell the House and the country that we are pleased to have wheat put on the free list, but the Government made a great mistake, in the interests of the farmers, in not taking this action last fall. If the Solicitor General will put wheat on the free list now, when he still believes that ninety per cent of the

agitation for it is purely political, why would he not do it last fall? What has the Minister of Finance to say? I could read pages of reasons that he gave why wheat should not be put on the free list. What has made my hon. friend change his mind?

Sir THOMAS WHITE: Read the Order in Council.

Mr. TURRIFF: I have it here, and the statements it makes are not true. I do not say the Minister of Finance did not believe these statements; I think he did. I do not think he would put a statement in an Order in Council that he did not believe to be absolutely true; I have that much faith in him. But the statements made in the Order in Council are certainly not correct, and nobody knows it better than my hon. friend the Solicitor General, who went on a trip all through the West, with his ear to the ground, and from every direction the cry came, "Either free wheat, or no Conservatives go to Ottawa at the next election." So at the eleventh hour my hon. friend calls on the Minister of Finance to put wheat on the free list. It was a case of death-bed repentance. However, they are entitled to all the credit they can get out of it, and they will get some credit for it in the West; they will get some votes that otherwise would have gone against them.

Mr. SCHAFFNER: That is what hurts.

Mr. TURRIFF: It does not hurt me half so bad as my hon. friend will get hurt if he appeals to his constituents again.

Mr. SCHAFFNER: Are you sorry that wheat was placed on the free list? What are you mad about?

Mr. TURRIFF: I am not mad about it. We are pleased to have it on the free list, and my hon. friends are entitled to all the credit they can get out of it. But now the Government have left it in such a position that not even an Order in Council is necessary; for as soon as the war ceases, unless the Order in Council is amended or wheat is placed on the free list in the ordinary way which should have been followed, wheat will be no longer free. As it stands to-day this accomplishes exactly the purposes hon. gentlemen opposite have in view—to enable their candidates in the West to declare that this means free wheat for all time, and the candidates in Ontario and in the East generally to do as they have been doing, to tell their electors that this is only a war measure and that as soon as the war is over things will be as they

[Mr. Turriff.]