

serious derangement in trade in consequence of merchants having taken their goods out of bond, in anticipation of a change in the tariff. I have only to say that the Government never directly or indirectly stated to anyone that the tariff would either be advanced or lowered, and we would have been as much to blame if we had indicated to any person that we would not alter it, as if we had announced that a change would take place. The Administration had no right whatever to intimate anything that would give any justification for derangement in trade; but, Sir, it was very natural for my hon. friend from Montreal, and for all men in his business who examined the returns published in the *Gazette*.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD—Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE—And who knew that a deficit this year would be inevitable.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD—Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE—It was quite natural for them to suppose that there would be a change in the tariff in order to meet these circumstances, also that this agitation would increase, as the time drew near for the meeting of Parliament and the delivery of the Budget Speech; and that every man who could command the means should withdraw his goods from bond, to save himself from the disadvantage of a possible increase. But for this no Government could be held accountable—no Government could be charged with dereliction of duty merely because people drew inferences from facts that were published, not for that particular time only, but in accordance with a custom that had prevailed for years. Only to this extent, Sir, is there any excuse or justification for the right hon. gentleman's assertion that we were in any way responsible for such a state of things.

I have no doubt that when my hon. friend from Cumberland was Minister of Customs, if there was any change in the tariff—I do not recollect, that there was—he found, repeatedly, questions addressed to him by letter; and the hon. gentleman will remember, that during the last two Sessions members

behind him put questions on the paper enquiring what increase would be placed on certain articles. People did not consider that the Government had no right—it would indeed be a violation of their duty—to make any statement then either as to any intention to create new duties, or let the duties alone.

I was a little surprised, Sir, to hear the right hon. member for Kingston speak of my hon. friend's tariff measure, two years ago, as to the mess made of it; but if the hon. gentleman should hold his tongue about anything, it should be with regard to making a mess of a tariff, for who does not remember the time when we had one tariff in the afternoon and another in the evening; and who does not know of the right-about-face movement of the right hon. gentleman? I am not aware whether my hon. friend was ever in the army or not; but if so, he was familiar with the manœuvre of right-about-face; and if there was ever a right-about-face, it was shown in that change of the entire tariff. I do not think that the hon. member for Cumberland was in the Cabinet at the time when he was credited with applying the whip very liberally from behind, bringing the pressure to bear upon the Government, which, it seems, the people from the Maritime Provinces are always credited with using. I believe that my hon. friend from Cumberland did not then deny the soft impeachment; but my hon. friends from the Provinces do deny the charge now made, and I also do in their name. I saw many of these gentlemen, who discussed the matter calmly and quietly with me. I heard all their views, as well as the opinions of many other members; but no member, nor any deputation from this House, held out any threats of any kind in this relation; and we have no reason to doubt that any course the Administration might pursue in the interests of the country would be supported by their opponents in the House as a general thing.

I have merely to say, in conclusion, that the Administration will feel bound, while they occupy these seats, to endeavour to administer the affairs of the country in the interest of the great