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JOURNALS

OF THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS

OF CANADA

OTTAWA, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1973

11.00 o'clock a.m.

PRAYERS

Mr. Cullen, from the Special Committee on Trends in Food Prices, presented the Third Report of the said Committee, which is as follows:

Following the presentation of its Second Report on Wednesday, July 25, 1973, your Committee has held ten meetings.

During that period, the Food Prices Review Board was called to discuss its first quarterly review of food price and cost developments, that Report being a response to the first mandate given to the Board by the Government, namely, "to monitor price movements of a comprehensive series of food products and to issue reports thereon at three-month intervals." The recent trends in beef prices was also discussed at the Committee's third meeting with the Board.

Your Committee also heard the Honourable Eugene F. Whelan, Minister of Agriculture, the Honourable Otto Lang, Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, the Honourable Herb Gray, Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, and officials of his department, namely, Messrs. J. B. Seaborn, Assistant Deputy Minister (Consumer Affairs), J. J. Quinlan, Q.C., Acting Director of Investigation, J. W. Morrow, Director, Research Branch, Office of the Director of Investigation and Research,

Combines Investigation Branch, and the Honourable Marc Lalonde, Minister of National Health and Welfare.

Food Prices Review Board

The First Report of your Committee called upon the Government to establish a Food Prices Review Board. Prior to, during, and after this Board had been established under the Inquiries Act, it is fair to say that it has been the subject of much debate, receiving both criticism and commendation. The very fact of the controversy surrounding the Board has assured it of maximum media coverage and has focussed much attention on debate surrounding the Board.

Members of your Committee are and have been as divided in their views on the work of the Board as has the general Canadian consuming public. The effectiveness of the Board, some of the statements made by its Chairman, the content of some of its Reports have all been the subject of wide-ranging discussion by Members of your Committee.

Your Committee views with alarm the report of Statistics Canada showing further increases in the price of food during the month of November and sees a continuing need for vigilance. Your Committee is of the opinion