

But the right hon. leader of the opposition (Mr. Mackenzie King) decreed otherwise, and in a speech of very considerable length called upon his followers to oppose the resolution and vote against the agreement. The reasons prompting the hon. gentleman to do that I am not going to attempt to discuss or analyze; but taking the speech he delivered as the key to his opposition to the whole scheme and as the lead that he gave to his followers as to the course they must take in opposing this treaty, the right hon. gentleman's position soon becomes obvious. I should like to divide the reasons he gave into six parts:

The first instruction to his followers was to abuse the Prime Minister. That could be taken for granted.

Secondly, he endeavoured to convince the house and the country that the Prime Minister had imposed some kind of brutal, unjust and burdensome agreement on the people of the United Kingdom.

The third was that other members of his following were to take precisely the opposite position and maintain that the United Kingdom representatives had imposed an agreement exactly similar in character upon Canada, and had in fact, as was stated by the hon. member for St. James (Mr. Rinfret), assumed a dictatorship as to the course that Canada should follow in her fiscal and commercial arrangements.

The fourth position of the right hon. gentleman was that in making these agreements for a period of five years the constitutions of all parts of the British Empire had been shaken to their very foundations.

His fifth objection was that in working out these agreements, negotiations or as the right hon. gentleman was pleased to term it, bargaining took place.

Sixth, and most absurd of all, was his contention that this agreement means diversion of trade, that the governments of the United Kingdom and of the British dominions together with the producers and manufacturers in each of these countries met together in secret conclave and there entered into some kind of devilish conspiracy to divert trade from foreign countries to the British Empire and dominions, thereby endangering the peace of the world.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that that is a fair summary of the position which the right hon. gentleman took in his opening speech, and I submit also that members who are supporting him on the other side of the house have followed with fair consistency the lead that he there gave to them. May I just briefly analyze one or two of those positions before coming to the main theme I wish to discuss?

[Mr. Nicholson.]

First, abuse the Prime Minister. Mr. Speaker, you can take it for granted that in any debate in which the right hon. leader of the opposition participates or in any speech or address that he delivers, even if it be one to the ladies' society of some church, at least one-half of his time will be taken up by a vituperative denunciation of the Prime Minister. I would just remind the right hon. gentleman and his followers that at the moment the Right Hon. R. B. Bennett is the Prime Minister of Canada, and furthermore he does not occupy that position through any log-rolling scheme or bargaining, as the right hon. gentleman was pleased to term it, but by virtue of the numbers who were elected to support him by the vote of a very considerable majority of the electors of this country—a position that my right hon. friend the leader of the opposition never had the satisfaction of occupying.

I come now to the five year period for which the agreements have been signed. Personally I look upon that length of time as one altogether too short. I have the consolation however that no government coming into power in Canada will presume to make any attempt at interference with these agreements. As a matter of fact all governments will look upon them in exactly the same sense as the delegates looked upon them; all governments will consider the agreements as the beginning of a great scheme of inter-empire development. In regard to the stipulated time, I say without hesitation that many of the industries which will ultimately profit by the agreement cannot hope to reap full advantage from them within a space of less than five years.

In that connection I should like to make some statements concerning an industry with which I am particularly familiar, namely that of lumbering. The statement has been made by many hon. members that the agreements mean nothing, so far as lumbering is concerned. A few moments ago the hon. member for Nipissing (Mr. Hurtubise) made a correction in Hansard, stating that last night he had said all Ontario lumber men looked upon the agreements as useless. It is strange that the Canadian Lumbermen's Association and the committee representing lumber men in all parts of Canada have never been apprised of the fact that lumber men anywhere looked upon the agreements in that light. At a later point in my remarks however I shall deal with that angle of the matter. I say now that Canada could not hope to recapture in less than from three to five years the British lumber market she has lost during the last