

any one can find fault. Canada being a component part of the empire, there seemed no reason why, particularly in a time of stress like this, the members of the family should not get together, and in closer cooperation—because misery loves company—do what they could to get out of these distressing conditions. But at the same time there does not appear to be any good reason why under such conditions the countries of the empire should entirely cut themselves off from the rest of the world.

But what a sense of deception filled the hearts of the Canadian people when the results of the conference were made known! What have we? These trade agreements for three, five and ten years! What had they for the famished and thirsty people of this country in their present need? They asked bread, the Prime Minister has given them a stone, a monument to his own fruitless endeavour as an imperial bargainer to cure the ills of the Canadian people. Sir, the Prime Minister was bound to the stake of his pre-election promises. For two years he had been harrassed and obsessed with these extravagant promises of 1930 to secure wider markets. No wonder that in despair he flung himself into the making of these agreements! But nothing can dispel from the memory of the Canadian people the distressing fears they entertained in the dying days of the conference when they understood it was likely to be a failure. No wonder the Prime Minister finally came out from under the bag of spoils which he has tabled in this honourable house in the agreements now under consideration.

But, sir, for that bag, what price did he pay? Time will prove better than any assertion of mine what advantage he has secured for us and what price we must pay. Presently, we are too near those events to appreciate fully and visualize their significance and effect. But even at this stage we can safely say that, proceeding as they do from a principle not too sound politically—I use that term in its proper sense—and not too sound economically, the Canadian people can expect to derive little good and advantage therefrom. The principles involved are a negation, or complete curtailment of our political liberty, none the less deplorable because self-imposed by a complacent majority.

Many years ago, Sir Wilfrid Laurier described the empire as a galaxy of nations, and until the birth of these trade agreements no better definition could be given. A galaxy of nations! the empire the heavens, the component parts of the empire the stars, each

[Mr. Chevrier.]

separate, having its own identity, independent one of the other, travelling in well-ordained channels, but all gravitating around a common centre. Canada, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, all enjoying responsible government, mistresses of their own destinies, jealous of their own rights and privileges, Canada particularly proud of its own modern garb, a la statute de Westminster, but all bound in a common tie.

These political liberties were not acquired without long and weary struggles. They represent the concerted efforts of many generations, and in some instances the price was high. Today, whether we be of Canada or South Africa, we are proud of our status, and we were ready to sit with the other countries at the family table under the eye of the mother country, to enjoy the well-earned fruits of these long labours. No one in those days dared challenge our loyalty to the empire, let no one do so today.

Speaking in this honourable house as one of those whose mother tongue is that of millions of inhabitants of this fair land, as one whose blood is the same as that of those millions, I say that our hearts beat in unison with the hearts of those who wish the empire well; our souls, like the souls of our millions of brothers in this fair land, are filled with the same ardent desire for the empire's maintenance, our hopes and ambitions are no less ardent than the hopes and ambitions of our brothers for a united empire. Those little white crosses side by side in Flander's fields mark the last resting places of thousands of the descendants of those who fought with Wolfe and Montcalm, showing that the bonds of empire in Canada have not weakened. Our loyalty is not less sincere, our prayers and our endeavours for a greater empire are no less earnest than the prayers and hopes of those who propose these agreements now under review.

And we have a perfect right to criticize them, we of the Liberal party who sit on your left, Mr. Speaker, in the light of the principles and doctrines which are our own, and which, let it not be forgotten, are at the foundation of our political and economic liberties today, the principles of a democratic party, of a party that seeks the greatest good for the greatest number, the Liberal party. The Prime Minister has made it clear that these agreements constitute the glorification of protection. He has succeeded in grafting this bud on the old British free trade tree. He is a past master in many arts and sciences,