

felt it necessary to defend the rights I thought were sacred to the minority in this country. At the same time I want to see built up in Canada a national spirit and a national unity, and that will not be done by claiming what we might call the crumbs of rights which do not exist and at the same time letting go our most sacred, guaranteed constitutional rights. We can never build up Canadian unity in that way. I have always claimed, and still claim, that the English speaking people of this country are willing to treat us as partners, even if they have not gone so far as we have gone so that they may treat us as brothers. If we are partners we on our part must play the game if we expect them to do so. As a citizen of Quebec, as a Canadian of French descent and as a nationalist, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the St. Lawrence is a national asset in which the people from the far west are just as much interested as we are in the province of Quebec. I think the government has a great part to play in saving that national asset for the people of Canada, and at the same time it can do a great deal for the province of Quebec by saving that province from the octopus which is controlled by the financiers of St. James street, Montreal.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: May I ask the hon. member for North Waterloo (Mr. Euler) how the Dominion of Canada can acquire this property by purchase or otherwise without the consent of the Quebec government? If it can be done I am almost disposed to agree with my good friend to my left in the remarks he made.

Mr. LAVERGNE: It could be taken to the privy council.

Motion agreed to and the house went into committee, Mr. LaVergne in the chair.

SPECIAL WAR REVENUE ACT

The CHAIRMAN: There is before the committee the following amendment:

Provided that the tax hereby imposed under subclause (i) shall not apply to the materials enumerated in customs tariff items 139 and 140, when sold in packages containing not more than five pounds each.

Mr. RHODES: I wish to withdraw that amendment, or rather to amend it by substituting for the word "five" the word "ten."

Mr. YOUNG: Will the minister explain the reason for this?

Mr. RHODES: I find that the householder can purchase one ten pound tin at a lower rate per pound than two five pound tins, and it is for the purpose of making the commodity cheaper to the householder that I have increased the limit from five to ten.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: I have not so far said anything with regard to the sugar duties and I do not see how I can allow this to go by without protesting. After hearing some of the letters read yesterday on behalf of the women and children of the country, and listening to the protests that came from every quarter on this side of the house, yes, and the silent protest of the rear-guard supporting the government—because I know they entertain such protests—I am wondering whether the minister is not considering the advisability of abandoning this tax. Before I go any further I would ask him whether he has seriously considered this matter.

Mr. RHODES: We gave the proposal every consideration before bringing it down. The government is under no illusion either as to the burden the tax imposes or as to the absolute necessity for it. Had it not been for the dire need of securing much-needed revenue the proposal would not have been brought down. We simply must have the revenue, and it is because of that absolute necessity that we have brought it down. We did our considering before these proposals were introduced.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: I take it then that all precautions were taken and that every thought was given the matter from every angle before the tax was imposed. Well, that is all the worse for my hon. friends; their blood will have to be on their own heads, because they have brought in this tax deliberately, and after hearing the protests that have been made on all sides they are not prepared to yield one iota. They need not be surprised then if events should prove that this was really an act of self destruction on their part. If there was one bit of evidence lacking that this government intended to commit political suicide that evidence is furnished in this tax, because I cannot imagine anything more destructive to them throughout the constituencies than putting into the hands of their opponents a weapon like this to flay them with—and it will be used to the limit; make no mistake about that. The government, through the Minister of Finance, declare their intention of going ahead with this tax and they will have to take the full responsibility for it.

If I rightly understood the minister the other day, the first attempt to impose this tax resulted in a loss of some \$2,000,000 out of an estimated revenue of \$20,000,000. That is not a good start, and when the officers of the government, after due investigation, suggest a loss of \$2,000,000 to the treasury, you may