

Ways and Means—Customs Tariff

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: I do not think the minister would be serious in raising such a point of order. Manifestly my request is in order. Why should we not have the information? Why should we not know—in connection with the changes in tariff rates on agricultural implements—whether that change is to be so tempered as that this large reduction in the cost of transportation, largely at the expense of the Canadian ratepayer generally, will come? Now why should we not have the information?

Mr ROBB: Do I infer from the last sentence of my hon. friend's observations that he is opposed to the Crowsnest pass agreement coming into force?

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: I have spoken more than once in connection with the Crowsnest pass agreement. I am absolutely opposed to a system that differentiates among Canadians as to the railway rates they shall pay. I believe in having railway rates honestly and fairly fixed by the body appointed for that purpose. I further realize that the basis of railway rates varies from time to time and that changes either up or down have to be made. My position is no secret. The whole secret here is, that apparently my hon. friend does not want to give any information in connection with an absolutely vital question—the question of carrying on this business under the present tariff.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Why should my hon. friend (Mr. Robb) make any statement that will bind the freedom of this House in any respect in regard to railway matters when he is discussing a question connected with the tariff? Until the last day of this session the House will have the right to take whatever action it may think best in regard to railway matters when railway matters are under consideration. At present we are discussing the tariff which is an entirely different subject.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: Of course I fully appreciate the point my right hon. friend makes. I fully appreciate the position he takes, that matters of public policy are to be fixed by this House, that the government is not to be responsible for them. I am not disputing that position of the government's for one minute. But in this very debate, as showing that the agricultural implement manufacturers could carry on and will carry on, a member of the government stated that they would get the benefit of the Crowsnest pass rates. Now, I am merely trying to find out whether the government has so stated or

[Sir Henry Drayton.]

merely an individual member of it; whether on the question of any such arrangement the government has any mind at all.

Mr. CALDWELL: I cannot help but think that we are discussing the effect of the reduction of the duty on farm implements from one angle entirely, and I think possibly that is the fault of members in our corner of the House. I should like to discuss the matter from a little different angle. As I said, nearly the whole discussion so far has hinged on how these changes will affect the manufacturer. I should like to point out how the reduction in the duty on farm implements and fertilizers especially will affect the producers of Canada, who after all should be considered in some small measure, I think, in view of the fact that they are the most numerous class; I will go so far as to say they have more money invested in their occupation than the manufacturers of farm machinery have invested in theirs. Last year a witness from the province of New Brunswick appeared before the committee on agricultural conditions, a man who both grows potatoes and exports them, a man who lives very close to the international boundary in the province of New Brunswick, a man who buys both American and Canadian potatoes and is very closely acquainted with the cost of growing potatoes in the two countries and the price received for them. I will quote briefly from this gentlemen's evidence, question and answer, as follows:

Q. I believe you live very close to the American boundary?

A. Yes.

Q. Is there any difference in growing potatoes in New Brunswick and in Maine?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Where can they be grown the cheaper, would you say?

A. Maine.

Q. Would you tell us why?

A. For several reasons. Fertilizer is higher in New Brunswick.

Further down he states that fertilizers are from \$8 to \$10 a ton cheaper in Maine. That has been overcome absolutely by the abolition of the duty on fertilizers. I had better give the prices. These are the cash prices on mixed fertilizers in Maine and in New Brunswick in 1921—lists issued from the same Canadian office:

Analysis	Prices		
	Maine	New Brunswick	Difference
4-6-4.. .. .	\$58 12	\$72 07	\$13 95
5-8-7.. .. .	70 45	84 40	13 95
4-6-8.. .. .	63 01	76 96	13 95

I may say that that year there was more difference in the price than there had been formerly, due to the fact that the cost of