

instruments of production and the necessities of life; and whether the tariff reduction proposals submitted to parliament in the present budget are not wholly in accord with, and a faithful implementing of professions, promises and pledges made to the electors at the time we sought their support in the general elections of 1921.

Let me refer first of all to the platform of the Liberal party as adopted at the Liberal convention in June, 1919. Whilst differences may exist as to the extent to which it may be wise at any given moment to carry out in detail the items specified within its pages, there can be no differences of view as to the essential underlying principles of tariff reform therein set forth. They are embraced in the opening paragraph of the resolution on the tariff, which reads as follows:

That the best interests of Canada demand that substantial reductions of the burdens of Customs taxation be made with a view to the accomplishing of two purposes of the highest importance: First: diminishing the very high cost of living which presses so severely on the masses of the people; Second: reducing the cost of the instruments of production in the industries based on the natural resources of the Dominion, the vigorous development of which is essential to the progress and prosperity of our country.

There is exactly what the present budget proposes—substantial reductions of the burdens of customs taxation, with a view to diminishing the very high cost of living, and reducing the cost of the instruments of production in the industries based on the natural resources of the Dominion.

With respect to the resolution as a whole and more particularly with reference to the detail which follows, as I have already mentioned repeatedly in this House, I have never regarded the purpose of the convention as other than that of giving to those who might be entrusted with the administration of the party's affairs a chart on which was plotted the course the party would be expected to take when in office, and to take in the light of all existing conditions and circumstances, not, as I have also repeatedly said, at the dictation of any one individual but under the guidance of those of its number whom the party might elect as its representatives in parliament and in the government. This I need not remind the House is not some new version placed upon the platform of the Liberal party to suit the exigencies of the occasion, but was the interpretation placed upon the platform by myself in the presence of the assembled delegates at the time of the convention and heartily acquiesced in by them—an interpretation moreover which in the sessions following was quoted to parliament and repeated by me from every public plat-

form in addresses delivered during the campaign of 1921.

The Liberal convention was held, as I have remarked, in June, 1919. In May of the following year we availed ourselves of the first opportunity afforded thereafter of disclosing to the country through parliament the official or authoritative view of the Liberal members of the House of Commons with respect to tariff matters when the hon. member for West York, the then Minister of Finance (Sir Henry Drayton) introduced his budget. An amendment was moved on behalf of the then Liberal opposition by the hon. member for Shelburne and Queens, the present Minister of Finance, (Mr. Fielding) and seconded by myself. It was supported in division with one or two exceptions by every Liberal member present in the House at the time. The amendment will be found in Hansard of May 18, 1920, at page 2510. I shall not read the whole amendment, the last paragraph will be sufficient to disclose to the House and to the country the consistency of the attitude of the Liberals in advocating the two great purposes I have already mentioned, namely, substantial reductions in the burden of customs taxation, with a view to (a) the reduction of living costs and (b) reduction of production costs, especially as those are related to necessities of life and the instruments of production. Here are the words of the paragraph referred to:

That in view of the continued increase in the high cost of living, of the greatly increased burden of taxation, of the hardship which many of the people suffer from those causes, and the unrest naturally arising therefrom; and in view of the desirability of adopting measures to increase production and effect such relief to consumers and producers as may be within the power of Parliament, the House is of opinion that, pending a wider revision of the tariff, substantial reductions of the burdens of customs taxation should be made with a view to the accomplishing of two purposes of the highest importance; first, diminishing the very high cost of living which presses so severely on the masses of the people; second, reducing the cost of the instruments of production in the industries based on the natural resources of the Dominion, the vigorous development of which is essential to the progress and prosperity of our country.

That was the manner in which we put forth in this House the Liberal position with respect to the tariff. But there was another session of parliament which succeeded the one to which I have just made reference. It was the session immediately preceding the general election, and the Liberal party therefore was doubly careful to outline in its resolution of that day the position which it was taking before the country. Let me say, Mr. Speaker, we were not at the time of the elections seeking Progressive support. We were offering opposition to the Progress-