

know of anything he has done to increase the trade of the country; and now when the Minister of Finance, aided by the advice and assistance of the Solicitor General, brings in a measure for the establishment of free trade in wheat with the United States of America, the Minister of Trade and Commerce rejoices in the fact that it is removed from the realm of trade. It will be said that this is a war measure and the inference will be drawn. I suppose every one says it is a war measure; that this is being done under the War Measures Act. If it be that, then I think even as fair an opponent of the Administration as I am myself, or as fair a critic of the Administration as I claim to have been, is entitled to point out that a little tardiness has been shown in producing this measure. The war has been in existence for two and three-quarters years. Surely, if it be only a war measure it should have occurred to the Administration sooner. The war was in a very active state a year ago when the Minister of Finance delivered a speech lasting an hour and three-quarters, telling us why we could not do this very thing. If it be a war measure—and we are all interested in war measures and in their success, I call you to witness, Sir, that no man can charge me with having taken much interest in anything else than the war for the last three years—why was it not put into force at the beginning of the war? My hon. friend from Halifax (Mr. Maclean) has pointed to the fact that nearly every country at war made tremendous tariff changes almost immediately the war began. Take Germany, our great opponent in arms, but the exemplar of hon. gentlemen opposite in tariff matters—at least until lately. I really hope they will not go to Germany. The Minister of Trade and Commerce will not even call them Germans; he always refers to them as “Huns.” What an illogical thing it would be for a civilized gentleman in the twentieth century to do—to go to the “Huns” for a fiscal policy. I should be sorry to do it myself; I would rather go to free England. That, however, is by the way. What did Germany do in regard to these matters? I read:—

On September 17, 1914, His Majesty's Minister at Copenhagen forwarded a list of the articles in respect of which customs duties had been suspended by the German Government up to that date.

From some points of view these Huns are a pretty wide-awake people, for this was done within six weeks of the commencement of the war.

[Mr. M. Clark.]

This list, which is a lengthy one, includes inter alia: Bread, beans, butter, eggs, poultry, edible fats, fish, meat, prepared alimentary products, cereals and flour, potatoes, cheese, cattle, pigs and sheep, and margarine.

The Board of Trade have also a copy of a German proclamation dated March 8, 1915, which temporarily suspended the customs duties on a large number of other articles, including certain fruit, game, arrowroot, sago and tapioca, sugar and yeast.

Let me say that similar changes were made—and almost as early—in Austria-Hungary, France, Italy, and in non-belligerent countries, such as Portugal and Spain. In Sweden customs duties on wheat and wheat flour—the very change to which my hon. friends opposite have become wide-awake after the war has been in existence for nearly three years—were suspended in December, 1914, when the war had not been in existence six months. I think it is fair to give the history of what these countries have done and to indulge in the reasonable criticism that, if this is to be defended as a war measure, then the Government must, with that defence, receive the condemnation of having been at least two years and a half too long in introducing it.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

### After Recess.

The House resumed at Eight o'clock.

Mr. MICHAEL CLARK (Red Deer) (resuming): Mr. Speaker, the war will pass. It is taking a long time and has brought heavy burdens and large problems, but it will pass. But the problems arising out of it, I venture to predict, will remain as long as the breath lasts in the body of the youngest member of this House. When I arose this afternoon it was with the serious purpose of endeavouring to contribute my humble quota to the financial principles which I believe will need to be followed by this country through its responsible ministers, of whatever political stripe they may be, if we are to deal satisfactorily with those problems within the present generation of men. I believe there will be such a change brought into the life of our country by the experiences of the war, and especially when our soldiers return, our soldiers who have gone in numbers which no one would have predicted was possible for Canada before the war, that our people will not be content with any perfunctory handling of these problems. They will demand that our public men shall go to the roots of them, shall study the needs of the