

Canada-First and until we are ready to stand up and proclaim Canada-First and act Canada-First then we may just as well resign ourselves to this sliding back process which characterizes our drift to-day.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: As long as we have anything like an open door immigration policy, how is the Canadian worker being protected?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Well I am not in favour of an open door immigration policy, any more than I am in favour of an open door trade policy. Certainly you cannot allow everybody into this country; nobody ever suggested it. The cheapest labour of the world we ought to bar entirely, and we do bar it. I would be the last to suggest that any other policy be adopted.

Now, I say you can give preference and at the same time be just to the Canadian worker. But I do not see any reason why we should continue to give preference to anybody unless we get preference in return. I do not know what we gain by it. I do not think we advance the day of getting preference in return when we give our own preference without any result at all. We have now for some twenty-five years pursued a policy of giving preference for nothing, and we have done so at the expense of the Canadian worker in every province of Canada, and never have we done so as emphatically at the expense of the Canadian worker as we are doing right now under this government. This government has reduced British preference schedules; we are getting nothing or very little in return. It has reduced the French schedules, and instead of getting nothing we get worse than nothing in return. All these it has reduced at the expense of the Canadian worker and at the cost of the expropriation of many.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: May I ask a question? Will my right hon. friend say that Canada is giving Great Britain the same opportunity in her markets as Canadians get in the markets of Great Britain?

Mr. MEIGHEN: We are giving far better.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: In what particular?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Certainly we are. What constitutes opportunity is preference. We are giving preference; she is not as a general policy giving preference. The preference she may have established very lately is good, and I should give something for it, but it is small

compared with the preference we have given. Does the Prime Minister think that if the British markets are wholly free to all countries, Canada gets any advantage there? None whatever; but if they have a tariff and give a preference then we do get an advantage. My principle is, give advantage for advantage, but do not give it without.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: My right hon. friend has been speaking largely of manufacturing industries this afternoon. Will he say that the manufacturers of Great Britain have the same opportunity with respect to the market of Canada that Canadian manufacturers have with respect to the market of Great Britain?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes, and better.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: What nonsense!

Mr. MEIGHEN: For the simple reason that they have a preference. Does the Prime Minister imagine we would not be better off if Britain had a tariff of 20 per cent and let us in for 10 than if Britain had no tariff against anybody at all? I place my opinion in this regard beside the Prime Minister's and I submit both for the consideration of the business people of Canada. Now, the Prime Minister says I have been talking from the standpoint of the manufacturer. I have not; I have been talking from the standpoint of Canada.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I did not say from the standpoint of the manufacturer.

Mr. MEIGHEN: How did the Prime Minister put it? I did not mean to make it different from what he said. What did he say?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I said my right hon. friend has been speaking a great deal about the manufacturing industries.

Mr. MEIGHEN: All right—that is, I have been talking about manufacturers. I am glad he did not suggest I was speaking on behalf of any class, for I certainly was not.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Is there an interruption? If there is, I hope it is from the hon. member for Brome (Mr. McMaster).

Mr. McMASTER: The right hon. gentleman has said that he was really speaking on behalf of nobody at all.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I will say this to the member for Brome: I am speaking on behalf of myself, and my country. I am speaking

my own considered opinions, and I am trying to support them by argument and by experience. I commend the same course to him. We have listened to the hon. member for Brome repeatedly in this House; we have heard him expound the old free trade doctrines of the early writers.

Mr. McMASTER: As true to-day as ever they were.

Mr. MEIGHEN: As true to-day, he says, as ever. But the member for Brome is so devoted to his theories that he is blind to facts. He is ready to believe anything so long as it is consistent with what he argues. Surely he is not satisfied with conditions in this country to-day. If he is, he is not the Canadian I thought he was. Surely he does not think we have bettered our position industrially since 1921. If he does, I would like him to talk it over with some of his close friends, with some of the men in whom he has consummate confidence right in his own neighbourhood. Let him talk it over with anybody who is actually in productive business, and find out. I would like him to talk it over even with many of those who in 1921 supported him and who put this government in power—talk it over not with our friends, but with our foes, and see whether they agree with his verdict or with mine.

This resolution also calls for the appointment of a tariff commission along lines embodied in legislation of 1912, legislation which passed the Commons at that time but was defeated by the Liberal majority in the Senate. The government at this session of parliament has adopted the principle, I believe, of a tariff commission, some sort of a hybrid affair with outsiders coming in and joining with officers of the Finance department. Well, I am glad to see any sensible move in that direction, but I for one cannot for the life of me see any reason for a tariff commission unless we openly and frankly acknowledge that we are on the protective principle. Now I would like to put this to hon. gentlemen opposite—who deny that you believe in the protective principle, you who have fought this principle election after election, you who have berated it in this House and out of it, and described it in all the language of bitterness—how do you justify a tariff commission? What is your tariff commission for? Is it to ascertain how you can fix the tariff to get the most revenue? It is not, and you know it is not. Everyone of you knows that you can take schedule after schedule in the tariff to-day and lower it and get more revenue than you do now, and that you can take others and raise them and get more

revenue than you do now. You know these things. The only reason in the world for a tariff commission is because that commission is to be deputed to ascertain what the level of protection should be to enable each class of industry to function. This hon. gentlemen opposite themselves declared so in 1912. That is why they resisted our bill, because they said it meant the embalming in permanent form of the protective principle. Now they are proposing a commission of some kind themselves, but they have not the courage to say that in doing so they give allegiance to the protective principle. Yes, we should have a tariff commission, a tariff commission for investigatory purposes, a tariff commission whose investigations will be such that the public will know more clearly and in more detail actual facts as to the industries of Canada. It should be advisory, and advisory only, because never from the shoulders of parliament can responsibility be shifted for the determination of tariff and fiscal policy. Such a commission has been advocated by the Conservative party before. It would, I believe, have been established in this country had not the war intervened. It would be valuable to-day. It will be a realized fact in Canada if the Conservative party is returned to power.

But no tariff commission can fix prices, and if the hon. member for Calgary wants me to say whether the Dominion parliament itself can actually fix prices, and in that way protect the consumer, I am compelled to answer in the negative. This is beyond our jurisdiction. But there is something within our jurisdiction, and what is within our jurisdiction is this: We can on the advice of a tariff commission, or we can, if we like, without it, remove a tariff schedule that protects an industry which assumes monopolistic power, remove a schedule that protects an industry which overcharges the consumer because it is bereft of competition. This we can do, and as well we can impose special excise penalties upon such an industry. Those weapons we can exercise; more direct weapons we cannot. We sought once to exercise means more direct. We had a Board of Commerce for the purpose. We felt we were within the law. I am free to admit the Board of Commerce failed; I do not know that even if it had not been in one respect badly manned it would have succeeded. The courts held that this exercise of jurisdiction was beyond our power. I know of nothing within our power save what is suggested in this tariff commission resolution. Whatever is within our power we will do, because the evil of exaction certainly demands a