

government of the day. Let me say briefly that where the people of the country have confidence in their government, and that confidence is not weakened by the carrying on of false propaganda, we can look forward to the future with greater confidence and with the prospect that it will not be long until a more prosperous and a happier day dawns for Canada.

Mr. THOMAS HENRY THOMPSON (East Hastings): At this late hour. I do not intend to take up much time. But a number of hon. members have spoken of conditions as they exist in their respective constituencies, and I should like to present some of the conditions that exist in the constituency which I represent and how the industries there are affected by the tariff. Before doing so I wish to join with other hon. members in expressing my regret at the illness of the right hon. Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding). May I be permitted to hope that he will soon be restored to his usual health and vigour and that before long he will be found occupying his accustomed place in this House.

I should like to consider for a few moments how the tariff affects the fluorspar industry in my county. For the benefit of hon. gentlemen who may not be aware of the fact I may explain that fluorspar is a mineral largely used as a flux in the production of steel. Prior to the year 1914 none or very little of the mineral was produced in Canada. The local market was supplied with 'spar imported from the United States and Great Britain. The outbreak of the war, however, led the Canadian manufacturers of steel to engage in the manufacture of steel for ammunition purposes and so a great demand arose in Canada for 'spar beyond the then existing capacity. The county which I have the honour to represent has large deposits of fluorspar, and the managers of the mines were able to open up and operate some of the mines and supply a portion of the great demand at that time. The mineral was shipped as far West as Sault Ste. Marie, as far east as Nova Scotia, and also to the United States. The quality of the mineral, I may explain, is of the very best and there is a sufficient supply to meet the needs of the Dominion. Fluorspar is protected in the United States but has no protection under the Canadian tariff.

In 1920 the operators of the Hastings mines became alarmed. They had a vision of what might happen. They got together, passed a resolution and forwarded the same to me. That resolution asked that the Canadian producers receive the same consideration as the producers of fluorspar in the United States and recom-

[Mr. Humphrey.]

mended that the government impose a duty on fluorspar entering Canada corresponding to that levied on Canadian fluorspar entering the United States. Surely that was not an unreasonable request to make. I may say that I took the matter up with the Minister of Finance at that time, and he promised that in the forthcoming revision of the tariff the matter would receive every consideration. The mine owners pointed out at that time that as the steel business would slacken, as it was bound to do in the United States, the supply of fluorspar would overtake the demand and that the old established and well equipped mines in the adjoining republic would dump their surplus production into Canada to the detriment of the recently opened fluorspar mines in Ontario. Fluorspar can be produced more cheaply in the United States than it can in Canada owing to climatic conditions. I should explain here that fluorspar requires to be washed, and in a cold climate such as we have in Canada that process is a very expensive one. Well, the fears of our mine owners were well founded. The United States raised its duty from \$1.50 to \$5 per ton. This practically closed the door to Canadian fluorspar, and as the result of not being able to ship the mineral to the United States—where they are able to produce more cheaply than in Canada—the mines in Ontario are closed.

When the mines were operating the Americans quoted prices so low that the operators of the mines in Canada could not compete. But just as soon as the mines ceased to operate and were allowed to fill with water and there was no competition in Canada, the United States raised the prices \$6.50 per ton, which the Canadian consumer is now paying in excess of what he paid when our Canadian mines were producing. The people of the county of Hastings appreciated very much the benefits derived from the operation of these mines. All classes were benefited, the labouring class, the merchants and the farmers. As a result of the mines closing down the Canadian National Railways has lost the increased tonnage created through the operation of these mines. There were five mines operating within three miles of my home, so that I know something about the benefits that were being derived from the industry. The labouring men have had to seek employment elsewhere. A number have gone to the United States to work in the mines there which now supply the Canadian market. The merchants have been deprived of the business that came to them as the result of the operation of these mines. The farmers have also been deprived of the increased home market for their produce. Capital is idle.