

with three which are. The matter not mentioned—and this astonishes me—has to do with the immediate prosecution of the war. At the present time Canada is in danger of grievous food shortages. Warnings are on every hand; people are losing confidence from sea to sea. At one time they were promised that there would be no rationing of certain commodities, and within two or three weeks they were astounded to hear that there was to be rationing of those very commodities, which indicates not only incompetency of the Liberal party in dealing with food production but also apparently inability to keep books well enough to know where they stand. This constitutes a very serious reflection upon them, no matter how buoyantly they attempt to laugh it off.

The three matters which are mentioned in the speech from the throne have to do with the post-war order. I shall refer to them at a later time.

With reference to the food and other requirements of the Canadian people, let me say we must manage to bring about greater and less variable production of essentials in this country. It is no use our doing so much to fight the war that we forget the people at home; that will but impair our efficiency as a fighting force. Let us remember what the Prime Minister intimated yesterday, that this war may last for years and years. This means that we must build up a reserve of productive equipment capable of sustaining this country's exertions at a high degree for a long time. We should be taking every precaution to see that all such things as, for example, milk products, meat, eggs, fruit, feeds, vegetables, sugar, honey, coal, gasoline, rubber and other essentials which can be produced in this country shall be produced.

Hon. members know my stand as to sugar. Years before the war broke out I told this house that the day would come when we would need sugar, and advised measures to increase sugar production. But all we received was good-natured tolerance from the Liberal party and just nothing done. All indications were that there was a deliberate plan, by some organization working through the government, to restrict the production of sugar in Canada. I have more than a suspicion that a similar plan is in operation with respect to gasoline and many other essential commodities. Unless the Liberal party sternly take the stand that it will not be moved by persuasion of that kind, they are placing this country in grave peril of serious suffering.

How is greater production to be stimulated in Canada? First of all we must have for every vital job wage rates that will be encour-

[Mr. Blackmore.]

aging to the people employed in that job. This must be done either by direct federal bonus or by federally-assisted provincial bonus, so that the increased wage will not cause increase in the cost of production. This principle I regard as vital. There has been a good deal of discussion in recent weeks regarding increased wages in certain plants. The government have repeatedly taken the stand that they must not increase the wages in those plants because that will cause inflation. If they will pay the wages from an external source, so that the cost of the wages does not enter into the cost of production of the plant, the increase will not cause inflation.

I should like to read a set of figures dealing with the wage situation in Canada. The census indicates that in 1941, 35.9 per cent of the total wage-earners in Canada received less than \$500 a year; those receiving less than \$1,000 a year constituted another 28.4 per cent; those receiving less than \$1,500 a year another 19.6 per cent, and those receiving \$1,500 and over were only 16.1 per cent of the total wage-earners. In view of the fact that the ordinary expert on nutrition would declare it impossible for a family to support itself in any degree of comfort, not to mention decency, on less than \$1,500 a year, the members of this house can see what a glaring reflection those figures are on the administration which has been in power in this dominion since 1935. Therefore I say the wage rates in this country must be adjusted.

The whole Canadian wage structure is inequitable and should be scientifically overhauled. Such upward adjustments ought to be made as will give all workers, male and female, a square deal. Everyone doing essential war work should be allowed the means of enjoying a decent standard of living, and this matter should be attended to without further delay if we intend to take care of our production.

Government officials will argue that such upward adjustments would cause inflation. Their arguments are unsound; I challenge any hon. member on the government side to prove the contrary, any time he chooses to enter this debate. Inflationary tendencies resulting from the added purchasing power which would be incident to giving such increased wages can be offset effectively by four measures, singly or in combination: price fixing, bonuses, subsidies and rationing.

We still have in Canada much labour not being used. I remember that when war first broke out we had members on the government side rise and prattle about the scarcity of labour in Canada. I am at a loss to understand why that was done. We still have plenty of labour in Canada if it is wisely