

CANADA PASSING THROUGH RECONSTRUCTION PERIOD

Right Hon. Arthur Meighen Tells of the Abnormal Task Before the People of Canada and the Measures Proposed for its Successful Outcome.

(Continued)

So last year he told us that such circumstances would justify a departure. This year he says as to new industries "I will have nothing to do with them, but I will continue to support those which are already in the country."

Now, the hon. member for Shelburne and Queen's tried to make out that because he effected in some microscopic way, to use the language of the hon. member for Red Deer applied to the very same subject, the tariff that he found in force in 1897 when he came into power, and thus reduced the average tariff only from 29.9 to 29.2, or .7 of one per cent, "nevertheless," he says, "the changes were a great relief to the consumers of this country because what we did was this: We lowered on the necessities of life, the things that the people had to have, and by doing that, although we did not reduce the general level very much there was a marked relief to the consumers of Canada."

Well, I have a list here of the goods which he reduced the tariff on. This is a sheet from the campaign literature of the Liberal party in 1904, and I want to analyse for a moment the results of these strenuous efforts of the hon. member for Shelburne and Queen's to reduce the tariff on the necessities of life and thereby afford great relief, as he puts it, to the Canadian people. This pamphlet says:

Here is a list of articles that formerly were subject to duty and that now are free. Now, will hon. members listen to these "necessaries of life." Mind you, you can always refer to barbed wire, binder twine and cream separators, as the hon. member for Red Deer does, but outside of those three let any hon. member go through this list and see where any duties of the necessities of life have been cut down. The first is:

Degras oleostearine—Has any hon. member ever heard of that? The next are: Florists stock, as follows:—corns, tubers rhizomes, auracaria, spiroea;

Indian Corn, Seed beans from Britain, Rape seed—sowing, Mushroom spawn, Artificial limbs, Asphalium (refined), Religious tracts, Clay crucibles, Cyanogen.

And another one, if any hon. member can pronounce it: Quebrach. Mr. MEIGHEN: Then follows: Extract of nut galls; Fashion plates.

I went through the entire list, and outside of the three that I have named I admit I found one that I think in this age of decay

might fairly be described as a necessary of life, and that was false teeth. But the hon. member for Shelburne and Queen's said that he had reduced the duty on a certain kind of cloth that the common people wore which he found taxed in every way you could think of. This cloth was subject to a duty of so much a piece, of so much a dozen, and then on that a percentage ad valorem, and he claimed that he had remedied all that had cut down the duty to a moderate figure 20, 25 or 30 per cent. I went through the whole list to find what in the world he referred to, because I had never heard of the fact before, and the only thing that I can find in this list published by the Liberal party that would answer his description is cotton shirts. Now, what is the history of his treatment of cotton shirts? The only cotton shirts he touched were those costing more than \$3. The only duty was \$1 a dozen and 25 per cent ad valorem. That, the pamphlet says, made a total of 37 per cent ad valorem, computed on the basis of the 1896 imports. Now then, will the delighted and relieved consumers be ready for announcement of the reduction that he actually made? He reduced the duty from 37 to 35 per cent.

What is the use of talking? The hon. member found a protective tariff in effect, and he kept it in effect—he scarcely changed it at all. Any change he made one could scarcely see with a microscope. When he went out of power the tariff averaged 26.7 per cent, and was in all essentials, except the three I have mentioned—and, as I say, there have been more important reductions since then than there were in the whole fifteen years he was in power—just as he found it. The tariff that he left at that figure in the fiscal year that has just passed averaged precisely 21.2 per cent. Now, he says: "The tariff is a tax and you should make it just as light as you can."

That is what he says in the tax paragraph of the amendment. Well, if it is a tax you can make it light in proportion to your needs I suppose; that is the only thing that will enable you to do so. What were his needs when he reduced the tariff from 29.9 to 29.2? They were \$37,000,000 or \$40,000,000 a year. His needs when he went out of office and was making the tariff 26.7 per cent on dutiable goods were \$100,000,000. The tariff, remember, is a tax, and today this country needs, as every hon. gentleman knows, \$485,000,000, and we are maintaining the tariff at 21.2 per cent. Yet the hon. gentleman challenges us in this House, and says "The main charge I have against the Government of the day is that the tariff is too high." At that is not this charge what is it? True he has taken good care not to say it in this amendment, but if that is not his charge will he let us know what it is? If hon. gentlemen want something reduced, why does not their amendment say so? In a word, why does it not state, express and reflect the tariff programme to which they are pledged?

