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Increased Tariff Taxes are Not For War

The first and principal comment upon the tariff proposals in the budget of 1915 is that they constitute a flagrant breach of the truce between the parties which was entered upon at the beginning of the War.

Under a truce between parties, all matters of habitual party controversy must be put aside and kept outside the scope of Parliament. Else there is no truce. People cannot reopen old subjects of contention at such a time, and there is no subject in all our Canadian politics that has given rise to so much difference of opinion between the parties as this question of tariff duties.

It is well known that Liberals and Conservatives hold different opinion on the subject, and that there are differences of opinion within the ranks of each party concerning it. If the Conservative Government had taken up the question of tariff revision at any time before the War began, and had taken their party responsibility for it, nobody could have complained. That was the right they had gained by their party victory.

What they have no moral right to do, and what they have done, is to smuggle in a high tariff measure under the pretence that it is a measure of war taxation.

Mr. A. K. Maclean, M.P., for Halifax, in his temperate but searching comments on the budget defined the proper attributes of war taxation. Having regard to the political truce, three of these attributes of the utmost importance are:

- (1.) A war tax should be of such a nature that it could be dropped on the termination of the purpose for which it was imposed.
- (2.) The revenue derived from it should go wholly to the treasury.
- (3.) It should not be susceptible of use to set up new vested interests,