

that amendment, which will make clear our position:

... this house is of the opinion that increases made by the present administration in the customs tariff . . . have had the effect of stifling agriculture.

Whether agricultural conditions are worse or better as a result of the alterations in the tariff by the present government is a fitting subject for debate. It might be very well contended by the right hon. leader of the opposition that agricultural conditions have been aggravated by tariff increases, but we do not hold the view that tariff increases by the present administration have stifled agriculture, because agriculture was stifled before this government came into office. The point in the amendment to which we take exception is this, that the entire emphasis is placed upon tariffs, and we do not think tariffs, higher or lower, can solve the problems of agriculture to-day. We therefore advanced a suggestion which we in this corner thought would come nearer to the heart of the problem. Of course we may be wrong in that, but we are just as much entitled to our opinion in that regard as hon. gentlemen to our right are to theirs. I think that will make clear why, from our point of view, though many may have agreed with the amendment, we could not agree with that part of it which says the tariff is either cause or cure of all our economic ills.

For a few moments I should like to answer what I think must be regarded as misrepresentations made by the right hon. leader of the opposition and acquiesced in, in one particular, by the Prime Minister (Mr. Bennett), in regard to the suggestion on finance and credit advanced in the subamendment by the group in this section of the house. Of course I do not charge either of these right hon. gentlemen with having deliberately misrepresented us; I say that their interpretation of our position in effect misrepresents our attitude. I readily agree that there is much room for differences of opinion on questions of finance and credit, but while we are willing to have honest disagreements we do not wish it to go out to the country that we were advocating what was suggested yesterday afternoon by the right hon. leader of the opposition. He objects to the nationalization of finance. We put forward the point that a matter so vital to the economic life of the state as finance, financial credit and real credit, if you like, cannot safely be left to the guiding hand of private interests for private profit, and we do not see any other institution in Canada but this parliament and this govern-

[Mr. Irvine.]

ment that is in a position to speak or act for all the people. The right hon. leader of the opposition in effect approved of this principle when he put forward his tentative suggestion, which is very interesting and with which I quite agree, in respect to the joint control of industry. There he recognized the necessity of taking from the control of one particular class the whole destiny of the industrial life of the state. We recognize the same principle in connection with finance, and we say this government is the only institution in Canada that has the power to speak for all the Canadian people or to take charge in their name of such a thing as finance, which means much to industry.

Then the right hon. gentleman asked who should do it. He wanted to know if the present government should be entrusted with that task. Our reply is that if the present government will control finance as effectively as they have increased tariffs we are willing to let them do it. If hon. gentlemen to my right should come into power, and if they will effect the control of finance as adequately as they brought about deflation after the war, we will gladly give them the opportunity to do it. If the party in this corner of the house comes into power we will show you how to do it, whether you like it or not.

The right hon. gentleman also objected to the issue of money in sufficient quantities to bring the value of the dollar to the point where it was when the major portion of our debts was contracted. We brought forward that suggestion in the subamendment, and referring to this point the Prime Minister said, "It is suggested that we cut our bonds in two, that is, that the man who had \$200 should have only \$100." That really is not the true position; for if inflation were to be carried out even on the grand scale misrepresented by the right hon. leader of the opposition, it would not mean that a man with a \$200 bond would be paid off with \$100. It would mean that the man who had a \$200 bond would be paid \$200, just as he would be to-day. But where would the difference come in? In effect what the Prime Minister said is true, but unfortunately the reverse is true also. That is to say, if we deflate, then the man who has a \$200 bond will be paid \$400, and unfortunately that is where the trouble comes in. The right hon. leader of the opposition was in power when that was done, when we went back on the gold basis, which is deflation. The war debts of Canada, as well as our private debts, which were contracted under an inflated dollar, were doubled. We want to correct that mistake. I do not know