

are almost invariably paying dividends of from fifteen to thirty per cent. Yet the Minister of Labour says there is no undue profit enjoyed by those engaged in the production of these particular commodities. How is the consumer affected? To-day flour is quoted at \$12.70 by the car load. The hon. member for Peterborough (Mr. Burnham) had something to say about putting wheat on the free list. At the time that the agitation for putting wheat on the free list was most acute the farmer might very well have looked for increased prices for the wheat which he had raised and it was a time when the consumer could afford to pay a little more for his supply. But they dawdled along for five years, until the price of flour got beyond the reach of the average consumer in Canada, and then they took the duty off to enable the speculator to create a panic and put \$1.20 on the price of flour. That is the result of the hon. gentleman's activity on behalf of the consumer. There is not a commodity that enters into general consumption that has not been enhanced beyond all proportion to the exigencies of the times unless you take into account the greed of those engaged in the manufacture of these products. The minister had an opportunity to-night to state wherein his activities had resulted in reducing the cost of living with regard to one commodity to the consumers of this country, but he has failed to do so. He has said that these commodities are dearer elsewhere than here. It is quite true that in Germany, and in Berlin they are, but with that exception food prices in Canada are dearer than they are in any part of the civilized world.

Mr. CROTHERS: The prices in Canada have gone up less rapidly than in any other belligerent country in the world, with the single exception of New Zealand.

Mr. KYTE: Australia?

Mr. CROTHERS: Yes, Australia. They are about the same in New Zealand as in Canada. Prices have gone up less rapidly than in any other belligerent country, New Zealand only excepted, and they are about the same as in Canada. My hon. friend has grown very eloquent over prices and found fault with my department for not keeping down the prices of everything. I remember him making a very eloquent speech not very long ago, but when he got down to facts there did not seem to be very much in it. We have endeavoured to carry out our part in enforcing that Order in Council. The right was given to the municipalities

to investigate within their own limits and to enforce the Order in Council. We thought it better to leave it to the attorney generals of the different provinces rather than to undertake to prosecute ourselves, just as hon. gentlemen did when they were in power in regard to the Lord's Day Act. Another instance was when they passed the Alien Labour Act. They started in by attempting to enforce it from Ottawa. They had not gone very far before they got tired of it, and they amended the Act so that they would not have to enforce it. They never attempted to enforce it afterwards, and I can fairly say that we never attempted to do so either. We left it to those who felt that they were aggrieved, just as in this instance we leave it to those municipalities who feel that they are aggrieved.

Mr. VERVILLE: Who asked for the change in the Alien Labour Act?

Mr. CROTHERS: I do not know; I was not in the House at the time. As a matter of fact, it was changed and no attempt was made by the late Government to enforce it. I am not blaming them for that but I am giving that as another illustration of why this Government had kept away from enforcing a statute passed by this Parliament. It is the duty of the province to enforce the criminal law, or quasi criminal law, and this Government does not undertake to enforce any Act, of this character, speaking generally although there are one or two exceptions. That is what we have done with regard to that Order in Council. No prosecution may be had under it without the consent of the attorney general of the province in which it is said the offence is committed. We believe that the attorney general of the province is in the best position to say whether a prosecution should be instituted or not. If the facts do not warrant a prosecution he does not order one. But, we have carried out the law. We have sent out these questions and wherever doubt arose we have sent out a man to examine witnesses under oath and have compelled people to show us their books; we have investigated cold storage and all that sort of thing. We are preparing a full and detailed statement of what we have done and the results and these reports respecting coal, sugar, bread, and cold storage—

An hon. MEMBER: Anthracite coal?

Mr. CROTHERS: The report as to anthracite coal will be laid on the table a few days and every hon. member will