I proceed with this amendment. Here is the third clause: That such changes should be made in the customs duties as may be expected—

"Such changes"—did any one notice that the word "reduction" was not there? It was there last year; it was in the Liberal platform, but so great was the strength of hon. gentlemen around him that he succeeded in getting the word "changes" substituted for the word "reduction." I continue the reading of the paragraph.

Such changes should be made in the customs duties as may be expected to reduce the high cost of living.

"May be expected to." The hon. member for Shelburne and Queen's says in his country that the cost of living can be reduced by raising the tariff. Indeed he indicated as much in this House when he spoke of what he had done for the coal and steel of Nova Scotia. Did he not say then that his policy had reduced the price of the product?

Mr. RINFRET: What about that clause?

Mr. MEIGHEN: This clause? Will the hon. gentleman say whether it means "reduction" or "increase"? The hon. gentleman does not answer.

Mr. RINFRET: The Prime Minister says that the word "reduction" is not in the amendment, but he has read it twice. The word is there twice.

Mr. MEIGHEN: It is only there once, so far as I have been able to see. They regret that no reductions have been made but they do not say they will not do anything to bring a reduction about. Where is the other reference to a reduction? Does my hon. friend refer to that part of the clause which says "may be expected to reduce the cost of living"? Well, that is just where the joker comes in. The hon. member took care that he would be able to go to his constituency and preach the very same doctrine as that on which he was elected—the doctrine of protection.

Mr. RINFRET: How does the right hon. gentleman know? His Government has no candidate there.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Why, there is no election there, but there is an election in the county of York-Sunbury and the hon. gentleman has no candidate there.

Mr. RINFRET: I made no statement about York-Sunbury, and I do not expect my right hon. friend to make any statement about St. James when he does not know anything about it.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Unfortunately, I do know something about my hon. friend. I know the tariff platform upon which he contested his seat. I have read his speeches.

Mr. RINFRET: How do you know?

Mr. MEIGHEN: I have read the speeches and I have read some of his newspaper articles.

Mr. RINFRET: Did my hon. friend say that the tariff platform his speeches were very good, because they advocated precisely the tariff platform of this government. All that is the matter with the hon. gentleman is partisanship; if he could get away

from that he would be all right. Mr. RINFRET: Unlike the Prime Minister.

Mr. MEIGHEN: If he would stand up for those who frankly say they are with him in tariff matters, but he and those who think him go before their constituents and say: Why, we do not propose to reduce a single item of the tariff; we can reduce the cost of living by seeing to it that we make more things in this country; by seeing to it that we get a scale of production which will enable manufacturers to reduce the cost; by seeing to it that by competition developed through a protective tariff we bring about a reduction of prices to the consumer of Canada. That will be my hon. friend's position in the county of St. James.

Mr. RINFRET: I ask again, how does the Prime Minister know?

Mr. MEIGHEN: It is a pretty safe conjecture because that is what the amendment enables him to do. What my hon. friend is going to do I have no means of knowing except by what he did before; I presume he will adopt the same tariff platform the next time that he adopted on the former occasion. I know that his journals all through the province of Quebec—including his own journal, the one to which he sends most astounding reports from this House—are continually assuring the manufacturers and the workman of that province not to fear anything should the Liberal party get into power. They say: "We are protectionists the same as you are; do not be afraid of us. Liberals if we get into power." That is what the Quebec journals are saying, and saying repeatedly. Did the hon. gentleman ever see those sentiments in the press.

Mr. RINFRET: Do not connect me with La Presse.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Well, Le Canada, we will try that one. Did the hon. gentleman ever see in his journal any article denouncing the principle of protection? Has he ever published any such article? I read that paper occasionally, and I have never seen anything of the kind. I do not know myself of a single Liberal journal in the province of Quebec, either French-Canada nor English-Canadian, which takes any such attitude. And what about the hon. member for North Waterloo (Mr. Euler)? He is a gentleman of strong views; there are not many cowboys in his brain; he talks pretty clearly. He made a speech the other day before the Reform club of Montreal, and I have a copy of that speech before me. Will he go back to his country and say that he voted against protection? Will he go back and say that he is against the principle of protection? Is he going to vote that way in this House? Which clause of this amendment is he going to support? Here is what he said in Montreal:

I would say that he is a bold man—"Bold man," remember,—who declares that one who believes that Canada should have a moderate tariff for revenue, or protection of industries and employment, was not a good Liberal.

