

*Customs Tariff*

That is a palpable untruth. That is another of those opposition charges that have no substantiation. To make that pretence is to indulge in misrepresentation of the facts. We have shown in the course of the discussions yesterday that with reference to the report of the tariff board in connection with iron and steel items we recommended some increases and some decreases compared with the recommendations of the tariff board and the decreases were in the majority. Similarly, on pipes and tubes, in the departures we recommended from the report of the tariff board there were some increases and some decreases and the decreases were in the majority.

No one can pretend, Mr. Chairman, that the tariff on wool items is a heavy or high tariff. Let me give you these figures by way of illustration. I am not going into other aspects of the textile industry. If you take woollen fabrics summed up in percentage figures the tariff hitherto applicable to woollens has been 15 to 16 per cent. With these modest changes it will be 17 to 18 per cent. Compare that with cotton goods under the Canadian tariff. The average tariff there is 21 per cent and on synthetics 30 per cent. Have we heard complaints from hon. members opposite about these other rates? These rates of 21 per cent on cotton and 30 per cent on synthetics were inherited from them but they left the woollen rates at 15 to 16 per cent and talk about an increase to 17 to 18 per cent, a 2 per cent increase, as though it would move this item into a high tariff rate. One has only to illustrate by the reference I have made to realize that kind of talk is simply poppycock.

Let me ask the rank and file of hon. members opposite this question. Are they prepared to disregard this modest recommendation of the tariff board, ignore the needs of this industry, go blithely forward and permit the industry, if necessary, to die, as the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate said? He says it is not an indigenous industry and therefore it does not deserve to live.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I did not say anything of the kind.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** He said it did not deserve to live if it could not get along with low tariff rates. That was the whole burden of his speech. What indigenous industries are there in this country by his standard? I suppose fishing, hunting and some primitive agriculture are the only indigenous industries that he recognizes.

**The Chairman:** Order. I regret to interrupt the Minister of Finance but I must advise him that his time has expired.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I should like to ask the minister a question and then he will have another half hour. The minister said that so far as any remark of mine was concerned the opposite meaning should be taken and it would be pretty accurate. The minister objected to my saying that this resolution was kicking the British in the teeth. I offered to substitute the word "stomach". I ask the minister seriously, taking the opposite meaning does he regard this gesture as an embrace of Britain?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Mr. Chairman, let us come down to facts and put aside my friend's metaphors and figures. This is not a gesture at all and there is nothing symbolic about it as he has sought to represent on this and other occasions. This is a measure that has to be judged by the house, in my respectful submission, precisely on its merits. It was not intended to have any symbolic significance other than its intrinsic merit and the effect it will have in creating a very modest increase here. In measuring the modesty of the increase, let me point out that it has been estimated, contrary to what was said by hon. members opposite about the burden this is going to throw upon Canadian consumers, that all it means is an increase of about 15 cents in the cost of the woollen material in a suit of clothes and an increase of about 25 cents in the cost of the material entering into an overcoat. In the face of that they try to pretend that this is something that is going to hurt Canadian consumers. I ask the hon. members opposite to judge this on its merits.

**Mr. Benidickson:** Would the minister just confirm that by the well known trade rules on yardage that apply to a suit or an overcoat?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** If my hon. friend wishes, I shall be glad to give him the details of that. If he wishes to know the weight of the goods that go into the suit or into the overcoat, I shall be glad to tell him. Those are the figures that have been submitted by very competent authorities.

I am not going to take advantage of the opportunity which was given to me to extend my remarks. I simply wish to close my remarks by asking—

**The Chairman:** I must ask hon. members to please permit the Minister of Finance to carry on his remarks. There is far too much noise in the chamber at the moment.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** I do not intend to proceed, I simply wish to ask a question. I will close with a question. Will certain members opposite be prepared to follow the lead and endorse the statements made today by