

and that is something to be devoutly desired, particularly at this time in the history of our country and of the world.

I shall pass on from the imperial conference to say a word with regard to that part of the speech from the throne which has reference to a description of conditions as they are existing or as they are supposed to exist. I can best describe that part of the speech as being in the nature partly of fact and partly of fiction. It is almost completely in the nature of generalizations, assertions and affirmations. How true these are, I am going to ask the house to judge for itself. Reading that part of the speech, I find first of all that it says:

You enter upon your duties at a time of continuing and universal economic disturbance and distress. World conditions are beyond the control of the Canadian people.

All of that is true, but it has not become true just to-day. It was true two years ago. It was true at the time the government of the day was appealing, and also when my right hon. friend was making his appeal, to the people. We who were in office at the time were very frank with the people of Canada. We told them distinctly there were world conditions that could not be met by any single government, by any policy, by any individual; that there was much that could be done to help to alleviate the situation, but that world conditions were being and would have to be taken into account in considering the problems with which we were faced. My right hon. friend seeks to-day to have us believe that his troubles arise for the most part from world conditions. While it is perfectly true that world conditions do in very considerable measure account for much of the hardship which at the moment, the people of Canada are experiencing, it is equally true that many of the problems which my right hon. friend and his government are grappling with to-day have been of his own creation.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Yes, that is true. He has helped to bring down on his own head much of the adverse situation with which he is faced at the present time.

Let me go back to the discussion in this house on the last budget which was introduced by the Liberal government of the day. Hon. gentlemen opposite in the house fought that budget to the utmost of their ability; they did the best they could to defeat it. They misrepresented its aims and purposes; on the public platform they went through the same procedure, ridiculing it and finally succeeding

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

in defeating it—and with what result? The result was that at the imperial economic conference then pending they made a mess of what otherwise might have been a great success. As everyone in Canada well knows, that budget was designed to make the best of a difficult situation as it had developed in Canada because of world conditions. It was designed to secure immediately the goodwill of all parts of the British empire in matters of trade, and it would have succeeded to that end had it had a chance.

Let me go a step farther in showing wherein my right hon. friend has brought difficulties upon his own head. What did he do at the special session? Though it was called to deal with labour problems, he took that opportunity to make the most extreme changes in the tariff. In that one session he altered the whole tariff schedule, exercising no judgment, discretion or wisdom, but acted just as it suited his whim or caprice, and without the advice of any tariff board. He swept the former tariff board out of existence and made tariff changes which suited him for the moment. What has he been doing ever since? He has been continuously changing that tariff, with the result that nobody knows for more than twenty-four hours ahead what the tariff rate may be. As I have already pointed out, his negotiations at the imperial conference were most unsuccessful. There, again, he brought down on his own head some of the difficulties he is facing at the present time.

Before I leave the special session of parliament, may I again remind the house that it was called to deal with unemployment. As I said this afternoon the only measure he brought in in that connection was to ask this house for a vote of \$20,000,000. He did not care to give or was unable to give any explanation as to how that amount was fixed. Although Canada had assisted with unemployment relief at different times during the ten or twelve preceding years, the total amount that had been spent from the federal treasury for that purpose, including a part of the post-war period of depression, was not \$2,000,000. Yet my right hon. friend asked for \$20,000,000. How much of it did he spend? Before the end of the fiscal year he had not spent \$4,000,000, although he had made commitments for something like \$17,000,000 or \$18,000,000. Was that not adding to his troubles? Had he come to this parliament and pointed out to the people of Canada that during the previous ten years, including one or two years of great distress, all that it had been necessary to take from the federal treasury, in cooperation with the municipi-