Does it not look as if the hon. member for Waterloo could be a Liberal and at the same time a protectionist? Will the hon. gentleman vote for this amendment and

still be a protectionist? I cannot get a nod from him, either; there is no reply. Of course there is a clause in the amendment to fit his case—there is one to fit every case.

Mr. MEIGHEN: The Prime Minister has the floor now.

Mr. MEIGHEN: But I want my hon. friend to explain his vote. I want him to explain which clause he will have in mind, which he is voting for and which he is voting against, when he supports the amendment—if he does; I still have some confidence that he will not support it. Listen to this protectionist doctrine as propounded by the hon. member for Waterloo:

One matter which people had to think of today was the labour question. Canadian workmen had become used to a good standard of living, and he believed—

That is, the hon. member for North Waterloo.

—that this standard should be kept up, though, perhaps, in some instances they had gone too far. Referring, I suppose, to the workmen.

To keep up these standards for the working people it was essential that there should be no unfair competition with countries where the standard of living was lower. Much better it would be if the standard of living in these countries were raised to the standard of that of Canada.

Mr. Euler instanced the manufacture of buttons, of which article Kitchener made the total Canadian product.

I have not the least doubt that when the hon. member goes back to Kitchener his platform will be much the same as that of the hon. member for West Peterborough (Mr. Gordon); it will be a case of "Kitchener first."

And what about the hon. member for West Peterborough himself who was elected upon a declaration that he stood "for the protection of industries and for the protection of labour?" What about the hon. gentleman's denunciation of me as an interloper and shameless intruder because I dared to say that the tariff had anything at all to do with that election. By the way, what did the hon. member for Red Deer mean when he stated that we ought to draw a lesson from the election in Peterborough? Why, the only candidate there who came anywhere near to standing on his platform—the only one who supported a policy resembling his in the remotest degree was a man who got approximately one-quarter of the votes. The successful candidate was elected on a protectionist platform; the leader of the Opposition went there in order to see that his candidate might be returned on a platform of protection. Why, he said, this Parliament has no right to touch the tariff, and even if I were Prime Minister I would not alter one word, one schedule or one item of the tariff until we had another appeal to the people. But he since submitted an amendment in this House—and in support of it he got the vote of the hon. member for West Peterborough—the object of which was to change the tariff duties on from one hundred to two hundred articles at this session of the House. What will be the position of the hon. member for West Peterborough if he votes for this amendment? Is he, who was elected because he declared he was a protectionist; is he who was elected because he pinned his faith to protection—is he going to go back to his constituents and say: I have voted for the protection of industry based upon the natural resources of the country; I voted for paragraph 3 of the amendment.

The House will remember that the third last paragraph refers to such changes "as may be expected to reduce the cost of living." Then the second last paragraph says:

That, while keeping this aim clearly in mind—

Just keeping it "in mind,"—the House recognizes that in any

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readjustment of the tariff that may take place, regard must be had to existing conditions of trade.

Does the hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Clark) say that in readjusting a tariff, you should have regard to existing conditions of trade? Does the hon. member for Marquette (Mr. Crerar) say that? He says that he is going to vote for that; the hon. member for Red Deer is going to vote for it; but they voted already; they session for something that they said they did not believe in at all, and I suppose they can do so again—anything to get in the same boat with hon. gentlemen, opposite.

Regard must be had to existing conditions of trade and changes made in such manner as will cause the least possible disturbance of business.

That is a new translation of the phrase that was used with admirable regularity by the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Mackenzie King) in many speeches that he has been delivering. He said: "Do not worry; when I amend the tariff, I will have regard to the needs of industry." Having overworked that phrase, which was a clear declaration for protection, they change it, and they say that they will have regard to existing conditions of trade and see that there is "no disturbance of business." All that they will do in connection with these "changes" that may be made, "expecting to reduce the cost of living," will be to keep them "in mind." That is what the resolution says.

There is no doubt where the Government stand. There is no measure of doubt through this country. The hon. member for Red Deer, the hon. member for Marquette, everyone so far as I know, who has spoken, clearly stated that the country could not fall to understand where the Government stood on tariff matters. It is not where the hon. member for Malsonneuve (Mr. Lemieux) says it stands, in the speech which he delivered and which contained many a sentence for which he had no warrant in the world. He said: "This Government stands for high protection." I wish he were in the chamber, so that I might ask him upon what authority he made that statement. Can he find any sentence or utterance of mine to justify him? Can he find any act of this Government or any schedule of the tariff to justify him in it, unless he admits that he himself is a high protectionist too? Upon what authority then does he make that assertion? He makes it upon no authority at all. This Government stands for the tariff that is in existence today, and in any adjustment that will be made we will admit the principle of protection and we will apply it, but only to the extent that we have applied it during our term of office here, namely, to the extent essential to ensure production in this country and to enable producers to compete with similar businesses in other countries. Have we ever done more than that? I ask again: What warrant have hon. gentlemen opposite, time after time, without a reference, without a single quotation from anything, without even pointing the finger at an item of the tariff, to keep continually asserting, through the press and upon platforms in this country, that this Government is "a high protectionist Government?" This is indeed its own tariff reduced.

