

wish to tell him that it is resting and recuperating from a long period of arduous activity, both in peace and war, in the interest of the people of this country. I wish to point out to him that these professions of superior virtue from his following, these reflections that are, from time to time, made upon both the old parties, would come with better grace if my hon. friends had to their credit some slight achievement in the interest of Canada. After hearing the address of the ex-Minister of Finance (Sir Henry Drayton), I think my hon. friend will revise his opinion and come to the conclusion that this party is not dead after all. No, Mr. Speaker, we are not dead; we are not sleeping; we are observing everything that is happening in this House.

Mr. ARCHAMBAULT: Keep on observing.

Mr. STEWART (Leeds): We are rejoicing in the vindication of the policy and the programme of our party that is coming through the merciless logic of events and by the action of our successors in office. I repeat that we are not dead, nor sleeping; and when the time comes—and it may not be very long—we shall be found ready and well equipped to resume the conduct of the complicated and difficult affairs of Canada, keeping her, with all her obligations, national and international, in a position of respect and responsibility in that great family of nations that go to make up the British Empire.

Mr. ANDREW McMASTER (Brome): Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to speak in this debate; but the placing in the discussion of the two amendments, and my attitude to one of them, makes it, it seems to me, incumbent upon me to utter a few words. As regards the last amendment moved by the hon. member for Calgary West (Mr. Shaw) in favour of economy, I find these words in the Address itself:

A strict economy in all public expenditures continues to be a necessity in the existing financial situation.

These words being incorporated in the Address, I cannot see the *raison d'être* or real necessity for the sub-amendment and therefore I will vote against it. As regards the amendment moved by the hon. member for Springfield (Mr. Hoey) I find myself obliged to take another position. I do so with considerable regret because I shall have to run counter, I am afraid, to the greater number, if not all, of the members of my own side of the House. Is there any objection to the material of the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Springfield? The amendment merely deals with the question of the reduc-

[M. H. A. Stewart.]

tion of customs duty and the desirability of having a downward revision of the tariff at this time. As the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding), in his instructive and most able speech the other day, himself said:

The general sentiment contained in these two motions is largely of a sound, sane and sensible character.

With this certificate of character of the amendment given by the Minister of Finance himself, it is unnecessary, it seems to me, to labour the point and to insist upon the desirability of the amendment. The question which has been brought up by the Minister of Finance is the propriety of urging this resolution at the present time. I have taken some time in studying this question and I have come to a conclusion somewhat different from that arrived at by the minister. I advance my arguments with a certain amount of diffidence in view of the long experience and the great public services which the Minister of Finance has rendered to this country. The Minister of Finance takes the view that the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne and the debate connected with it are really a matter almost of form rather than a matter of real importance. "It is simply a resolution," he states, "politely acknowledging the speech which His Excellency has kindly addressed to the House and giving him the assurance that whatever matters are brought before us will receive our respectful consideration." That is quite accurate as a statement of form; I respectfully submit that it is not accurate as a statement of reality. In reality the Speech from the Throne does not emanate from the Governor General at all; it is merely put into his mouth by his advisers. The Speech from the Throne is the more or less sketchy pronouncement of the government as to their legislative programme for the session; and our discussion of it is not, I take it, merely a courteous interchange of compliments with the Governor General. It is a debate in which the mind of the nation is to be expressed, and I think that it is the more modern reality rather than what may have been and no doubt was in the past the fact. The question is to my mind an interesting one and I would refer the House to three authorities that I have before me. The first is Parliamentary Government in England by Todd, Vol. II. I find therein expressed the view which has been so well placed before the House by the Minister of Finance. On page 364 the author states:

Accordingly, it has gradually become the practice to refrain from moving an amendment to the Address in answer to the royal speech unless some great political objects were in view, and likely to be attained—