

Mr. MARLER: The hon. gentleman is quoting an editorial from the Manitoba Free Press.

Mr. FORKE: I do not want to be unfair to the hon. gentleman, I wish to be fair in every way, but I understood from his remark that he believed in the protective policy for the central provinces, and a bonus to the railways for the west to meet its difficulties. Am I correct?

Mr. MARLER: To a moderate extent, yes.

Mr. FORKE: That is all I wanted to prove. I am surprised that the hon. member should point out that that policy was a failure for twenty years, and now should want a little more of it.

Mr. MARLER: My hon. friend is misinterpreting my remarks. I think that if he reads carefully what I said in Montreal he will find that what I said was very fair and just towards the west, and a very fair exposition of the feeling in Montreal towards the west. My hon. friend is not fair in the attitude which he has assumed to-day. The feeling in Montreal is one of sincerity, fairness and justness so far as the west is concerned.

Mr. FORKE: I do not doubt for one moment the sincerity or good will of the hon. gentleman. I think he really meant well towards the west in the statement which he made in Montreal at the time referred to. But I differ from the conclusions which he draws from the conditions which now exist. Apparently he takes the ground that central Canada could not possibly get along without some means of protection, but that the west would not be helped by protection. I would infer that they could not, because in return for protection to the central provinces you are willing to give a bonus to the railways carrying freight from the west. Is that not a fair interpretation of the hon. gentleman's argument? That is all I have tried to prove. I think the address of the hon. gentleman was one of good will and showed what might be called a very reasonable spirit. However, I am inclined to think that the idea of a bonus to the railways is not going to solve the problem either of the west or of the Maritime provinces. I had another extract taken from a Maritime province paper that I might have read, but I will not do so. I am inclined to believe they are in as difficult a position in regard to railway transportation as we are, if not more difficult.

Speaking about industries, I feel perfectly certain that an increased population and an increased purchasing power of the people of Canada will do very much more to solve our industrial problem than any question of tariff policy is likely to do. I noticed that in the Speech from the Throne the government almost despaired of any reduction in taxation. The Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) last night pointed out the large volume of taxation that can be attributed to the war and he also pointed out the deficits in the operation of our Canadian National railways which could be attributed to the same cause. I hope the government has not given up the idea of economy. Drastic economy is necessary in the public affairs of the country at this time. Taxation is pressing heavily on all classes of the people. The tremendous taxation, not only Dominion and provincial, but also municipal, is perhaps the one drag on our prosperity at this time. There is no doubt that all governments indulged in a policy of rapid spending, and now after the money has been spent we are trying to pay the bill. In regard to taxation, I should like to see the field of taxation accurately defined between the Dominion and the different provinces, so that there will be no overlapping and no extra expenses incurred in the collection of taxes.

Another matter that I think should be settled at an early date is the question of the natural resources of the different provinces. If our field of taxation were properly mapped out, and if the question of the natural resources of the provinces were definitely settled, there would be no necessity for those pilgrimages of provincial premiers and other officials to Ottawa, to confer with the Dominion authorities here. If these questions were settled, it would make no difference which party was in power in the Dominion or which party held the reins of office in the different provinces.

The fourth paragraph of the Speech from the Throne states:

It is becoming increasingly evident, however, that quite as important a factor as the customs tariff in their effect upon production and living costs are transportation costs and rates, by land and sea. It is the opinion of my advisers that the attention of parliament at the present session should be directed more particularly to the desirability of effecting a freer movement of commodities through an equalization of railway freight rates—

And so on. Now, Mr. Speaker, I think this paragraph is rather adroitly worded. It mentions tariff, taxation and transportation in almost equal terms. I am quite willing at this time to admit the tremendous importance of transportation and the great significance