

The Address—Mr. Coldwell

urged the appointment of a transport controller. That has been done much too late, and while I think the present transport controller is doing a moderately good job toward giving service to the country, I am convinced that something more must be done so the farmers may be assisted in either holding the crop on the farm or having storage space provided and payments made for the amount of grain that they find it necessary to store.

There is one other point that I should like to refer to briefly, namely, the Massey report. I am glad to see that we are going to get legislation on the Massey report. May I just say that I think in its conception, in the matter of the language that it uses, it is not only a great report on a great national problem or a group of national problems, but a contribution to the general literature of Canada, a splendid report in every respect.

I want to deal with a topic that has been under discussion this afternoon, namely, the increase in the cost of living. The amendment moved by the leader of the opposition is of course in very general terms. Because we have been consistent first of all in resisting the removal of beneficial controls and subsidies and subsequently in urging that where controls can be beneficial and subsidies useful to bring down the high cost of living they should be re-adopted—that has been our position in this house ever since 1946, and today we offer no apologies for that position—I think that I should be very specific.

I can understand some hesitation in this regard on the part of the leader of the opposition (Mr. Drew) and of the party he leads because I am not forgetting that it was largely because of the insistence of the Progressive Conservative party in this House of Commons and across the country, as well as that of the powerful press of the country and of the financial institutions and other interested people, that controls were removed. At least the speed with which the controls were removed was accelerated by that propaganda.

On the other hand we have been consistent. Therefore I am going to move a sub-amendment, seconded by the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. MacInnis):

That the amendment be amended by adding thereto, immediately after the words "high cost of living," the following words:

such as the making of provision for price controls and the payment of subsidies, where necessary, so as to equalize the sacrifices our people are called upon to make at this time.

That leaves a fairly wide area within which the government can bring before the house the proposals to make this equalization effective.

The Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) says of course that this cannot be done at the

present time. He says that neither the government nor the Progressive Conservative party nor the C.C.F. could control prices. I am going to ask this question: Why does the government say it will do it when and if it becomes necessary?

Mr. Abbott: It does not. It has never said any such thing.

Mr. Coldwell: It has said it, over and over again.

Mr. Abbott: Rubbish.

Mr. Coldwell: If I have understood what the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) has said on more than one occasion—and I think I understand the language fairly well—then certainly we have been told that measures will be taken which are necessary to bring about a better condition for the Canadian people in regard to prices, and so on.

Mr. Abbott: Oh, that is different. We will do what is possible; but we will not attempt to achieve the impossible.

Mr. Coldwell: That they will do what is possible; and the Prime Minister says it is impossible. So we might as well know and admit where we stand at the present time. We know now where the government stands at the present time in relation to this matter. The Prime Minister spent a great deal of time this afternoon reading from a Labour party pamphlet. It is a pamphlet which I myself read, and the contents of which I have noted very carefully. But let us remember that while the cost of living did rise in the British isles in the first six months of this year by a percentage greater than in Canada in the same period, it rose from a base which was very much lower than the cost of living in Canada. The Minister of Finance—

Mr. Abbott: The index rose less, not the cost of living.

Mr. Coldwell: All right—"the index". The minister has just returned from London—

Mr. Abbott: Paris.

Mr. Coldwell: Paris. He knows that in London today the cost of bread is a fraction of what it is in Canada.

Mr. Abbott: How much is the subsidy on bread?

Mr. Coldwell: I will deal with that. He knows that the cost of meat in London is a fraction of what it is in Canada.

Mr. Abbott: Only you don't get the meat.

Mr. Coldwell: On the amount of meat that is rationed. I know, of course, that the quantity is small. But let me say that the British are not rationing people by the length