

With respect to the first accusation, I should like to say to the Solicitor General that I did not see the Prime Minister every day. If he does not believe me, he can ask the Prime Minister.

Mr. BENNETT: The hon. member did call to see me with a group.

Mr. POWER: Exactly, and I was coming to that; but the accusation is that I saw the Prime Minister every day. The Prime Minister knows that I did not see him every day, that I saw him with a group, and this is the group with whom I must have conspired. Will the Prime Minister or any hon. member of this house say that I could have conspired with such an open, jovial, friendly gentleman as the Hon. Mr. Tolmie, Premier of British Columbia? That gentleman was present, as was the Hon. Colonel Harrington, the Premier of Nova Scotia. Surely the Minister of Finance (Mr. Rhodes) will admit that that gentleman is no plotter. I think it will be admitted that the same applies to the Hon. Mr. Richards, the Premier of New Brunswick, who was also present, as well as Mr. Finlayson, the Minister of Lands and Forests of Ontario. Will any hon. member say that the hon. member for East Algoma is a beetle-browed Guy Fawkes who would conspire against this government? Those are the people with whom I was associated, those are the people with whom I saw the Prime Minister. I suggest to the Solicitor General that he does not have to be any more ridiculous or silly than he is obliged to be in following the dictates of whoever gives him his orders.

Mr. BENNETT: That observation might be applied to the hon. gentleman himself in connection with the conference.

Mr. POWER: I might say to the Solicitor General that I purposely refrained from taking any part in the discussion until that incident occurred, because I was under the impression that perhaps owing to the position I had occupied I might be considered as proceeding not quite within the bounds of propriety. More than that, I had a report to make to the government of the province and I deliberately kept that back, it being of a semi-official character, in order that it might not be used in this debate. In case it was intended that the reference to prayers and the hope that the conference would be a success applied to myself, I may say to the Solicitor General that a little inquiry upon his part would have led him to the conclusion that both personally and professionally I had at

[Mr. Power.]

least as much interest in the success of the rehabilitation of the timber trade as anyone in this house.

Having said this, I shall now go on to the discussion of the schedule itself. I do not know whether or not hon. members of the house are aware of the fact that prior to the conference the Canadian Lumbermen's Association spent many months in the preparation of a brief, at once exhaustive and instructive. New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, the province of Quebec and I think Ontario and British Columbia also filed briefs for the information of the Canadian government. The subject was very well canvassed and I have not the slightest doubt that the members of the Canadian delegation were fully informed as to the position of the lumber trade and what it expected to achieve out of the conference.

An unofficial British delegation, representing the timber trade, was also present. This delegation could be divided into two groups: one which afterwards came to be known as the pro-Russian, the other being in opposition to the first. This so-called pro-Russian group appeared to be the more important from the standpoint of the interests which it represented, and on account of the fact that it gave the impression that the timber trades federation of Great Britain was behind it. The members of this group could not by any means be accused of being bolshevik or communistic; they were members of firms whose names were household words in Canada at the time of my boyhood. These men represented such firms as Churchill, Sims and Company; Farnsworth and Jardine, and Foy, Morgan and Company, which are known for their integrity and honesty, and I am convinced that none of these men cherished any radical feelings or sentiments. They represented a group which had made arrangements with the soviet government to control the importation of timber into the United Kingdom. In 1929, or perhaps in 1928, Russian timber was pouring into England at distressed prices. There appeared to be no price bottom and as a means of self-protection this group, composed of some of the most prominent merchants in Great Britain, approached the Russian government with the idea of controlling these importations and purchasing in bulk the quantity which Russia would place on the British market. An arrangement was arrived at, and I believe I am correct when I say that something like 960,000,000 feet of Russian timber were allotted to this trust, cartel or whatever you like to call it. These gentlemen obtained very favourable terms from the Russian gov-