

Interim Supply

The Deputy Chairman: Order. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but it is my duty to advise him that his time has expired.

Mr. Harris: Mr. Chairman, I realize there will be further speeches but I feel that I ought to make some references to what has been said already before the debate goes much farther. I do want to say at the outset that it is always interesting, not to say entertaining and amusing, to hear my hon. friend from Dufferin-Simcoe. It is not however, an exercise in consistency that anyone should study.

Earlier this morning his leader, in an effort to prove that the government was not properly exercising its duties with respect to certain Canadian matters, urged upon the government that we should have a tax system similar to that of the United States with respect to certain natural resources. That was a matter with which he dealt at great length. It seemed that if only we would imitate the Americans, if only we would have a tax system such as they had in Washington, we would then have the best of all worlds.

I was looking at my hon. friend from Dufferin-Simcoe about that time. I recalled the fact that in 1930, when the government of the party to which I belong went to the country at that time with a tariff which was known as a countervailing tariff, that is a tariff designed to help the farmers by saying to the Americans that we will put up our tariff against you if you put up your tariff against us, my hon. friend from Dufferin-Simcoe on the public platform said, "Why do we have to have our tariff made in Washington?"

Mr. Rowe: I still think that.

Mr. Harris: And you still say that; you just say to your leader the same thing with respect to a tax system. You say to him that the wheel has come full circle; that now, instead of having a complaint about our tariffs being made in Washington we are having the complaint that we ought to have our tax system made in Washington. That complaint comes from the party to which my hon. friend belongs.

I do want to answer very briefly some of the questions which have been raised by my hon. friend about farm matters. He has been trying to say that this government has done nothing about tariffs on farm products. I would be the first to admit, as he will remember, that this party, then the government, was defeated in 1911 because we felt at that time that the interests of farming in this country required certain tariff arrangements with the United States and that his party opposed those tariff arrangements on the grounds that they would be prejudicial to other interests in Canada.

That is a long time ago but in the meantime what has happened? When my hon. friend's party was in office they had an attitude on tariffs which has been repudiated ever since by the Canadian people and indeed by all the people in the world. Every single trade treaty which has been made since 1935, either by this government or indeed by any other government, has been made for the purpose of facilitating the exchange of goods rather than restricting them. At the end of the war we entered into our general agreements on tariffs and trade, and I well recall hon. gentlemen of the party opposite, even as late as last year, saying that this was a very excellent document. Yet today my hon. friend asks, why have we not done more about raising tariffs against United States products of one kind or another, knowing full well that those products are covered by an agreement which binds us not to take this action except after a long period of negotiation and settlement with the United States.

Mr. Small: We always get the short end of the deal on that.

Mr. Harris: Whether or not we do—

Mr. Small: We do.

Mr. Harris: —is a matter of opinion. But I well recall when this matter was raised about two years ago by my colleague from Churchill, he said that the party to which my hon. friend belongs had some doubts about the general agreement on tariffs and trade. There was an indignant outburst by their representative who deals with this matter, namely the hon. member for Eglinton, followed by the hon. member for Greenwood, in which they reiterated the support of their party for the general agreement. They insisted in indignant terms that their party never deviated from support of the agreement. My hon. friend may have brought in a new version of the Tory party platform, I do not know. If so, let him speak.

Mr. Small: I have spoken on it already.

Mr. Harris: Let us deal for a moment with these farm matters and let us see what has happened since the war. We entered into these agreements in 1946. I have a recollection that almost everyone supported them in the house in one form or another. If there were qualifications they were only minor ones expressed in the course of a speech.

With respect to potatoes, my hon. friend takes credit for members of his party for what has been brought about in recent weeks. I shall be the first to agree that all members from the maritimes have felt strongly on this subject in the last two years, but I repeat that this change has come about in that time; that up to that time it was an