

Customs Tariff

published in that great Liberal paper the *London Free Press* on July 3. I assume the *Free Press* published this because they wanted their readers to see that there was this side to the question. The article is headed, "No Excuse for Raising Tariffs", and it says:

The tariff changes in Mr. Fleming's budget will come as a shock to the high hopes that many Canadians had placed on the new government. Hundreds of thousands of Canadians voted Progressive Conservative last March in the hope that Mr. Diefenbaker as a westerner would not revert to the tariff raising policies that were associated with the Conservative party in the past. Hundreds of thousands voted P.C. in the hope that a party which announced its intention to increase the United Kingdom's share in our trade would do something to make such an increase easier. All those hopes have been disappointed by Mr. Fleming's budget. You do not increase Britain's share of our trade by raising tariffs on one of her most important exports.

The *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* headed its main editorial on the budget "Back to Protectionism?" This was on June 20. They had this to say:

After some further probing into the reasons for tariff revisions contained in the federal budget this week, parliamentary news correspondents now are reporting that the Diefenbaker administration has embarked upon a definite policy of protectionism for domestic industry.

I have no doubt that the minister will get up and tell us that this is another press report that is without foundation, but unfortunately the facts are here on the other side of the case. I must say, speaking as one who spent 30 years of his life in the province of Manitoba, that I am not surprised that the minister from Manitoba is not in his seat when we are discussing this item; because I am perfectly certain that if he had gone to his electors in Winnipeg and said, "I am going down to Ottawa to raise the tariff on woollens", the results would have been very different from what they were.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Perhaps my friend would allow me to say that at this moment the Minister of Trade and Commerce is attending a cabinet meeting.

Mr. Pickersgill: Oh, yes, I know; the business of parliament is arranged in such a fashion that it is no longer possible for ministers to be in their seats attending to their parliamentary duties. That was not what happened in former days. That is one of the reforms of parliament. They now have loudspeakers to listen to what goes on here.

The Deputy Chairman: Order. I ask the hon. member to come back to resolution No. 7.

[Mr. Pickersgill.]

Mr. Pickersgill: As a matter of fact I was diverted by the Minister of Finance, the minister of diversions. But whether or not the Minister of Trade and Commerce is in his seat, it is very interesting to observe that not one of all the Conservative members from the three prairie provinces has got up and said one word in commendation of the proposed increase in the tariff on woollens.

Mr. Pallett: Have you checked the trade balance recently?

Mr. Pickersgill: When the vote is taken on this item it will be very interesting to see how many Conservative members from the prairie provinces find it convenient to be somewhere else, as one of the most distinguished Conservative members in other parliaments often used to find it convenient to be somewhere else.

Mr. Pallett: Three hundred million bushels of wheat is a lot of wheat sales in one year.

Mr. Pickersgill: The hon. member for Peel, with his incomparable knowledge of our commerce, talks about the increase in our wheat sales. He has anticipated a point I had intended to make a little later but I will make it right now. My point is, and the furtive approach is all the more dangerous on this account, that the minister told us—perhaps he should not have told us; perhaps he should not have been so frank—that this was just to be the prelude to changing the most-favoured-nation tariff if he can negotiate a change because it is a bound item.

Now, sir, what country is it that exports most of the woollens to us under the most-favoured-nation section of the tariff? It is Italy. The tariff board pointed out that Italy is a large and expanding market for two of our greatest and most important primary products, wheat and fish, and it is perfectly obvious that if this tariff is increased the Italians are not going to take it lying down. The government has already succeeded in losing the market for our fish in Jamaica, and if they go on by this kind of tariff action to lose the market for our fish in Italy and we have that much more fish to be concentrated on the few markets left after these disastrous policies have been carried on for some length of time, we can see that the social position of an industry which employs far more people than the woollen industry is going to be adversely affected. The plain fact is that in my constituency and nearly all constituencies represented by members