

bottom of the heap to reach up and to purchase the goods which have been so unnecessarily enhanced in cost.

One of the sad things is that the men who are getting the highest prices for their products are not in many cases getting as much in real wages as if industry had been left to stand on its own legs and at its own natural height, and to prosper or otherwise under the conditions obtaining in the country, by their own intelligence, initiative and skill. So that to step in and artificially increase prices is an immoral act. Many hon. members talk about industry as if it were only for the purpose of getting work for men. I do not think that is so, and I never held that view. I think the only excuse for industry of any kind is that it may produce in abundance goods which may be sold as cheaply as possible, so that the people as consumers may have as much as possible of the wealth they are able to produce.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): For the first time in their history, my hon. friends applaud me.

Mr. BLACKMORE: It is the first time you have seen the light.

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): I agree with them that I am right. That wealth can be got only when it is produced in constantly increasing quantities and exchanged for the surplus production of others. It cannot be done by writing promissory notes issued by ourselves and payable to ourselves and never to be redeemed.

Mr. DUNNING: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, I believe the rule is that the discussion should be confined to the item before the committee. Not only do I see ahead of us a general discussion on free trade versus protection, but I smell social credit. I submit it might be a good thing to call the committee to order at this time rather than later on.

Mr. PELLETIER: I suggest that that is a good reason why we should carry on.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the point of order raised by the minister is well taken. I ask hon. members to confine their remarks to the item under discussion.

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): I have great pleasure in agreeing absolutely with you. I hope hon. members do not think I am insinuating that social credit is so extreme that the Minister of Finance can smell it at this distance.

Another reason why I object to this increase is my belief that it is an economic waste to
[Mr. M. McLean.]

increase the tariff on furniture at the present time. I shall give my reasons a little later. There are reasons why I should not take too much of the time of the committee. The house has always been very kind and patient with me and I do not want to embarrass anyone by talking too long. I do not want to weaken in any degree the speeches made by the hon. member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Ross), the hon. member for Marquette (Mr. Glen), the hon. member for Saskatoon (Mr. Young), the hon. member for Huron North (Mr. Deachman) and the hon. member for Winnipeg South (Mr. Mutch).

Mr. MacNICOL: The hon. member will not weaken them; they were weak enough.

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): When the hon. member for Moose Jaw was speaking the other night, no hon. member opposite was able effectively to answer him, because he had the record in front of him.

Mr. SPENCE: He did not tell it all.

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): No one would expect him to tell it all.

Mr. SPENCE: That is the unfair part of it.

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): I am not going to take the few minutes at my disposal to tell it all. I do not intend to weaken the excellent speeches of these hon. gentlemen. I was in thorough agreement the other day with the leader of the opposition (Mr. Bennett) when he said that an opposition must check and watch closely any expenditures made and so on in order to see that the interests of the country are protected. But I also claim the privilege as a private member supporting the government to check certain things.

Mr. BENNETT: Opposition to the government.

Mr. McLEAN (Melfort): I do not feel the least bit embarrassed by the stand I am taking in connection with this higher impost on furniture. I have heard other members in similar circumstances say that it pained them to do so and so, but it does not bother me at all. I do not propose to declare my loyalty to the Liberal party, to the leader of the government or to the Minister of Finance; I do not have to prove that. At times in certain provincial legislatures the Liberal party has had to develop within itself opposition in an informal way in order to maintain parliamentary government where there was not sufficient opposition.

Mr. BENNETT: Alberta is an instance.