

the result of the Conservative policy of 1930, a policy of "Canada first," which has meant what? The economic crucifixion of this dominion for the last two years. While my hon. friend opposite was making his sectional plea for his constituency, the price of wheat in Canada has dropped in the last hour or two to the lowest known level in our history since confederation. It is now twenty-five cents, probably twenty-two cents a bushel. That is an answer to their policy of "Canada first."

What is there in this document for our unemployed? What is there for the consumers of Canada? What is there for those of our people who are starving, for, despite the words of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Gordon), there are people starving today in my own city of Vancouver and other Canadian cities? Will this agreement help them to buy bread, to get clothing for their bodies? No, they will pay more for their clothing. Will this help them to build or to obtain shelters? This, as I said, is a piece of tariff terrorism; it is a fiscal fraud at the expense of the people of Canada.

My sixth objection to this agreement is this: The principle of fixing tariff rates for five years and the powers given to the tariff board are an unwarrantable interference with the duties, privileges and responsibilities of parliament and constitute the destruction of Canada's fiscal freedom.

Again I wish the Prime Minister were here, because I want to indicate to the house his alarming inconsistency. May I in this connection read from Hansard of the 13th March, 1928, when the house was discussing certain hearings held by the tariff board at that time in connection with old country manufacturers? This is what the present Prime Minister said on that occasion:

Do you realize, sir, that for the first time in the history of Canada, people outside of this country have assisted in determining what our tariff shall be? I have under my hand the briefs that were filed with the tariff board. By whom are they filed? The first brief on the woollen tariff schedule was filed by representatives of the Canadian Woollen and Knit Goods Manufacturers and there were also filed observations on the brief presented by the Canadian Woollen and Knit Goods Manufacturers, by the Wool Textile Delegation of England on behalf of the federations and associations who are its constituent members.

Then there was an interjection:

Mr. Young (Saskatoon): Does the hon. member object to that?

Mr. Bennett: I certainly do. I object to any man who is not a Canadian having anything to do with fixing our tariff.

[Mr. I. A. Mackenzie.]

O consistency, thou art a jewel! Again on page 1258 of the same Hansard he is reported as saying:

Do you suppose, sir, for a single moment that the great republic of France, in fixing its tariff, would have Canadians tell them how they should deal with it? Do you suppose, under the Safeguarding of Industries Act, the government of Great Britain would rely upon the attitude taken by Canadians as to how they should shape and form their tariff?

He continues:

That is his story, but now he approves of these men not bringing factories to Canada but endeavouring to influence the members of the tariff advisory board as to what protection our industries should have.

Again he says:

This country is an autonomous country—

It was then. I doubt very much if it is now.

This country is an autonomous country and we must be a self-governing dominion.

Now, listen to this, in the light of all that has happened since then:

When we have to be told by the manufacturers of other communities how we shall transact our business, what happens?

Mr. Casgrain: Information.

Mr. Bennett: If it was information that was wanted, it was not necessary for these gentlemen to come to Canada. They might have sent their information by mail. Why should they examine witnesses?

Now we have the section dealing with the tariff board at the present time when our fiscal autonomy has been destroyed by this lover of our fiscal freedom. We have a section in the agreement giving old country manufacturers the right of a hearing before our Canadian tariff board, a tariff board that should have been appointed two years ago in the interests of Canadian consumers, and is now to be appointed with specialized instructions in the interest of specialized Canadian manufacturers and their allies, their highly protected allies in other lands. The Prime Minister has abrogated the principle for which he stood in this house in 1928.

He elaborates upon the principle of fair competition. The only departure in this whole agreement from the "Canada first" policy of 1930 is this new doctrine of fair competition, based upon what? Based upon the relative cost of production, having regard to the necessities of efficient industry. It was pointed out the other evening by my hon. friend from Ontario (Mr. Moore) that this old and worn-out dogma of the relative cost of production was discarded years ago by the United States. If this principle of fair competition as amending or altering the doctrine of "Canada first" is a fair principle as affect-