

Interim Supply

Mr. Harris: I know that. That is why I corrected the statement.

Mr. Rowe: These smart reporters have deleted it from *Hansard*; but if the Minister of Finance says that he should not have laughed and that he did laugh—

Mr. Harris: I did not laugh at the old people as you said.

Mr. Rowe: No. I must be fair to the Minister of Finance. I would not charge that against him. Now that they are in the twilight of their career I would not want to say that they had laughed at old people or babies either. Nevertheless I would put it this way. He laughed in smug and complacent satisfaction that they will win the election anyway. I think the minister has been smug all down through the years.

It always puzzled me that a government which has such a large majority as this one has should do as it has done. Every time that an election is in prospect it has brought in something that should have been brought in long ago. We see what it is trying to do for the maritime provinces at the present time. I have listened to the debates in this house for many years and I must say that we have never had in parliament more able representatives of the maritime provinces than we have had on this side of the house. Had it not been for hon. members over on this side—and I am thinking particularly of my colleagues the hon. member for Royal, the hon. member for Saint John-Albert, and in fact the various members on this side of the house—we would not have had much consideration except in election year as the government now proposes. As has been said, it would be a good thing if we had an election almost every year because that is the only time that the people seem to hear much about it.

I listened to the hon. member for Victoria-Carleton, the hon. member for Saint John-Albert and the hon. member for Restigouche-Madawaska as well as the hon. member for Royal. For four years the government never thought about any duty on potatoes. Even the Minister of Finance must feel a kind of cringe in that he is obliged to adopt some of the protective policies that I have been enunciating in this house and to get away from that old, dusty free-trade doctrine which he has followed all his life and put a duty on potatoes coming into Canada. Had the hon. member for Victoria-Carleton, the hon. member for Saint John-Albert, the hon. member for Restigouche-Madawaska and the hon. member for Royal not been pressing for it he would not have thought about this action in an election year. So the opposition, no matter how small it is, means something at election time.

[Mr. Rowe.]

An hon. Member: It will be smaller again.

Mr. Rowe: My hon. friend says it will be smaller again. That is the type of interruption we have been listening to from the back benches. No group are better judges of smallness than they are. I realize what scares you people who have been heckling like that for some years. One of the elevator attendants said to me the other day that we will see more changes in this parliament than there have ever been before. I asked why. I should not like to say what he said because if you fellows found out who he was you would fire him and put a stronger supporter in his place. He said that the government is getting tired, old and smug and that the people are dissatisfied with it. I think some of the fundamentals have been overlooked.

Mr. Schneider: We are tired of your wisecracks.

Mr. Rowe: The people of Waterloo North are getting on to your wisecracks. I was out there and I heard them talking about this great champion of free trade. He was talking about the great philanthropic trade policies of the Liberal party and of how we should trade with the people throughout the world. Then he came down here and in a loud voice wanted tariffs on bones, bottles and buttons because he said the button manufacturers in Waterloo North could not survive without it. He said that the rubber shoe people are getting for rubber shoes less than the cost of the rubber in the sole and that as for buttons, that were made out of bones, we must have tariffs on them. What a difference just a few months make. Never was there such a conglomeration of mixed-up policies as you see to your right, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Schneider: Wait until June 10 and we shall see.

Mr. Rowe: That is smug complacency. He says, "Even though I talked about free trade in Waterloo North, wait till June 10."

Mr. Harris: There will be nobody this year who will bet a shirt on the results in Waterloo North.

Mr. Rowe: I have no doubt about Waterloo North. The hon. member is just as fit as a free trader to represent the manufacturing industry as is any other Liberal that I know of because he is one Liberal who at least talks free trade at home and protection in parliament. Some of you do not know which way you are going. The Minister of Finance cannot rise and tell me that in future his policy is going to be the same for other people as it has been for the potato growers