

*Customs Tariff Amendment*

Mr. DUNNING: I would suggest to my right hon. friend that he has not made a comparison with the past administration. If he did, his figures would be of astronomical proportions.

Mr. BENNETT: Not quite, because the minister increased the sales tax from six to eight per cent, and that is included.

Mr. DUNNING: And reduced the tariff.

Mr. BENNETT: I remember when they were fighting shoulder to shoulder; they were about to remove these barriers against trade and this three per cent excise tax; and these tremendous duties that were imposed under the British preferential tariff, were to be reduced fifty per cent. I can remember the ancient days long since past in the legislature of Saskatchewan when the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dunning) fought shoulder to shoulder in passing resolutions year after year demanding a fifty per cent cut in the British preferential tariff, and freedom of trade in all articles of household furniture. They used the term "household machinery." Fertilizers and implements were to be put on the free list. Here their cohorts are all gathered together, but they are not fighting shoulder to shoulder. The Minister of Trade and Commerce was not a vigorous applauder of the speech of the hon. member for Moose Jaw.

Mr. EULER: I did not agree with it.

Mr. BENNETT: I can fancy the sorrow there must be in some of the homes of Saskatchewan as they read the speech of the Minister of Finance. How they must recall the halcyon days when he inveighed against the doctrines of protection and told them that he would lead them, not into the wilderness, but into the promised land of a fifty per cent cut in the British preferential rate and free trade in everything they had to have. But those days are past. He says he is no free trader now. He is a protectionist in some items and a free trader in others.

Mr. DUNNING: He did not say that.

Mr. BENNETT: He said the other evening he never had been a free trader. I thought he would say that, and I wanted to see what he had said in the Saskatchewan legislature. I find that he advocated placing upon the free list all foodstuffs.

Mr. DUNNING: Yes.

Mr. BENNETT: He demanded:

...the reduction of the customs duty on goods imported from Great Britain—

Mr. DUNNING: Exactly.

[Mr. Bennett.]

Mr. BENNETT:

—to one-half of the rates charged under the general tariff.

Mr. DUNNING: Yes.

Mr. BENNETT: He demanded:

...and that further gradual uniform reductions be made to the remaining tariff on British imports that will ensure complete free trade between Britain and Canada.

Mr. DUNNING: Does that make me a free trader?

Mr. BENNETT: I should think it did. He demanded:

The placing upon the free list of all agricultural implements, farm and household machinery, vehicles, fertilizers, coal, lumber, cement, gasoline, illuminating fuel and lubricating oils and all raw materials and machinery used in their manufacture.

That would seem to indicate that there was not much to protect after he achieved free trade in all these items. The only protection to be afforded would be to that idea which it was necessary to disseminate in the east in order that the west might realize that its noble champions of free trade were fighting the battle for them while in the remote and effete east they were leaving it open to say: "We are not free traders outright; we are only free traders, you know, in respect of all the items I have mentioned, but we reserve to ourselves the right of protection to those commodities not named." Perhaps the minister would be good enough at some time to indicate just what would be left, so far as the western consumer is concerned, after you had free trade in all these items.

Then I cannot help thinking of my hon. friend the Minister of Mines and Resources (Mr. Crerar). I recall the days of his noble past when, under the banner of progress, he marched upon Ottawa and attacked the citadel with fifty-eight gallant supporters called Progressives.

Mr. CRERAR: Sixty-five.

Mr. DUNNING: Sixty-five. Get it right.

Mr. BENNETT: Excuse me for underestimating them. It only shows that his desire to achieve free trade was stronger than I thought.

Mr. CRERAR: I was sure that my right hon. friend desired to be accurate.

Mr. BENNETT: I do not want to minimize the confidence placed in him by so vast a number of the people's representatives in western Canada. But when he advanced on the citadel and attacked the dragon of protection in its lair, we realized that for some