

Then our Liberal friends suggest that we might have the tariff a little lower. But if they reduced it by two or three per cent, would such a reduction show any appreciable difference? We have had practically the same policy all along, and in the case of either a reduction on this small scale or an increase there would be no great difference. I have come to the conclusion therefore that the time has arrived for some radical change in policy if we are to make any progress in the future.

This is a country of wonderful opportunities; we enjoy very many blessings. It is very seldom indeed that any hon. gentleman rises in this House who does not boast of our wonderful natural resources. So that when we think of these resources and reflect that this is a new country, it is disconcerting to realize what little progress we have made; we cannot help thinking that there is something wrong with the policy that we have followed. I want to ask the government to tell us why they have faltered in carrying out the policy upon which they were elected. Last year they made a fair attempt to implement it and several reductions were made. And our Conservative friends have not failed to seize every opportunity to inform the House that this partial adoption of the policy upon which the government was elected has been the ruin of industry in this country; they have told us how many industries have gone out of business. On the other hand, the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) and the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Stewart, Argenteuil) have declared that these industries that were affected last year by the tariff are showing splendid progress; they say that the implement firms, one of them particularly, paid very substantial dividends during the past year. And on top of this, according to the government's own figures, a surplus is shown in the budget this year. Well, if that is the case, and if the reduction in the tariff last year did not hurt these industries, what excuse have the government for not applying the same policy to every other industry? The government were elected on this platform of freer trade. Last year out of six by-elections they won five, and this to my mind would seem to have been an endorsement of the policy which they adopted at that time.

Mr. LAPOINTE: Hear, hear.

Mr. LUCAS: The Minister of Justice says "hear, hear." I think the people who elected these candidates last year, if they had to pass upon them again, might vote differently.

An hon. MEMBER: They are better satisfied than ever.

Mr. LUCAS: I am glad to hear that. As I pointed out a few minutes ago, we have had practically the same policy, except for a variance of about one per cent, during a number of years and we have made no great progress. I invite hon. members therefore to consider the question whether the time has not come for the adoption of some radical change. If we could not make greater prosperity in the past fifty years than we have made, in a new country, with low taxation and the lure of free lands, in the name of heaven what is the hope for the next fifty years with things as they are to-day? To my mind, protection as we have had it during the last fifty years has proved a failure, and I for one should like to see the government take its courage in its hands and get behind the free trade policy on which it was elected, and put it into effect. If the government would do that and would come out boldly and stand by that policy, making a fairly substantial cut of three per cent a year for five years, our industries would know what they might expect and would be able to adjust themselves to these conditions. And any industry that refused to place its cards on the table and reveal the condition it was in would simply have to take the consequences. On the other hand, as regards the industries that are indigenous, if any could honestly show us that they were unable to carry on, I would be quite agreeable to some system of bonusing them for at least a period of years to see what they were costing the country and whether it was worth while to maintain them. In my opinion that which Canada most needs to-day is population. We have provided facilities in this country for a population of at least twenty-five or thirty millions, perhaps more; and nine millions of people are endeavouring to carry that load. We all know the condition our railroad systems are in to-day, and unless we can get more population in this country to produce more tonnage for our railroads, it seems to me it will be only a matter of a few years before they are facing a very serious situation.

Everybody admits we need population, but where are we going to put new immigrants? Can our cities absorb any more to-day? I think not. We have our bread lines, or at all events there is a great deal of unemployment at the present time. The only place where you can put these new immigrants is on the vast open spaces of this country. In my opinion we have had a policy which I might call a cart-before-the-horse policy. We have been trying to build up an industrial system