

partly aware of the terrible world situation. We realize that conditions overseas are critical, and perhaps in a general way we can agree with what the minister says is his objective. I was also interested in the question asked by the hon. member for Moose Jaw, and I find myself in agreement with his suggestion. If our only purpose was to keep United States goods out of Canada, why not put them under quota, or, for that matter, prohibit them as you have prohibited many other articles? But why the excise tax? It is recognized that the government does not need more revenue. It almost boasts of the surplus of five or six or seven hundred million dollars it anticipates, so that surely we do not need more revenue. I agree with the minister when he says that when these conditions arise we must adopt fiscal methods to correct them, but I do not find myself in agreement with the statement of the hon. member for Halton that this emergency came up very quickly. As the hon. member for Muskoka-Ontario has said, it certainly was not that type of emergency, unless there are two dictionary meanings of what an emergency is. As hon. members have already said today, several on this side pointed to the critical situation which was developing and repeatedly told the Minister of Finance and the government that it would continue to develop if they persisted in their fiscal policy. The hon. member for Halton harked back to the days when a leader of this party, a former prime minister, said he would blast his way into the markets of the world. Perhaps that was not the best way to put it, but I submit that it was much more graceful than to make no statement at all and then blast your way out of the markets of the world, as this government is doing.

Mr. ABBOTT: Our trade has never been greater. Some blasting!

Mr. ROWE: I have been surprised at that myself. This must be a strong country to be able to withstand the weaknesses of this administration.

Mr. HARTT: Don't tell us about Mr. Bennett.

Mr. ROWE: You were not here when Mr. Bennett was here.

Mr. HARTT: No, but I know all about him, and I know all about you, too.

Mr. ROWE: And I know all about you. I can only say, Mr. Chairman, that if we are to deal with fiscal matters I am sure no one on this side needs to offer any apology for the fiscal policies enunciated by ourselves or our predecessors. If I were a new member like

the hon. gentleman who has interrupted me, and had lived with the Liberal party in this house for only a short time, and if I knew as much about it as he pretends to know, I would be almost ashamed to mention fiscal matters. These are the great champions of free trade. These are the people who, away back years ago, were going to have commercial union with the United States of America. These are the people who, for half a century, have heralded free markets of the world.

I can well recall hearing speeches along that line when I first came to this house in 1925. Many who spoke at that time have now passed on to their great reward. Some of them were fine gentlemen, on the other side of the house—and there are a few left in that category. I know that even one of the worthy predecessors of the present light-hearted Minister of Finance, the Hon. Mr. Robb at that time, and many others, spoke along that line. I listened to the Hon. Mr. Fielding, although at that time I did not hold a seat in the house. But I did have the opportunity to listen to him speak and I have heard many others talk about the free trade policy of the Liberal party, and tell how they would open the markets of the world.

I sat in parliament while the party opposite came to parliament with one trade agreement after another, between 1925 and 1929. Never did any party in so short a time negotiate more trade agreements with other countries of the world than did the Liberal party of that day. And never did a party in such a few years almost close our world markets; because in 1930 we found ourselves in a terrible condition.

An hon. MEMBER: A Tory government.

Mr. ROWE: Yes; it was so bad that the country called in a Tory government to take over.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: It must have been bad.

Mr. ROWE: And it is coming to that again, very rapidly.

Mr. HARTT: A pound of butter.

Mr. ROWE: And it was not only a pound of butter. I can well recall what happened in those years. All one has to do is to go back and search the records to find out how much trade we had in agricultural products with the United States, and compare the figure with our trade in 1930. The fiscal policy in those years was of a most haphazard and uncertain type.

We find that between 1921 and 1930 not only was the balance of trade unfavourable to Canada, but there were more people leaving this country and going to the United States