

*The Budget—Mr. Kyte*

Manitoba, took the matter into court. What the decision was I do not know as I was not any longer interested. That, Mr. Speaker, is the reason why I did not feel that I ought to vote for any legislation entrusting the government of that day with the appointment of a tariff board whose interest it would be to see that the tariff was kept up rather than down. Mr. Ames, then the member for St. Antoine, in a speech he delivered at the time, very frankly admitted that the result of the appointment of a tariff board might be that the consumers would be compelled to pay more for certain articles than they were then paying.

Now, the hon. member for Fort William and Rainy River (Mr. Manion) rather ironically referred to the condition of the Liberal party in respect of unanimity. He pointed out that there were grave divisions of opinion in the ranks of the members sitting on this side of the House, that some are free traders, some are high protectionists, and others are moderate tariff men, and that taking them all in all they represented a great medley of opinion. Well, we always find the maximum of unanimity in the minimum of numbers; and inasmuch as the hon. gentleman places so much value upon the virtue of unanimity, he has the consolation of knowing that just in the proportion that the Conservative group in this House continues to decrease in numbers so it will increase in unanimity.

Mr. MEIGHEN: It is the only group that has increased since the last election.

Mr. KYTE: They have increased by retrogression.

Mr. GRAHAM: The percentage was high, too.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: They did not increase in West Hastings.

Mr. MARTELL: It takes an Irishman to answer an Irishman.

Mr. MEIGHEN: It was not very well done, though.

Mr. KYTE: I think it is very fortunate for the consumers of this country that the proposition for the establishment of a tariff board comes from a Liberal government whose ideal is protection—for we know that some burdens from the shoulders of the taxpayers. Supposing our Conservative friends were in office, and supposing such a proposal were submitted to a caucus of the party whose ideal is protection—for we know that some time ago the right hon. leader of the opposition (Mr. Meighen) issued a manifesto in

[Mr. Kyte.]

which he set forth the desirability of more protection—and supposing further that in his party there was that unanimity of opinion which the member for Fort William and Rainy River boasted of, what chance would there be of any low tariff men being appointed upon the tariff board? The government would be unanimously of the view that protection was the only thing for Canada, the more protection the better, and therefore they would see to it that those in favour of lower tariffs were not appointed. But under present conditions, if it be true, as the hon. gentleman said, that we have free traders in our party, high tariff men, and low tariff men, when the proposition is submitted to a caucus all those views will be expressed and represented, and that caucus will more nearly arrive at a proper conclusion as to what is best for Canada than would a caucus of our hon. friends opposite.

Mr. SUTHERLAND: Might I ask my hon. friend if he is arguing that his government are going to be a party to a low tariff commission rather than a commission that will judge tariff questions on their merits?

Mr. KYTE: I thought I was speaking loud enough for the hon. gentleman to hear me, but apparently my command of language is inadequate to enable him to understand me.

Mr. SUTHERLAND: Am I to infer that it is the intention of the government to appoint a free trade tariff commission to deal with tariff questions?

Mr. KYTE: I am not accountable for what the hon. gentleman understands.

Mr. SUTHERLAND: That is what I understand.

Mr. KYTE: If I were I would have a very much greater job on my hands than I have at the present moment. I did not suggest that the appointments to the tariff board would be dictated by the free traders in the party any more than that it would be dictated by the high protectionists—if there be any. It would be appointed with a view to promoting the best interests of all the people of Canada.

The presentation of the budget, Mr. Speaker, is always a milestone in the financial and business history of this country. The present budget also represents a milestone in the distance that we are getting away from the sad period of 1914 to 1918. The presentation of the budget by the Acting Minister of Finance (Mr. Robb) has been received with great favour all over Canada. A year ago