

Mr. ALFRED SPEAKMAN (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, I do not think any apology is necessary for taking part in this debate. The subject itself is so tremendously important, so intricate and so difficult that it warrants very careful consideration and might warrant a somewhat prolonged discussion. It brings into review the whole question of international and world trade, of which inter-empire trade is a phase. It is obvious at this time that every civilized country in the world, and by civilized I mean every country which is now adopting or which has adopted modern commercial and industrial methods, is straining every effort towards one objective, the pursuit of markets in all parts of the world. To that end they are ransacking every nook and corner of the globe to find markets to dispose of their surplus production. They seek also another objective, that of selling in the markets of the world more than they are prepared to purchase.

This question of international trade has become much more difficult and much more intricate during past years. Not so many years ago the world was divided practically into two distinct types of countries. There were the old world countries, densely populated, highly industrialized, which were bending their whole effort toward manufactured production but which were dependent upon the newer countries for their foodstuffs and their raw materials. Then there were the newer countries which were sparsely populated and which had not made any considerable effort at that time toward industrialization, but which had for sale both at home and abroad large quantities of food and of raw materials. In those days world trade was a comparatively simple matter. The two classes of countries interchanged their goods to their own mutual advantage and very little domestic or internal irritation arose. But since that time and during the past few years a very great change has taken place. The newer countries have become industrialized, and of those newer countries Canada is a very outstanding example. Canada is no longer a mere purveyor of foodstuffs and raw materials to be manufactured by other countries, but she has developed her manufacturing industries to a very great degree and is now in the position not of affording a ready market for the manufactured products of other countries but of being forced to seek a market in which to dispose of her manufactured products.

There is another very significant change which has taken place in the world during the past few years, and that is the tremendous speeding up of production, both in manufacturing and agriculture. The adoption of newer and more up to date methods, the utilization

[Mr. Ladner.]

of machinery to a degree unheard of and undreamt of a few years ago, has placed production upon an entirely different basis. Over-production is a constant possibility and as a matter of fact is a constant menace to the newer countries such as Canada.

To complicate the matter further, the tariff walls of the different nations have been raised again and again. These countries are faced by the menace of over-production and a constant effort is being made by means of tariffs to conserve their own home markets and to keep out the goods of other countries which might have surplus products to dispose of. I hardly need state the result to the house for it to realize the obvious absurdity and impossibility of such a situation. In order to meet this situation trade treaties have been negotiated, and, speaking for myself, I heartily approve of such treaties particularly as they may apply to those countries comprising the British Empire. I do not approve of the principle of protection as it is generally applied and I see in these trade treaties an obvious attempt to modify the effect of the protective policy as we know it. Each treaty seeks to lower the protective wall of some individual country against some particular article to favour the country making the treaty, and I think it is safe to say that each treaty is an attempt on the part of a country to modify the effect of the high tariffs which may prevail in other countries.

Believing as I do that unrestricted trade between all countries is beneficial to everyone concerned, I welcome the attempt being made, by treaty or otherwise, to eliminate, partially or wholly, some of the obstacles which this and other countries have raised. In making these treaties a very definite principle should be always observed, and that is that the benefits accruing therefrom should not only be mutual as regards the two countries entering into the arrangement, they should be reasonably advantageous to the country but they should not be hostile toward any part of the population of either of the two countries concerned. Upon consideration of this phase of the matter, I find myself in opposition to the present Australian treaty.

When I speak of that treaty I mean the treaty in its largest sense. It is useless to discuss the New Zealand situation as being apart from the working of the Australian treaty, for the benefits of that treaty are simply extended to the kindred dominion of New Zealand. When I speak of the treaty I speak of it as it applies to Australia and to New Zealand alike. While I am in sympathy with and in favour of the negotiation of these treaties when they may be beneficial to Canada as a whole, I recognize in