

Coll - British Preference
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THE BUDGET AND THE BRITISH PREFERENCE.

Speaking in Winnipeg on November 1st, 1929, the Prime Minister (Rt. Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King) prepared the country for the fiscal policy which was to be introduced by the Liberal Party in order to meet the unusual economic situation created by the tariff revision of the United States and its effect upon Canadian exports to that country. The words of Mr. Mackenzie King were as follows:-

"The Government is fully prepared, in the interests of Canada, to readjust its fiscal policy from time to time to meet any changes in existing fiscal structures which may affect home markets. If the United States or any other country does not want to trade with Canada, except on unequal terms, then surely we can look as never before to the rest of the world and particularly to the rest of the British Empire."

The Budget of 1930

When Mr. Dunning delivered his Budget Speech on May 1st, the people of Canada discovered that the Mackenzie King Government had declared for a far-reaching extension of the British Preference with the double object of diverting large proportions of existing Canadian imports from the United States to Great Britain and of assisting by this means the Canadian consumers to take greater advantage of the lower scale of duties under the British Empire Preference. *to get markets for Canadian goods*

The British Preference - A Liberal Policy.

During the discussions on the Budget which have taken place within the past few weeks, Conservative speakers have resorted to the ancient tactics of accusing the Government of adopting Conservative policies. But the British Preference was never a Conservative policy. It was introduced in 1897 by the first Laurier Administration. When it was first introduced Sir Charles Tupper said:-

"I say that a deeper wrong was never inflicted upon Canada." Conservative leaders of our own day have paid lip service to the cause of Empire, but have opposed either directly or by implication the practical steps which have been taken by Liberal Governments to give reality to Empire co-operation.

On May 6th, 1930, Hon. R. B. Bennett, Leader of the Conservative Party, declared in the House of Commons:-

"If a dollar goes to the West Indies that should go to a Canadian it is no better than if the money went to the United States."

W.L. Mackenzie King Papers
Memoranda & Notes

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