

with a view to getting behind the very important associations I have mentioned, in an effort to try to solve the enormous problem before us, and to relieve the world of the crisis under which she is now suffering.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

After Recess

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

Mr. R. W. GRAY (West Lambton): Mr. Speaker, the Right Hon. Mr. Baldwin, head of the British delegation, speaking in this chamber on the 21st of July last, said:

Reverting now to empire trade, we hope that as a result of this conference we may be able, not only to maintain existing preferences, but in addition to find ways of increasing them. There are two ways in which increased preferences can be given,—either by lowering barriers among ourselves or by raising them against others. The choice between these two must be governed largely by local considerations, but subject to that it seems to us, we should endeavour to follow the first rather than the second course. For however great our resources, we cannot isolate ourselves from the world.

And again:

Among the factors which should operate towards a restoration of price levels the first place must be assigned to the recovery of confidence by traders and producers. This object can best be achieved by assuring traders of a market for their goods, by the removal or limitation of existing barriers to trade, particularly arbitrary and erratic quota systems and exchange restrictions.

And the Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Bennett) speaking on the same day, said:

The trading potentialities of this empire are great. But even one-quarter of the human race cannot profitably shut itself off from contact with the rest of the world.

Those who heard or read these statements felt encouraged. Here had assembled the governmental leaders of the empire. They recognized that for the conference to succeed, artificial barriers to trade which had been set up during the past few years must be lowered; that our failure to recognize trade as an interchange had at last been realized. It cannot truthfully be said that every opportunity for the success of the conference was not afforded. That the people of Canada were encouraged by our leaders to expect large results from the conference cannot be doubted, and it was with that expectation that we awaited the coming into this house of the Prime Minister and his tabling of the full texts of the conference report on October 12 last. But from the very tenor of his speech,

[Mr. Spencer.]

from the barrage of words and high-sounding phrases in which he indulged, it was apparent that his purpose was to carry these agreements through the house without opportunity for the proper study that their importance deserved. Did the right hon. gentleman invite discussion and cooperation in the passing of these agreements? Did he say to this house and to the country: We met and we sincerely tried to do something for state and empire, but after meeting for a month we could not quite realize that hope; we did not accomplish all those things for which we met, but at least we did not part in absolute failure; we have something, not much, but it may be a basis for future conferences. Did he suggest that? On the contrary, he has boasted that he succeeded where others failed. He attempted to give to the people of Canada what to my mind is an entirely erroneous and unwarranted impression of the effects these agreements will have on trade in Canada, and improved conditions among the Canadian people as a result of that improved trade. To bolster his argument the Prime Minister quoted from speeches of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, former leader of the Liberal party when he attended various conferences. My right hon. leader (Mr. Mackenzie King), and my hon. colleague from Quebec East (Mr. Lapointe) have already pointed out the fallacy of those arguments. But even if there were a similarity, let me ask this question: What would Sir Wilfrid Laurier have done if he had proceeded to the imperial conference in 1930? Would he have proceeded to that conference in the spirit enunciated in the Dunning budget, or would he have stacked the cards against the motherland, as the Prime Minister of this country did, by raising prohibitive barriers before proceeding to the conference? When the Prime Minister of Canada uses the name of that great man, let the people of this country ask themselves that question, and then compare the two. When the smoke of the first barrage had cleared away the right hon. gentleman found that the lines of the opposition were still intact. He found that the leader of the opposition had the courage of his convictions and was determined to give to the people of Canada his understanding of these agreements, a duty surely cast upon one and all of us without its being said that to disagree is to be unpatriotic.

I have the honour to represent a riding partly rural, partly urban, and during the course of this debate I have waited with expectancy for statements from those ministers in the cabinet representing agriculture. It is true that last night we had a statement from