

to find, not the extreme view which might suit one particular section, but the course most reasonable to adopt in a country as vast as ours, where conditions in different parts of the country vary as much as they do. May I say to my hon. friend that the situation, however humorous it may be, of gentlemen in the present administration sitting cheek by jowl with each other is as nothing compared to the amusement to be derived when one looks across to the benches opposite and sees the hon. leader of the opposition (Mr. Guthrie), the hon. member for Fort William (Mr. Manion) the hon. member for Victoria (Mr. Tolmie), and one or two others, formerly all good Liberals, seated cheek by jowl with dyed-in-the-wool Tories and carrying off the plums. I cannot imagine any situation quite as ludicrous as my hon. friend the leader of the opposition sitting cheek by jowl by the side of the hon. member for Toronto Northwest (Mr. Church), who of necessity is one of his followers at the present time. I think the less my hon. friend has to say about cheek by jowl the better for all concerned.

The leader of the opposition in the course of his remarks touched quite a little on the question of the tariff. In that particular he was only running true to form in the leadership of the party of which he is now the head. At every general election we have heard much discussion by the Conservative party with respect to protection. They come out in full force as advocates of a protective doctrine, which they say is all important in order to save the interests of the Dominion. But as soon as the election is over and they come into parliament, while they talk a great deal about protection, I have noticed that never once have they come forward in the debate on the budget with an amendment of their own in which they lay down their doctrine and their principles with respect to the tariff. In the election of 1921, from one end of the country to the other, the then leader of the Conservative party advocated the doctrine of a consistently maintained protective tariff, but when we came into the House and the debate of 1922 on the budget took place, when one might have expected that the leader of the party would have moved his tariff programme, what did he do? He and the party opposite contented themselves with a motion complaining that the government of the day had not put into force all at once all the pledges that had been made at a previous Liberal convention. Nothing whatever was said about their own programme. In 1923 a similar course of talking about the need of protection was adopted,

except that at that time the opposition did not present any motion as an amendment to the budget, it was left to the then leader of the Progressive party to move an amendment. In the following year 1924, they again failed to bring in any amendment to the tariff setting forth their own programme, and they left it to the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Woodsworth), to bring in an amendment relating, I think, to the cost of living. Then again in 1925, instead of presenting their tariff platform, for which they professed to have such great concern, the ex-Minister of Finance (Sir Henry Drayton) or some other member at his instance, brought in an amendment regretting that taxation had not been reduced and that the national debt was as large as it was—not one word of their policy of protection consistently maintained. Then we had a general election, and all the talk about protection over again, and we came back for another session. What was their position on the tariff? Did they present an amendment to the budget embodying their policy of protection? Not a bit of it. They brought in a resolution regretting that before certain changes had been made in regard to the tariff in relation to one of the industries of the country, the whole matter had not been referred to the tariff board. Now after another general election at which there has been much talk about protection, we have my hon. friend coming forward with his general talk on the need of protection, but carefully avoiding a statement of what his party desires. I hope when the budget debate proceeds he and his friends will have the courage to state exactly what they stand for on the tariff, and let us see how our friends from the maritime provinces, who form a large part of their following, line up with my hon. friends from Toronto and elsewhere, in regard to protection and the question of the tariff.

My hon. friend next spoke about the net debt of the country, and regretted that the net debt did not seem to have been reduced as rapidly as possible. I think my hon. friend forgets just how much of that debt was incurred during the administration of hon. gentlemen opposite. I do not wish to go over subject matter debated in previous sessions, but I do think it is well worth while, when my hon. friend speaks of five years financing by the present administration, to call to mind how the financing was done by my hon. friends opposite in the four or five years they were in office during the period of the war. At that time something like \$1,760,000,000 was added to the public debt of the country as the capital cost of the war, and