

his attention, and he seems to be in some doubt as to whether I regard this agreement as jeopardizing in some manner the fiscal independence of Canada. Let me assure my hon. friend that I have no doubts on the matter whatever. There is no danger to the Empire in this agreement which has been presented to the House by my hon. friend the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Foster). There is no man in this House to whom I listen, speaking generally, with greater attention or interest than the hon. member for Red Deer. There is a quality of spontaneity and of wholesome humour about him that, I must say, appeals to me and there is also an originality about the hon. gentleman. When my hon. friend from Red Deer is speaking it is always my hon. friend from Red Deer; we know that it is no one else. If he strikes a hard blow, a good English blow, it is usually above the belt. I will pay him that credit. My hon. friend is interesting to me because he is one of the few specimens of free traders still extant in this country; at least he was until very recently. He is a graduate of the Manchester school, I believe, an apostle of Bright, of Cobden and, I think, going back farther, of Adam Smith.

Mr. FOSTER (North Toronto): A son of Adam.

Mr. WHITE: And a son of Adam. That is one point of similarity between him and the rest of us; we are all sons of Adam. But, until recently he was an apostle of Adam Smith. I have always considered my hon. friend a free trader, dyed-in-the-wool, a convert not likely to apostasize, a free trader, free trader to-day, to-morrow and for ever. It was to me a surprise recently in the naval debate to find that my hon. friend had changed from a dyed-in-the-wool free trader to the most rabid protectionist that we have ever had in this country. My hon. friend is a fiscal chameleon: he can change his colour not only overnight but in a few minutes in the course of a debate. I was so surprised to hear my hon. friend's utterances in the naval debate in regard to the building of ships in Canada, required to meet the serious need of the Empire at this particular juncture, that I did not trust my memory, but I took occasion to look up 'Hansard,' and what did I find? I found that my hon. friend was speaking of the serried hordes of labour that he had seen in the Glasgow ship yards.

Mr. CLARK (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I am sorry to do so because I do not fear any argument that is borrowed from the Minister of Trade and Commerce, but I think it is not according to the rules of the House that speeches of this session should be discussed at this present moment.

Mr. WHITE (Leeds).

Mr. SPEAKER: The rule is quite plain that a previous debate cannot be quoted in the House. I was not quite sure that the hon. member intended to quote a previous debate.

Mr. WHITE: If my hon. friend is not willing that this House should have again brought to its attention what the hon. gentleman said only a few days ago I cannot object to the ruling of the Speaker.

Mr. CLARK: As a member of this House I claim, what my hon. friend has just said, that I can give hard knocks and take them. I am a little bit of a stickler for the rules of parliamentary procedure, and, after all, rules are bigger than my hon. friend and bigger than I.

Mr. WHITE: I should like to call attention to the fact that when my hon. friend did me the honour of referring to me, he himself referred to a passage in a previous debate, the debate upon the Address.

Mr. CLARK: Last session.

Mr. WHITE: This session. My hon. friend referred to the fact that I had, in connection with the reciprocity agreement, stated that it involved the fiscal independence of Canada. Now my hon. friend is objecting to my doing precisely what he did a few moments ago with reference to myself. Let me appeal to my hon. friend. My hon. friend is a true Briton, believing in fair play. I ask him if he is unwilling that I should refer to certain utterances of his in the previous debate on this question of trade. I ask him, and I appeal to his sense of fair play, as to whether he thinks it quite in accordance with that British fair play, that he should challenge me here as to a matter that I referred to in a previous debate, that he should quote what I said in a previous debate, and then object when I get up to defend myself in connection with that and reply to his argument.

Mr. CLARK: I think I was saved from being out of order by the fact that it is perfectly notorious to every one of us who listened with the closest attention to my hon. friend's maiden speech in this House, that he elaborated his great argument about his fiscal independence in the speech which was delivered last session. The rule applies to a reference to a debate which has taken place in this session. I am not unwilling to meet anywhere any argument that my hon. friend can make. I do not rise for my own protection; I rise for the protection of the House of Commons and its members.

Mr. WHITE: If my hon. friend objects, I will not refer to the previous debate; I will put it this way: During recess my hon. friend has been speaking in the West