

country to reject any proposal in the direction of annexation.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. MACLEAN (York). But what are the circumstances under which this proposal comes before us. A new departure in constitutional government is being introduced. In the old days the King was supreme, and then came the lords and gradually the commons came to have control, and to-day in the old country all the powers are about to be taken by the House of Commons in the interests of the people. But in this country another great development is taking place, and we are asked to give exclusively into the hands of the cabinet the power of making the tariff. That is a crime against the constitution, against the rights of the people, greater than ever attempted heretofore in this House. In the old days, as my hon. friend the leader of the opposition (Mr. Borden, Halifax), has said, this House had the right to control all money Bills whether for the expending of money or the raising of money for revenue purposes. But to-day we have reached such a stage that the cabinet and the Prime Minister, in an irresponsible way and without consulting this House, frame our tariff and tell us that we must either accept it without amendment or reject it. Well, if there be anything which is of national importance, it is that parliament should control all money Bills and the making of our tariff. But here we have had negotiations carried on in Washington culminating with an agreement with regard to the tariff. That tariff was brought down and we are told that we cannot change it, but must take it as presented. Even the screws are put on the government side, and they are given no opportunity of saying what they think about it. In fact a closure is put on the whole House and the whole country, and we are told that we must accept this tariff proposal without any change whatever. As has been said a few moments ago, every other tariff Bill has been submitted to this House as a government measure, open to explanation, discussion and amendment. Deputations were heard with regard to it, their suggestions were considered, some were adopted and changes made.

Other delegations came that were affected by the amendment, and they were heard. And so, after a great deal of talk, after many amendments, after everybody was heard, the new tariff Bill was voted and carried—the result of a compromise, as every tariff Bill ought to be. But here, for the first time in the history of this House, a tariff Bill is laid before us, the result of surreptitious negotiation between the Prime Minister, who is the new czar of this country, and the czar of the United

Mr. MACLEAN.

States, and the people of the whole of North America are committed to a tariff proposal to which there is to be no amendment, negotiated by the czars of the two countries. There is a feeling in the United States, as there is here, that if our tariffs are to be made for us in this way, and if they are to be made for us in Washington, as in this case, the people of Canada, or the parliament of Canada not being consulted, then, on the face of it, the tendency of such a proposal is toward the destruction of our national autonomy and our gradual absorption into the United States. I have not any doubt that that will be the result of this proposal. And that that will be the effect the people of the United States believe—not only the members of the House of Representatives and of the Senate of the United States, but men, business men generally. And I take that fact from a friend who has recently come from New York, and who has been in touch with business men there. He tells me that the biggest men there regard the proposal as one step on the road to annexation. And if this proposal realizes, or tends to realize, the view expressed by Mr. Champ Clark as to the American flag waving over the whole of North America, is it not reasonable that the United States should be prepared to make tariff concessions to that end? On the other hand, we, by adopting this proposal, say in effect that, for a tariff consideration, for a money consideration, we will endanger our nationality. Is not our nationality endangered if, when a tariff Bill is to be made, word is sent to the Canadian government to send delegates to Washington to look after our interests? It means, if this proposal is carried, that never in the future can there be another tariff Bill introduced in this House without the consent of the people of the United States. This country will be indubitably committed to such a principle if this proposition is accepted. Never, hereafter, can any move be made in connection with the tariff without first sending to Washington to enter into secret negotiations with them. And never again—and this is the most significant thing of all if this method is to be continued, which I hope it will not be—never again will the people of Canada have the opportunity they have always had heretofore of discussing a tariff measure as introduced in this House, amending it, compromising on it, or adopting it as we see fit. That is the thing that is ahead of the people of Canada to-day—that they are losing absolutely their tariff independence.

Mr. TALBOT. Even with a change of government?

Mr. MACLEAN (York). No, not with a change of government. But, adopt this