

across this whole continent east, west, north and south, from Vancouver right to New York, where 50 or 65 cents out of every dollar the people pay for their food goes into the pockets of unscrupulous middlemen. Howe tells us that the waste in New York City alone from the operations of these agencies is estimated at from \$150,000,000 to \$200,000,000 a year. And yet we talk of the high cost of living and wonder why such prices should be. We talk of the Government fixing prices so that our people may be able to live without famine conditions.

But what is the Government likely to do? Absolutely nothing, except what the people of Canada force it to do. The Government itself is in the grip of the handful of men who control the whole trade and commerce of Canada. The wheat speculators, the packing houses, the railroads and banks of this Dominion are so bound together by interlocking directorates and are so powerful in the realm of politics that they hold the Government in the heart of their fist. Not even in the desperate days of the war did the Government dare to make any serious attempt to fix prices in the interests of the common people. They never professed to do so. They urged the people to save and eat less of certain foods, but they let the prices go soaring skyward to fill the coffers of the food speculators and profiteers.

The very week after war was declared the leading bakers of Canada earnestly urged the Government to fix the price of wheat at once, before the speculators began their robberies of the people. Wheat was then 78 cents a bushel. Had the price been fixed at a dollar the farmers would have been as well satisfied and as well off financially, as they were finally when the price was fixed at \$2.20 a bushel. But the Government refused and allowed the profiteers to manipulate prices for nearly three years before they moved. Then, when the price had been driven up to nearly \$3.20 a bushel, they fixed it at \$2.20 for the rest of the war.

Again, when the call went forth for the nation to save every ounce of beef and bacon to feed the soldiers, we were urged to eat more fish. The fisheries of British Columbia were asked to provide supplies for the whole Northwest, and the Provincial Committee on Food Control got busy at once. I was on that committee and know what happened. Here is a copy of the unanimous report sent down to Ottawa detailing the plan to create a market throughout the country for the best of "ground fish" at two pounds for fifteen cents. Every detail was figured out, and this price was high enough to allow, on a minimum catch, \$200 a month and board to every fisherman employed and \$6,000 clear profit each month to the company providing the trawler. A maximum catch would have brought each fisherman \$320 a month and \$9,600 profit to the company. And this at the time when our men at the front were risking their lives in our defence for \$30 per month! What happened? The Food Controller turned down our report, fixed the price at ten to twelve cents a