

strong, and among the planks in the policy then placed before the House was our trade policy. The delegation, you will remember, presented their case, and the honorary president of the association, Mr. J. W. Scallion, was the spokesman who introduced that feature of the question before the House. In the middle of a very earnest and suggestive address he was interrupted by a member from the Government side with the question: If you put this platform into effect, how will you raise the revenue? Immediately that delegation rose to its feet and said: We will raise the revenue by direct taxation. That was the declared policy of the West at that time. They came to the conclusion that that was the fair and equitable and honourable way to raise the national revenue. They said: Tell the people of the country what you need the money for, and how much you need, and then distribute the burden equitably, and the people of Canada will get under that burden and lift it. Later on two other delegations came to Ottawa presenting the farmers' platform.

11 p.m. So that that platform has been circulated all over the country and has been prominently before the people.

I wish to say that I was at the framing of that platform and endorsed every plank in it. I endorse the planks of that platform to-night. I believe that we have in that platform the essentials to the building up of a policy that will distribute the burdens of taxation equitably and will enable us to carry on as a nation and go forward to future greatness. I have not changed my opinion with regard to these matters.

This brings me to another stage. The fiscal policy of the Government is before us. In that policy as presented there are several things with which I do not fully agree, for I think that the policy mapped out could have been improved in some directions. I believe that food stuffs should have been placed on the free list. I believe that agricultural implements should have received more consideration. I believe further that cement might very well have been placed on the free list and that cottons and woollens might have received more consideration than they did. While I believe that there is room for improvement in respect of the treatment of these items, I wish to make myself very clear with regard to one or two things that have taken place since I came down here.

I endeavoured to inform myself with regard to the position the Government intended to take on the tariff question, and after trying to get the mind of the Govern-

ment on the subject as far as I could I came to the conclusion that it was the intention of the Government to consider this as a war session. In other words, I believed that the Government would take the attitude that war conditions had not yet passed away, that this was really a war Government, and that, therefore, no very great changes would be made in the tariff this year. I took exception to that position. I felt that the time had come when marked changes should be made, and when the 7½ per cent and the 5 per cent tax imposed as a war measure should be entirely removed. I felt that there should be some indication of a general reduction of the tariff, and so expressed myself.

In a measure, the 7½ per cent tariff imposed by way of war tax has received consideration along the line that I thought it should; it has been removed from agricultural implements, certain foodstuffs, and other articles in respect of which the tax bore most heavily upon the poorer classes of the people. The 5 per cent tax also received consideration. The question was asked whether it was advisable to remove the 7½ per cent tax entirely, and the position I took was that it would be more equitable to leave the 7½ per cent duty on certain lines in connection with which the poorer classes were not effected or production was not interfered with, and to make marked reductions beyond the 7½ per cent where the poorer classes were affected or the question of production which bore an important relation to the tariff came under consideration. To a certain extent that idea has prevailed in the tariff revision, and so far as that goes I give my approbation to the course pursued by the Government.

Some people say that this is a high protectionist Budget. Perhaps it is. But there are greater indications of tariff reduction and tariff reform in the Budget of this year than I have seen in any Budget since I commenced to study Budgets. Had the Government taken the position that as this was a war year and it was a war Government, the duties of 7½ per cent and 5 per cent should not be interfered with at all, I believe a great many people would have supported that position. The Government gave consideration to various representations which were made in favour of a reduced tariff policy, by deciding to take a course which involves a reduction in the revenue of \$17,000,000. This reduction applies where the taxation bears most heavily and affects production the most. Therefore I say that the action of