

*The Budget—Mr. Ryckman*

supply dries up, then you pay and you pay heavily. It will be said that the transaction which I instance of the dresses means a tariff increase of 200 per cent. That is so. If hon. members are in favour of keeping out those dresses, then they are in favour of a tariff of 200 per cent, and if they are in favour of a tariff of 200 per cent, then they will find that the cases cited by the hon. member for Shelburne-Yarmouth (Mr. Ralston) simply move out of the picture because they are not to be considered. They are in the same class as the misses' dresses, to which I have referred.

Mr. YOUNG: What value did the minister set for duty on those dresses?

Mr. RYCKMAN: That point was not reached. They never came in. On page 1897 of Hansard a list of goods is given with apparently very high duties and the hon. member says:

I need not say those figures include sales tax, excise tax, the exchange rate and the arbitrary fixing of the value for duty purposes by the Minister of National Revenue.

I wish simply to say that I had nothing to do with any of those items, so I think it is unfair—

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Who fixes the price for duty purposes?

Mr. RYCKMAN: —in eagerness to make out a case, to utter, with regard to a member of the government, statements which are wholly untrue.

I should like to point out that the principle laid down in the amendment was not followed by my hon. friends opposite when they were in power. We have heard the comments upon it. When they are in opposition they are against the tariff; when they are in power they keep the tariff going. The general trend of the tariff is pretty nearly the same with hon. gentlemen opposite as it is with the government at the present time, and I venture the assertion that if by any chance a Liberal government had been in power when England was driven off the gold standard and when we had this pressure in the sale of distress goods, action similar to that taken by this government would have been taken by them or, indeed, by any government that had the interest of Canada at heart. If hon. gentlemen will visit the office of the Department of National Revenue, I can show them lists of houses that are selling or trying to sell nothing but distress goods. If prices are kept down—and no one is complaining that they are too high—and if employment is given to Canadian men and women, surely it is in the

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interests of the country to follow this line of tariff protection inaugurated by a great Liberal and carried on by a great Conservative.

I would also point out that this method of dealing with the currency springs from the time when the Right Hon. W. S. Fielding was Minister of Finance. If hon. members will turn up the statutes of 1922 and look at chapter 18, they will find he was wise enough to establish the structure—and pretty complete it was too—of the present proceeding in relation to currency.

It is suggested in the amendment that the action taken by this government has been detrimental to the interests alike of producers, importers, distributors and consumers. They have inserted the middleman twice; they have left out nobody; they say that this plan is a benefit to no one. I am fairly familiar with inquiries that have been made of me as to the attitude of the chain store people and others who are willing to import as long as they see a chance, if they can import, to make at the expense of the Canadian consumer a handsome profit on the imported goods because of the distress in the country from which they come. That is contrary to the policy of the Conservative party, and I believe also to that of the Liberal party. I must add this: I have heard complaints, as I am sure others have done, of those in our towns and cities who have had to close up their shops because of the chain store, because of its immense buying power, because it can go to a man who, on account of some driving exigency, must have the money, and compel him to sell his goods to it at less than their value. Hon. members know that sort of thing takes place. The condemnation of the chain stores, which at one time subsided somewhat but perhaps has been revived on account of the hard times, is that it was felt in the hearts of people that they were losing out because there was in the business a bigger man with more money who could undersell them. These big institutions can go to countries where they can buy goods for a fraction of their cost. The case I cited was one-third with 200 per cent. There are cases of ten per cent; I know of one case of 25 per cent discussed with me. Those of us who have found in towns and cities that the chain stores have driven out popular business men who simply could not continue, ought to say: We are not now going to give some special privileges or lay down any of these barriers that have been erected by a former government and by this government to prevent the importation of goods which are not being merchandised in accordance with good faith in business. This government stands for