

*Supply—Trade and Commerce*

dollars are scarce. I may give the contents of the article before the conclusion of this discussion.

The general message of the article, the general fact elaborated, is that the United States is increasing the variety of her industrial life.

**Mr. Darroch:** So are we.

**Mr. Blackmore:** That is another important fact in the situation. It means that the needs of the American people for goods coming in from abroad are decreasing progressively, unless she can get raw materials to supplement those raw materials of her own the supply of which is largely exhausted—as, for example, iron. She will take plenty of iron, she will take plenty of wood, she will take plenty of oil, she will take plenty of those primary products of which we cannot afford to deprive our country if we are to avoid exhausting our supplies of these things within twenty-five or thirty years. She will take those things, but she will not take the products which can be processed from those things if she can possibly avoid it. That fact is as clear as it can be. It is a major factor in the trade situation of the world today.

Obviously United States tariff restrictions are going to become more effective as she approaches more nearly a condition of being completely self-sufficient. That is the ideal toward which I believe her leaders are working. In other words, the United States is rapidly developing into what might be called an economic nationalist state.

Canada is doing exactly the same sort of thing under the exceedingly wise guidance of the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe). He gave a speech not long ago in Montreal—he will correct me if I do not paraphrase him correctly—in which he said that Canada was endeavouring to decrease her vulnerability. Those were not his exact words, but the general thought he was conveying was that he and the government were striving to make the Canadian economy less vulnerable. The minister will check me if I am wrong.

What does that mean? It means that Canada under the guidance of the minister and the government in power is seeking to reach the point where Canada will be self-sufficient in respect of all really vital commodities. She does not want to be in the position where she will be dependent on outside sources of supply during the exigencies which might result from war in any part of the world. We had a good example of that in connection with rubber. I believe it was the Minister of Trade and Commerce who

[Mr. Blackmore.]

established the Polymer Corporation as a result of which we are now fairly secure in respect of rubber. If it had not been for institutions such as Polymer we should have been in a very bad way in world war II. The minister will correct me if I am wrong in that.

Will anyone in this house, will anyone in this country advocate for one split second that the Polymer Corporation should be disbanded and thus render us vulnerable in respect to rubber? He certainly will not. But what has this thing done? What has the establishment of Polymer done in the world? It has had the practical effect of depriving Malaya of its main source of revenue. The minister will check me if I am wrong on that. If you want to find the reason why communism prevails so dangerously in Malaya, why some 50,000 British troops have to be kept there to keep down communism, you will find it in such things as Polymer.

**Mr. Howe:** My hon. friend asked me to correct him. Is it not true that Malaya has received the highest price for rubber in the last two or three years ever received in its history? It is still receiving a very high price compared to any standard, despite what has been done. The Polymer Corporation and artificial rubber is merely keeping pace with the increase in consumption rather than cutting into the supply from Malaya.

**Mr. Blackmore:** I am glad to have the minister correct me. We are under the same difficulty as the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggarr (Mr. Coldwell) referred to. When a member of the opposition rises in this house he is facing an expert of the highest quality, with a large expert staff. If he was not that he simply would not be worthy of the position he occupies. If a minister in charge of a department of government with a staff of fifty, one hundred or probably more skilled experts cannot know more about the details of that department than all the rest of the house put together, then it is time that minister resigned.

**An hon. Member:** He has to be good to be in the Liberal party.

**Mr. Blackmore:** I say he has to be superior to be in the government of Canada, no matter what party is in power. We lack the facilities to get this information and that is why I want the minister to check me if I am wrong. I gather from what he said that we have been buying from Malaya just as much rubber as we bought before the second world war; is that right?

**Mr. Howe:** I should think that that is probably right.