

proved basis because we had prevented the leader of the government from being present at the Imperial conference. We let him go. The point I wish to bring out very clearly is this, that his whole attitude was one of coercing this parliament into passing those particular measures. Usually when large sums of money are to be spent a supply bill is brought down and is discussed in committee of supply. No supply bill was brought down at the special session, but in order to limit discussion, a special bill appropriating this \$20,000,000 was introduced. Usually when the tariff is being changed the Minister of Finance brings down a budget and shows the bearing of the changes upon the revenues of the country and the taxes of the people. There was no budget brought down at the special session, but my right hon. friend brought down special measures, which he drove through in a certain time by his threat not to go to the Imperial conference until he had witnessed their enactment. Under that form of closure, by those coercive methods he put through his legislation.

And what was the nature of it? There were three bills, one relating to the relief of unemployment, one to amend the Customs Act, and another to amend the customs tariff. The most extraordinary thing of all is that on the eve of going to an Imperial conference my right hon. friend should have put up the tariff against Britain herself. I wish he would give us his explanation of that particular action when he gets up to speak. Let me come back to what I said at the outset. We were agreed that the selling of Canadian wheat in the British market was the most important of all objectives, as it is still the most important. How can he possibly reconcile with that objective his action at the special session in putting up the duties against Britain, wiping out the preferences that were granted under the Dunning budget? Not only that, but raising the duties to a point that in many cases prevented any inflow of goods from Great Britain into this country. I hope my right hon. friend will give some explanation of his action in that regard. I should not like to think it was simply because he had made promises to certain interests that if he were returned that was what he would do. We all know that there are certain selfish interests in this country that would like to shut out all competition from Great Britain. We know that they are afraid, from the point of view of their monopoly, of British competition even more than of competition from the United States. I hope it was not from motives of that kind that my right hon. friend made the changes he did make. And

I hope that it was not from a belief in his power to coerce the British government. Did he think when he raised the tariff against Britain that he was going to find it possible to coerce the government of the United Kingdom by such a step? Was that what he had in mind? If he thought anything of the kind he should have been fair to this parliament and told us.

I want to say to my right hon. friend that he did not treat parliament fairly with respect to the Imperial conference. I asked him politely at the beginning of the special session to give us a statement of what he intended to do at the Imperial conference, to make known his policies. He was also asked by the hon. member for Bow River (Mr. Garland) to advise parliament. He spoke on the Imperial conference two or three times, but he never told this house what he had in mind. I say that was not fair to parliament and it was not fair to the country. I think we all assumed that my right hon. friend was busy and that he had little time to think of these matters, and naturally we did not press him. But if he had in mind going to Britain to coerce that country; if he had in mind going to Britain to put up to the British government a proposal which he knew could not be accepted by any government in that country he should have told us.

I say he should have made known to parliament what his intentions were, and here again may I say I think it is worth considering whether it is consonant with procedure under British parliamentary institutions for any individual or for that matter any cabinet to promote policies with respect to great imperial matters, policies that affect the whole future and development of the British empire and to launch those policies publicly before the world without any discussion in the first instance either in parliament or throughout the country. After all, public opinion is a factor in government quite as much as anything else, and it is part of the system of government under British institutions that there should be the fullest discussion of policies on the platform, in parliament and certainly also in the cabinet. I do not know what has transpired in the cabinet, but I have very grave doubts in my mind as to whether my right hon. friend ever told his cabinet what he intended to do when he got to London. If he did so, I am amazed to see certain hon. gentlemen sitting beside him to-day. I believe, with respect to one or two of them at least that if they had known in advance that this was the approach that was to be made to Britain, they would have