

that these are two hon. members of very high standing in this House, and if they cannot agree on this question, what is the man in the country going to do? This question should be settled once and for all, because I can picture what is going to happen in the country if an election takes place shortly, what statements are going to be made on the stump, one side holding up the splendid surplus that they advocate and the other side just as strenuously stating that there is no surplus but a huge deficit. The result will be confusion amongst the electorate in Canada.

As regards the Greek and Roumanian loans, it is Greek to many of us. I should like to commend the government for having placed those loans on a better financial basis, but further than that I do not see that they can take any credit at the present time. If, for instance, we should have a war in Europe in the near future—and such a thing is not unlikely under existing conditions over there—what would be the chance of collecting anything on that loan? The government would be well-advised to leave that amount out of their surplus until they have made a collection, and that would be the proper time to apply it to reducing the debt of this country.

As regards the budget, I am badly disappointed with the government at this time in not carrying out their pledges to the people at the last election. The people of this country have placed in power a government, believing that they were truly standing for the pledges which they made to the people at that time. But we find that after taking a few side-steps they finally came to the position of stand-patters. I read, with some interest, on the morning after the budget was delivered this editorial in the *Ottawa Citizen*. It is headed "A Standpat Budget" and it goes on to say:

Nobody expected the government to bring in any substantial changes in the method of raising revenue this session. None has been made. Although the great majority of members are committed to a fiscal policy of freer trade, they seem to have less power in the country than the small groups of special interests who oppose tariff reductions.

Party leaders are allowed to talk about the national policy, but the economic policy of Canada is determined by interests outside of parliament. That becomes yearly more apparent: it will probably continue so until the people of Canada, thinking as consumers, really know what they want to get from the building up of Canadian industry.

At the present time, the small groups of protected, bonused and subsidized interests know what they want. So far, they have succeeded in getting about everything they want from parliament.

It seems to me that that is the situation we have in Canada to-day, that while we have had governments in Canada ever since con-

[Mr. Lucas.]

federation going to the people and advocating certain policies, there has always been, I would almost feel like saying, another government behind the scenes pulling the strings. When we look back over the debates in this House since confederation, we find that the great arguments have been on the question of protection versus free trade. Politicians have laboured and have filled pages of Hansard on this question, and yet we find ourselves to-day in the same position, debating the same old question. Taking the figures supplied by the hon. member for South Winnipeg (Mr. Hudson) the other day, I find that the average tariff on all imported goods coming to Canada has been as follows: In 1878 the average was 13.1; from 1883 to 1896 it was 19.1; in 1898 17.5; in 1911 16.2; in 1922, 16.2; in 1923, 16.7; and in 1924, 15.1. Outside of the period from 1883 to 1896 when we had an average of 19.1 the tariff has not varied practically more than 1 per cent. I think there is something very striking in this for every member of this House as well as for every man in the country. It shows that we have had practically the same policy in this country during all these years, and I would ask any hon. gentleman in this House whether he would be prepared to stand up and express his satisfaction at the progress that Canada has made in the last half-century. Looking at our figures in the matter of population in that time we find that in 1871 we had in Canada 3,689,257 people. Our total immigration into Canada in the past fifty years has been 5,099,692 while our natural increase has amounted to 3,931,125, or a total of 12,720,074. Yet in 1921 at the last census we had a population of only 8,788,483. As I have said, we have had during the last fifty years practically the same policy, and we find that we have lost in that time 3,931,591 of our population. We have spent in our Immigration department over \$30,000,000 and the results, as I have shown, are anything but satisfactory. Would any business concern put up with such a state of affairs? It seems to me that any business that had followed a certain policy for fifty years, practically without change, without making any greater progress than we have made under the policy that we have pursued would fire the whole management and adopt something new. Our Conservative friends say that we should have higher protection. Well, they have been in power a number of years during which this policy has been in effect, and yet we can see no very great change as a result of its operation. But suppose we did increase the tariff two or three per cent, what difference would that make?