

with the reins of government in their hands, what claim can they lay to be a Government of business men and of business habits. The United States people passed through the throes of an election only a few months ago. Their Congress met under the new regime on the 15th day of March, and on the 31st day of March, through that body—where legislation is not easily passed—they had passed a complete revision of their tariff, and it was sent to the Senate within sixteen days of the opening of Congress. And not their second session either, but their first session. This is the second session of hon. gentlemen opposite. Why have they not the tariff down? Because they are unready—is that the reason? What becomes of the statement made by my hon. friend the Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Mr. Davies) out at Aylmer when an election was on? He has seen the statement in the newspapers, and heard it quoted in the House—

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES** (Mr. Davies). What statement?

Mr. **FOSTER**. I will tell you. And from that time to this he has not denied it, and he is not now plucking up courage enough to deny it.

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES**. I have not heard the statement made in this House.

Mr. **FOSTER**. He said that when the hon. leader of the Opposition heard the statement, he would hear a statement that would surprise him.

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES**. The report in the papers is false.

Mr. **FOSTER**. I have no doubt my hon. friend is a very diligent reader of the papers. He is too old a politician not to see what his enemies say of him, or not to be flattered by the good things his friends say of him. I was out at Aylmer, and everywhere I was met with the statement, "They are going to have the tariff down right away; Mr. Davies says so." And what is the hon. gentlemen reported as saying? He said:

It had been charged that the Liberals had no policy and no intentions. Well, I would let you into a few secrets only for the presence of these newspaper men. But I can tell you this, that within a week of the opening of Parliament we shall produce our Budget and our tariff; and we shall give Sir Charles Tupper one of the surprises of his life.

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES**. Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman will, I am sure, allow me to say that I never made such a statement.

An hon. **MEMBER**. Oh.

Mr. **FOSTER**.

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES**. What does my hon. friend mean by the interruption? It is rather rude, I think. I was reported by a number of papers at that meeting—among them the Montreal "Star," an independent paper, the "Citizen" of Ottawa, an Opposition paper, and several others. Not one of them put that statement in my mouth. I did not make it nor anything like it. What I did say was that within a few weeks of the meeting of Parliament I had no doubt the tariff would be brought down. That statement was never made in this House before. If it had been, I should have taken the first opportunity to repudiate it. The hon. gentleman will do me the justice of admitting that it was never quoted or referred to, in my hearing at least. The latter part of the statement is right, that we would give the hon. leader of the Opposition a surprise, and I think we shall.

Mr. **FOSTER**. The hon. gentleman is now in for a surprise himself. He says he was reported in the Montreal "Star," an independent paper, and in the Ottawa "Citizen," which was not a friendly paper, and that in neither of these papers was he so reported. This is the "Citizen" I am reading from.

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES**. No, the hon. gentleman cannot be reading from the "Citizen." Is it the "Citizen's" report of the next day?

Mr. **FOSTER**. Yes.

The **MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES**. I read the "Citizen's" report, and did not see the statement. I saw the statement, which was incorrect, in the Ottawa "Free Press," which was the only paper, I understand, that gave it.

Mr. **FOSTER**. My hon. friend has stick-to-it-iveness enough at any rate. What the hon. gentleman now says is that he made the statement that in several weeks the Government would have their measure down. Well, one finds it difficult to know what effect that statement would have two days before an election. At all events, the tariff is not down. What is the reason? Has there been any time within the last eight years when they have not been able to declare before the people that they had well-defined and certain principles on which to base their tariff? Now, I find that in "Hansard," on page 47, in Sir Charles Tupper's speech, this quotation from the "Citizen's" report:

I can tell you, that within a week of the opening of Parliament we shall produce our Budget and our tariff, and we shall give Sir Charles Tupper one of the surprises of his life.

My hon. friend was probably not in the House.