

cise duty of 2 per cent on \$1,700,000,000 of Canadian manufacturers and obtain \$34,000,000, and that, together with the \$16,000,000, would give me my \$50,000,000. It may be argued that I am taking it off the tariff and asking the consumer to pay. That is true in a sense, but what taxation can you levy on the people, unless it be an income tax, that the consuming public does not pay? I think we should have a stable tariff and if we have a special amount to raise we can raise it by a surtax and an excise tax that could be changed from year to year.

Having said that much on the tariff I shall now refer to the high cost of living. The effect of the Budget, I said, was to reduce the tariff by \$17,000,000, and that means that we reduce the per capita tax about \$2 each or about \$10 per family as a result of the reduction in the Budget this year. In view of the unrest in the country and the criticism that is made that the tariff is responsible for the high cost of living, it is well to consider the situation from every standpoint. I do not understand why there is so much criticism that the tariff is to blame for the present high prices. If it were true that the present tariff is to any real extent responsible for the high prices, then we should give the matter serious consideration. As a matter of fact, under the tariff that will obtain this year, we will collect only \$30,000,000 more than would have been collected on the same values in 1914. And if the 7½ per cent we are collecting were applied to the values of 1914—not the quantities of goods but the values—I venture the opinion that we would not collect from the people much more than \$20,000,000, which would represent \$2.50 per capita, or \$12.50 per family. And will any hon. member tell me that because the Government of the day is collecting \$12.50 more from every family by reason of the tariff, it is fair or reasonable to say that the tariff of the day is responsible for the present high cost of living?

Now, Mr. Speaker, what are the causes of the high cost of living? In my opinion they are directly traceable to the war. Early in the war, the Government, in the interests of the Allied armies, undertook to fix prices for the basic food product of the country.

They undertook to pay the farmers a very high price for their wheat, and what was the effect of that? The effect was that every other cereal, every other food product, went up in price in sympathy. Now who will say, Mr. Speaker, that the Government did not do right in the interests of the country

at large? The important matter was to ensure that our soldiers were supplied with food on the field of battle. These prices still exist, and that is the cause of the high cost of living. When wheat declines, I venture to predict that every other food commodity will, in sympathy, also decline.

Then there is another basic product. Before the war, raw cotton was eleven cents per pound. To-day, it is 28 cents per pound, and textiles of all kinds that are manufactured from cotton are, of course, at fabulous prices. For Heaven's sake, the Government is surely not to blame because raw cotton is high down in the Southern United States! Then take iron and steel. We know, as a matter of fact, why these commodities advanced in price. The Government of the day were controlling steel for munition purposes, and it went up so rapidly in price that all manufactures of steel likewise advanced, and if the housewife to-day buys a stove she must pay twice the price that formerly prevailed. And yet, gentlemen will say that the Government of the day are responsible for the high cost of living. What are they going to do to reduce the high cost of living? Can the Government fix the price of cotton? Can the Government fix the price of steel in Pittsburgh? The Government may fix the price of wheat for next year by leaving it alone and letting it take the market value; I do not know but that is the starting point for getting the cost of living down to its proper standard.

Mr. Speaker, it has been well said by the Finance Minister that this is a war year. In my judgment we require the best thought and experience of the men of the Union party to guide the ship of state into safe anchorage. So far as I am concerned, I believe it was the part of wisdom to unite the men who compose that party in Canada for enforcement of a measure of coercion regarding the army. So now, in view of our present condition, I consider it would be undoing to some extent the splendid achievements we have won if we did not continue a united front along the lines indicated when the Union party was formed.

I have set out some reasons why I support the Budget and oppose the amendment. My position regarding Union Government is to-day as it was in 1917, and so far as I can see my duty, it is so to act that to-morrow shall be as to-day but much more abundant. Canada entered unanimously into the conflict. She never flinched, she suffered greatly, the manhood of Canada fought and died; and our citizens will face