

laid before Parliament for approval. Though this motion was rejected, it is the right of the people to declare that the case should not have been finally closed by the action of a moribund Parliament, but that the whole matter should be reported to, and adjudicated upon by the new Parliament.

The Economic Situation.

It was natural to expect that the reconstructed government would give very serious attention to the economic situation of the country, which is admittedly critical. There is no allusion to it except the vague promise of "effective measure to prevent excessive profits, to prohibit hoardings and to prevent combination for the increase of prices, and thus reduce the high cost of living. The economic problems have to be grappled with at once, in no such vague general terms, but in vigorous and concrete proposals.

The prices of all commodities have been steadily rising since the beginning of the war. The daily provisioning of the family table is from day to day becoming a more and more alarming problem for all classes of wage-earners and for all people of small and of even moderate income. It is no answer to say that this is the natural consequence of the war. When it is considered that the price of bread and bacon—to speak only of these two commodities—is higher here in Canada than in the United Kingdom, this of itself is proof sufficient that the prices here are inflated by methods which are in no way connected with the war, unless the war is taken advantage of for the very purpose of inflation. Indeed, the principal causes of these ever soaring prices are none other than those described in the Government manifesto as "excessive profits", "hoardings" and "combinations for the increase of prices". Since the Government knows where the evil is, what prevents the Government from striking the evil, and striking hard? The remedies are at hand, and I at once set down the policy.

Tariff Reform.

No measure to reduce the cost of living can be effective unless and until the tariff is reformed and its pressure removed from those commodities in which there are "excessive profits", "hoardings" and "combinations for the increase of prices". Of this obvious, fundamental reform there is not a word in the Government manifesto. Indeed, members of the present Government have announced that all questions of tariff legislation must be relegated to after the war.

Believing that increased food production is one of Canada's best contributions towards winning the war, I would propose, if entrusted with the administration of the country, to immediately relieve Agriculture from its disabilities in this regard.

Since the commencement of the War, the Government placed an increase of 7½ per cent in our tariff on all commodities coming into Canada from outside Great Britain, and an increase of 5 per cent on the goods coming from Great Britain. I would immediately remove those two disabilities as respects commodities from all countries other than those with which we are at war. There is no doubt that under existing conditions, these increases in the tariff are a hindrance rather than a help to production in Canada, whilst it is certain that in the final resort the consumer has to pay these extra taxes.

The increased duty on imports from Great Britain was an unfriendly and an unnecessary action on the part of Canada towards the mother country, at a time when British trade was staggering under the disadvantages incidental to the war. It continues to bear unfairly and unduly on existing trade and should be speedily removed.

In further mitigation of disadvantages to agricultural production, I would immediately remove the duties on agricultural implements and other essentials, as demanded by the western farmers. A general well-considered reform of the Tariff for the purpose of helping Canadian production and relieving the Canadian consumer would also be an object of my administration.

Control of Food Supplies and Prices.

In connection with the high cost of living, I would take drastic steps to bring under government control all food producing factories so that food may be sold at a fixed price under the control of the government, as has been done in Great Britain. To this end, arrangements should be made with the management of the food producing factories allowing for a fair interest on investment and fair and reasonable net profits, so that food may be obtainable by the ordinary consumer at the best possible prices. Should such arrangements not be possible, I would not hesitate to commandeer all food factories.

Nor is that all. The government is invested with powers which they could and should have used to reduce the price of all commodities. These powers they have already exercised in the case of newsprint-paper.

As far back as the month of February last an Order in Council was passed by which it was enacted that "with a view to ensure to publishers of Canadian newspapers, newsprint paper at reasonable prices" the Minister of Customs was "authorized and empowered to fix the quantity