

lieve the present disturbed condition of the country?

A great convention of the Liberal party was held in this city in the early days of August. Every riding in the Dominion was represented by delegates who received their appointment from the people. A thousand men and women, the popular choice of the Liberal party of Canada, came together to select a leader and construct a platform. This convention demanded among other things:

Reforms in our election laws. Punishment of election frauds.

Proportional representation.

Reciprocity with the United States.

Downward revision of the tariff.

Increase in the British preference.

Improvement in the laws governing labour and capital.

Greater encouragement of our agricultural and fishing industries.

A fair deal for the returned soldier.

The restoration of parliamentary government in this country.

Why does the Government suggest a short session of Parliament when the country is seething with unrest and discontent and all these vital questions require to be dealt with? The hon. gentleman (Mr. Whidden) quoted some celebrated man as saying that it was always harder to make peace than to make war. I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that the present Government does find it hard, but it has only itself to blame. To use an old saying, "The chickens are coming home to roost." Imagine, if you can, my right hon. friend the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir George Foster) trying to convince an audience of hungry men and women that the Government that refused to vote a dollar to prosecute the profiteers is really in earnest on the question of reducing the cost of living. Imagine, if you can, the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Meighen) delivering an address on electoral purity with that famous ballot-switching telegram in his pocket. Imagine my hon. friend the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Rowell) delivering an exhortation on economy with a copy of the Canadian Record under his arm, when it is remembered that that publication cost the people of Canada over \$80,000 last year, and that it was not worth eighty cents! Imagine my right hon. friend the leader of the Government (Sir Robert Borden) with his numerous declarations and protestations regarding the purpose and scope of the coalition, trying to convince the hon. member for West Peterborough (Mr. Burn-

ham) of the morality of making the Union party a permanent institution! Is it any wonder then that the present Government finds the pathway of peace even more thorny than that of war?

One crying need at the present time is a reduction in the cost of living, and my right hon. friend (Sir Robert Borden) in his speech to which we have just listened devoted attention to that important matter. No effective action has been taken by the present Government to reduce the cost of living. For over three years the people of Canada have been groaning under excessive prices. While the war lasted they were patient, but hostilities terminated more than nine months ago and in place of getting better, conditions are getting worse. The cost of living is higher to-day than it was when the war was brought to a conclusion. The Government has been tinkering with this question but all the time the profiteer has been having full swing, and he was never more aggressive and arrogant than he is at the present moment. Threats are being made at the present time by the Board of Commerce, but similar threats were made by the old defunct Food Board. The Board of Commerce which was recently organized is the twin sister of the old Food Board. Threats do not disturb the profiteers; no one understands the situation better than they do. When the legislation creating this Board of Commerce was being enacted, members on this side strongly urged the importance of the Government providing money for the conduct of prosecutions and the throwing of responsibility for those prosecutions upon the Department of Justice. The Government refused to yield to our request and in consequence of that refusal the Board of Commerce became as useless as the defunct Food Board.

What does the profiteer care for investigations if there are to be no prosecutions? I think it was President Roosevelt who said, that the Government that shakes its fist first and its finger afterwards will soon fall into contempt.

In some phases of violation of law this Government has been perhaps over-zealous. I heard of a man in this province who got into jail for having in his possession a copy of a little pamphlet called "The Fiddlers." I read the pamphlet, but I could not understand why in the world the man was punished. Another man was put in jail in this province for having a copy of Plato's "Republic" in his possession. For the past year or two the jails have been