

prices, but as a mother and a housewife I must say a few words before this debate closes.

We have had some very interesting speeches on the whole subject of setting up a committee to investigate prices, and I was particularly interested in the vicious attack made by the hon. member for Cochrane (Mr. Bradette) on the price of milk, milk subsidies and so on. I thought it was too bad I had not answered him that night, because it would be an interesting debate for a mother and a bachelor to fight over a bottle of milk. In the last couple of weeks I have thought it would be a very good thing if the members of the government in this house could change places with their wives who have been doing the shopping in the last six months.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: That is tough on the Prime Minister.

Mrs. STRUM: If the Prime Minister and other hon. gentlemen on the front benches were to exchange places with housewives we would not be quibbling over subsidies. Those hon. gentlemen do not understand what it means to shop these days. Every time I start to keep house for a while—because I usually eat out when I am alone in Ottawa—I know that every time I have a grocery order filled I am shocked at the way a \$5 bill has shrunk. You carry home a little sack in your arms and it is a couple of dollars. I think the gentlemen who are deciding on the food budgets of the nation ought to take it upon themselves to do the family shopping for a week, and then they would be better fitted to judge the matter.

We have had some interesting statistical debates in this house in the last couple of weeks. I have indulged in some statistics myself, but tonight I will not try to convince you on the basis of statistical argument. Instead, I will try to make you see reason by presenting to you the ordinary everyday problems of the family. I listened to the defence of the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ilsley) the other day, and I must say I think he is one of the most honest and fair-minded members in this house. He said that the statement he had made was predicated upon a supposition, and that no one knew what we would have had to pay had we not had price control. If I misinterpret him I hope someone will correct me, but that was what I understood him to say. I understood him to say that we could not compare prices in the inflationary period following the last war with prices in this period because, after the last war, we had not attempted to control prices, and because

we had attempted to control prices this time no one knew how far they would have gone without control. That is what I took from his statement and if I am wrong I hope to be corrected.

On January 8 the *Ottawa Citizen* published a chart showing that, since the removal of controls, our prices have shot up to nearly the same heights as prices following the last war. The headline to the chart is "Prices zooming toward 1920 peak". So that, while perhaps we do not know to the last dollar what we saved through the exercise of control, we do know that we have lost nearly all the gains that we were able to achieve by controlling prices in that period.

We have had many references to the cost of subsidies and many criticisms about paying subsidies, and every once in a while the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mitchell) gets up and tries to embarrass people who believe in subsidies by asking us, "Do you intend to control the cost of labour? Do you intend to put a price control on labour?" And, by the way, that is uttered in a tone that suggests it is the \$64 question. Let me point out that we are now paying subsidies on feed grain and have been for some years without controlling the cost of farm labour or the cost of labour used in the transportation.

We are not attempting to control the wages of the people who work on the railways or the wages of those who work on the farms and feed the grain on which this subsidy is paid. We are not attempting to control the price of labour in the coal mines where we are paying a coal subsidy. We are not attempting to control the price of labour in the gold fields where we are giving certain assistance in the production of gold. So I submit that that is a false argument or a false defence; and it is not preventing the paying of subsidies in those industries I have just mentioned.

We are not objecting to subsidies on coarse grain for the eastern farmer; but, in the interests of the health of this nation, we say that you cannot afford to bring about standards of nutrition that will undermine the health of the people. I wish you gentlemen would learn the nutritional facts of life. I wish you would learn that you cannot raise babies without milk. I wish you knew that the pre-school child needs it just as badly. I wish you would scan the maternal mortality figures and the infant mortality figures; take the evidence of your own health department and see what lack of proper nutrition does to the expectant mother and what it does to the dental condition of school children. Take the nutritional