

their administrations. The people of Canada believed that the government, through its Minister of Finance, would make provision in this budget for meeting many of the difficulties that it was recognized the country was encountering, because we are passing through a period of world-wide economic deflation.

There is another feature in connection with this budget that I wish to mention. There has been up until lately continued violent opposition to our Prime Minister. It has been stated that the Liberal party lacked the initiative or were too friendly, and some even went to the length of saying too cowardly, to bring down legislation to meet the ever-increasing customs duties imposed by the United States against Canada. But we do not hear that statement made to-day.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I have not any doubt, Mr. Speaker, that they will continue to talk that way if they feel that there is some party advantage to be gained thereby, but they will not be in a position to prove it, as they thought, so emphatically. Why?

An hon. MEMBER: The death knell of protection.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): No longer can the cry be raised that our Prime Minister gives more to the United States than he is willing to give to the mother country. That has been one of the statements of the opposition to which I have continually taken exception and to which I take exception to-day, and I am going to have a word or two to say to my hon. friends opposite in connection with their attitude towards the British preference. Let me say in the first place that this budget is a complete answer to every statement which they have made in that connection. It is more than that. It is no mere lip loyalty on our part. It is not the mere expression of a sentiment. This budget is action, bold and forward action on our part in connection with the British preference. So I say, Mr. Speaker, that our hon. friends opposite can never expect the country to believe their statement that this government headed by the Prime Minister has been more friendly in its attitude in any particular towards the United States than we have always been ready and willing to be towards the mother country.

This budget places on the free list a large and important list of goods that we import from Great Britain. Here again we are following the well-established practice of this government of extending from time to time

the British preference. By so doing we hope to increase our trade with the mother country. That, briefly, is what the budget means, Mr. Speaker. It means that we hope to transfer a large volume of trade in goods that we must use in Canada from countries that are unwilling to trade with us to those that are willing and anxious to trade with us. That is the position in a nutshell. It is for the benefit of those countries that have shown their willingness to trade with us by buying the goods that we have to export from this country.

Mr. BLACK (Yukon): You took the duty off hay.

Mr. CHAPLIN: What about wheat?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): My hon. friends are very clever. The finance minister made it abundantly clear that he had wiped the duties off a great number of articles, almost one hundred in number—

Mr. SHORT: Hay and cider.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Yes, hay. Why should he not wipe off the duty?

Mr. BENNETT: Who put those duties there?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I am not able to answer that question nor am I concerned about it. The thing was a perfect absurdity and it was fully explained to hon. gentlemen opposite.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): He laughs best who laughs last. The duties on these articles, as on a large number of other items, are wiped out for the simple reason that there is no excuse in having them cumber up the tariff schedules. They never were intended to have any relation to imports, and it was so stated, but hon. gentlemen opposite will persist in making that statement, and I know that no statement of mine will ever stop them. It shows exactly the absurdity of their contention. But there are, and always will be, critics who will say, "There is a joker in this tariff. Of course there is." They will perhaps imagine that they can see the outline of the Ethiopian in the woodpile. My hon. friend from Lincoln (Mr. Chaplin) always sees one in the woodpile. They will say that the predicted imports from Great Britain will not come in, and that the real effect of the change in the tariff on iron and steel products will be a substantial increase in the cost of machinery used in primary production. Of course they will. We are emphatic in saying—and again I