

he should have taken the same exception to his leader (Sir Robert Borden) a few minutes ago.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: I understood my hon. friend was reading from some authority. If he is not, it is my mistake.

Hon. Mr. BUREAU: That is camouflage. That is not a mistake.

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR: I am endeavouring to show that this Government has failed altogether to prosecute the profiteers. That fact should be admitted without the support of any other authority. As a matter of fact, you cannot find a worse example of gross and unjustifiable profiteering than is contained in the menu of the Canadian Government Railways. On this menu the Government charges its patrons sixty-five cents for less than one half pound of fresh cod fish. They purchase this fish at Mulgrave and other places along the coast of Nova Scotia for about four cents a pound, so that the portion they sell for sixty-five cents originally cost them only two cents. That is to say, the railway gives the fisherman forty cents for a cod-fish weighing ten pounds and, after cooking it, sells it to the consumer for thirteen dollars. No one can contradict those figures for they are found on the menu of the Canadian Government Railways.

Hon. Mr. BUREAU: There is good authority.

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR: If the Board of Commerce is in earnest, and if it or the Minister of Justice really wants to institute a prosecution for profiteering, may I suggest that the first offender to be dealt with should be my hon. friend the Minister of Railways.

I wish also to take the ground that such a vital question as suppressing profiteering should not be turned over to any commission. It should be dealt with by a responsible minister. We have had Royal Commissions by the score. My hon. friend, the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir George Foster) told us himself that they are "as thick as blackberries." For the last four years this country has been overrun by irresponsible busybodies attending to matters that ought to have been attended to by responsible ministers. If anything more were needed to show the utter absurdity of commission rule it can be supplied. It developed a few days ago that the Board of Commerce had issued an order prohibiting the export of sugar.

At the same time the Canadian Trade Mission was negotiating for the sale of sugar abroad and issuing licenses permitting its export. It is high time that Royal Commissions and Orders in Council should be relegated to their proper place and that responsible ministers of the Crown should attend to the business of the country.

There is another matter that calls for explanation on the part of the Prime Minister. In one sense it is a semi-private matter, but it will be admitted that political morality and fair dealing are matters of Dominion-wide concern. The Union party was formed to carry on the war. It is now proposed, without any appeal to the people, to make it over into a permanent political party. This Government, if it can be said to have been elected at all, was elected on a single issue and for a definite purpose. Thousands of Liberals, and Conservatives too, threw their party allegiance to the winds and voted on that issue, and on that issue alone. The appeal was to their patriotism and they responded in that spirit. These men had no idea that after the war was over the Union party would settle down to be a permanent political party that would take the place and carry on the policy of the old Conservative party. I am informed that many of those who supported Union Government look upon this move as an unjustifiable piece of political strategy.

Mr. BUREAU: Serves them well.

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR: So abhorrent was this proposal to the mind and conscience of the hon member for West Peterborough (Mr. Burnham) that he withdrew his support from the Government and now sits on the cross benches. I submit that this matter is of sufficient importance to call for some explanation from the Prime Minister.

The Government is carrying on a propaganda in the newspapers in favour of economy. This is a very proper thing to do, but the Government should show an example. Has this Administration been economical? The answer is easily given.

Mr. BUREAU: No.

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR: No one can answer that question in the affirmative.

Mr. BUREAU: Unless he drew on his imagination.

Mr. J. H. SINCLAIR: I could with justice use stronger language and say that this Administration has been profligate in