

turing, electrical machinery, furniture, automobiles, iron and steel; and with permission of the committee I should like to place this table on *Hansard*.

Mr. ILSLEY: Mr. Chairman—

Mrs. STRUM: All right; I will read them, then. The figures are as follows:

Per Capita Weekly Earnings December 1946				
Industry	U.S. ¹	Can. ²	Difference	Per cent
Manufacturing	\$46.83	\$34.54	\$12.29	35.6
Electrical				
Machinery..	49.23	35.69	13.54	37.9
Furniture ...	42.54	29.74	12.80	43.0
Automobiles..	55.38	41.73	13.65	32.7
Iron and steel	49.67	39.17	10.50	26.6

¹U.S. figures from *Federal Reserve Bulletin*, March, 1947.

²Can. figures from *Labour Gazette*, March, 1947.

What about farm prices? What are we going to do about them? If you accept the United States structure, then you are going to have to go back and revoke your treaties with the British government and you are going to have to allow the farmer these increases in his prices. These are the prices as at Chicago and Winnipeg, and are the latest figures available:

Commodity	United States	Canada	Difference
Oats	\$.87	\$.65	\$.22
Wheat	2.89	1.55	1.34
Barley	1.61	.93	.68
Hogs	26.50	21.60	4.90
Beef	24.75	14.50	10.25
Flax	7.50	3.25	4.25

I ask the government to tell us if they are going to allow farm prices to follow the level of farm prices in the United States; is that what they believe in? The policy of the government is based on two premises, both of which are faulty. They say that volume will reduce prices. That is not being experienced either in the United States or in Canada. They say that the buyer can strike. Well, what happens when the buyer strikes? The buyer punishes two groups of people. The buyer withdraws his purchasing power and punishes the manufacturer who has the privilege of putting the ticket on the goods; but he also puts out of work the people employed in that industry. Already that has begun to happen in the United States, where we have seen some industries close for the first time in eight years. I submit that is a stupid, clumsy and wasteful method of punishing big business for taking excessive profits.

If we have to go through another depression in order to reduce prices I think we shall have failed in our duty as members of this parliament, because we had all the machinery for price control and the people

of this country had confidence in it. Again and again the ministers have told us that it worked, that it saved the consumer millions of dollars, that it saved us from inflation, that it saved us from all the evils of an unregulated economy in war time. And while the government may say that, as a nation, the emergency is over, I wish to say that for the individual the emergency is just beginning. I have in my hand two letters from old age pensioners in Vancouver. In the last one, which I received only yesterday, the writer says:

Also I may say the rent situation is a disgrace.

This is since the controls were taken off.

In this house room rents were raised from \$3 weekly to \$7 weekly. They are ordinary rooms, no proper facilities for washing, one bath and toilet for fourteen people, and no one bothered to do anything about it.

In the same letter she tells me that large department stores such as David Spencer, Woodward and Hudson's Bay are now discharging people sixty-five years old, and that all married women over thirty-five are being discharged and refused work. So we are tightening up on the labour situation; we are letting rents go up; we are letting butter reach 60 cents a pound; we are taking the subsidy off milk. At the same time we can give almost half a million dollars to Crane, so that we enlarge their plant facilities in order that they may extend their output, and then we take off price control to let them set the price on their plumbing fixtures, though they are a monopoly and part of a cartel arrangement. I say to the government that if through this measure they now render abortive the remaining section of our price control machinery, they shall deserve the trouncing they will get at the next election.

Mr. ILSLEY: We are not rendering any machinery abortive at all by this legislation.

Mr. WRIGHT: You did when you voted down that amendment.

Mr. ILSLEY: My hon. friends had better not go out and say that. I am afraid that is just what they will try to do, but it is not so. I may never get an opportunity to answer their speeches, so I will just have to answer them in advance, here. That amendment did not mean anything, and if it is going to be used as a basis of political attack on the government, it will be an unworthy attack. I agree with the hon. member who just took her seat that care should be exercised in our decontrol, and the only point I am making now is that by enacting this section we are not doing anything, nor did the members of