(To Be Continued.)

—By SINNOTT.

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Y. M. C. A. NEWS ITEMS

On Monday evening, May 23rd, the boys of the Victor Tuxis Square Summer side, together with the girls of the C. G. I. T. and a number of visitors, met in the Y. M. C. A. Hall to bid farewell to one of their number, Mr. Jack Walsh of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, who has been transferred to Vernon River. Rev. G. S. Mitchell occupied the chair, and after a few opening remarks, called on Mr. Goodwill McFadyen, the Pretor of the Square, to read the address which was as follows:

Dear Jack:—It is with mingled feelings of pride and sorrow that we, your fellow members of the Victor Tuxis Square, have met here tonight, on the eve of your departure to a new field of labor, to say "au revoir," pride because of your promotion, sorrow in the fact that with your going we are losing from our midst one whom we have learned to admire and respect.

Since our organization as a Tuxis Square you have been one of our most active members, ever anxious and willing to assist in whatever activities we were carrying

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HIGH RATES ON WESTERN MARKETS

CHARNOUFF, Sask. May 30—Saskatchewan farmers will be driven off the land eventually by high freight rates and as a result of being skinned by grain men, A. R. Wells, a farmer of 30 years' experience in this district, told the Royal Grain Inquiry Commission today. He complained specifically as to dockage levied on a car of grain he shipped last fall to the United Grain Growers, Ltd. The dockage, he said was four per cent on a car of 3,250 bushels and he got \$4.85 for 3,250 pounds of wheat, not enough to pay the freight.

MISCELLANEOUS

ALL UNCALLED FOR SUITS and overcoats from our 30 branches throughout Canada will be sold at \$14.00 each. Odd trousers \$3.95. Odd vests \$1.50. In many cases this price is less than one-third their actual value. Merchants buy these goods for resale to their customers. Wise men will buy two or three suits and an overcoat. For sale at our store only. English & Scotch Woollen Company, 188 Richmond Street.

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on, and your absence from our midst will be greatly felt. However, realizing as we do that one must climb the ladder of success step by step, and that in your chosen profession of banking, such steps upward must be, in every case, marked by a move, we forget our loss in your gain and wish you every success.

In going for a new community you will of course meet new people and make new friends, and perhaps may be instrumental in starting a new Square. But whether that be possible or not we feel assured of this, that in the realm of athletics you will play a leading part, and by your example do much to encourage clean sport in any community in which, through your various transfers, you may find yourself.

In conclusion we would ask you to accept this small gift as a token of our deep appreciation for your services among us, and of our high esteem. With best wishes for every success in life.

Signed on behalf of the Square. G. S. Mitchell, Mentor. Goodwill McFadyen, Pretor. J. C. Mountain, Dpty. Pretor. Albert McKay, Scriptor. Max Linkletter, Comptor.

After the address which was accompanied by a Dressing Roll, all joined in singing "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow," following which Mr. Walsh, in a few well chosen words expressed his appreciation. After short speeches by the chairman and Mr. R. C. Stedrus, the Field Secretary of the Y. M. C. A., who was present, all retired to the gym floor for group games, until the tea cream was served. The meeting was then brought to a close by a singsong and prayer.

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DICKY DIPPY'S DIARY.

THURSDAY: A WOMAN, WITH A SMALL PUPPY IN HER LAP, SAT NEXT ME IN THE TROLLEY CAR. AS WE CAME TO EACH STREET, SHE WOULD ASK ME: "IS THIS BAYSIDE AVENUE?"

AT LAST I SAID: "MADAME, WHEN WE COME TO THE STREET YOU MENTION, I'LL INFORM YOU."

AND WHEN WE DID, I SAID: "HERE IS BAYSIDE AVENUE. WHEREUPON SHE FETED THE PUPPY TO THE WINDOW—

AND SAID:—"LOOK, PETSIE! THERE'S WHERE TOOTSUMS' TITTLE MOTHER WAS BORN!"

