

critical. Construction work of all kinds suspended owing to lack of supplies. This delay is serious blow to general development. Strongly urge temporary remission of duty which will enable us to obtain cement from United States so as obviate further commercial distress.

Board of Trade.

My hon. friend contends for a policy that will retard development in the West. The right hon. leader of the Opposition makes these charges when he might have had the common civility to have walked over to my office and said: 'Will you be good enough to let us see the documents on which you took action in the reduction of the duty on cement?' Is it fair that, on the strength of an anonymous communication, a charge involving my personal integrity should be made against me on the floor of this House? I say there is an apology coming to me in all fairness.

Mr. MACDONALD (Pictou): When the hon. minister speaks about this communication being an anonymous one, is he in a position to say that the Prime Minister did not receive a letter signed by a responsible person in the term published in the *Courier*?

Mr. WHITE (Leeds): I am not in a position to say that. All I can say is that he said yesterday, as I understood him, that it was anonymous.

Now, let me say here, because it is not necessary that I should in any way evade these accusations—the case is absolutely conclusive—that there is not a man among hon. gentlemen opposite who will say that this Government could have taken any other course in view of these telegrams and communications. I ask any hon. gentleman to rise in his seat and say that it could, and, not only that, if we had not done it, how the welkin would have rung! The hon. member for Edmonton would have waxed eloquent about the ills of the West and he would have placed the onus upon us of being allied with the trusts, mergers and combines. Talk is all right, but this is the real test. When my hon. friend from South Wellington (Mr. Guthrie) says we are the representatives of the trusts, the mergers and the combines, the position of the right hon. Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Edmonton will be a sufficient answer on this question.

Mr. OLIVER: Mr. Speaker—

Some Hon. MEMBERS: Sit down.

Mr. OLIVER: I asked the hon. gentleman before to correct the statement which he has seen fit to put in the mouth of my right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition and myself. I understood that he intended to correct it. I must ask him again not to repeat it.

Mr. WHITE (Leeds).

Mr. WHITE (Leeds): I have no desire to misinterpret what the hon. gentleman said, but I do feel a little strongly about this on account of the reckless way in which this charge was made against me.

Mr. MACLEAN (Halifax): There was no charge made against the hon. gentleman. Do not be too sensitive.

Mr. WHITE (Leeds): Let me make answer to the hon. junior member for Halifax (Mr. Maclean). The leader of the Opposition said distinctly—and I took his words down—that it was by reason of political expediency—

Mr. OLIVER: Hear, hear.

Mr. WHITE (Leeds): I hold strong views, and I have some ideals as to the position which I have the honour to occupy in this Government, and if the Minister of Finance, for considerations of political expediency, would do what has been done here, he would be recreant to his trust. If the hon. junior member for Halifax has a different conception then I hope he will change it before hon. gentlemen opposite get into power.

Mr. MACLEAN (Halifax): My only objection is that the Minister of Finance assumes the whole responsibility himself.

Mr. WHITE (Leeds): My hon. friend does not, I am sorry to say, keep in touch with current events. If he had kept in touch with what was happening he would have known that I made the public statement that I had investigated this matter, and that it was in the public interest that this should be done by reason of the cement shortage. Yet, yesterday, it was brought up here as a charge against me that it was for political expediency that it was done, and I am simply meeting the charge as I think I am entitled to do.

Did I rest content with this? I did not. I have a number of press clippings from Western papers, from Liberal as well as Conservative papers, that would have no interest whatever in influencing adversely the Saskatchewan election, impressing upon this Government the absolute necessity of taking some action that would relieve the cement famine which was tying up work in different parts of the West. I have these clippings, but I am not going to put them before the House. What did I do? I decided to look into the matter. I also got into communication with the Canada Cement people, who ship all the cement to the West. The smaller manufacturers in Ontario do not ship any cement to the West. I got into touch with them and with the railways and I endeavoured to get the railways to supply cars in increased numbers to the Canada Cement Company in order to relieve the famine that existed in the West. I am not taking any credit for it, it was