

we all know that price levels in the United States are alarming not only to us but to the people of that country. I plead with the government to protect the Canadian consumer to a much greater extent through these orders which clause 4 would give the government the power to revoke in whole or in part.

Last year on July 5 the then minister of finance made an extended statement in the House of Commons on the need for having emergency control. At the time he made that announcement he was restoring the Canadian dollar to parity with the United States dollar, and speaking of the need for controlling prices and thereby safeguarding the Canadian consumer he said at page 3180 of *Hansard*:

Perhaps the greatest threat to the stability of prices in Canada comes from the rise in prices in the United States and, to a lesser extent, in other countries.

Then he outlined four different steps which the government was taking to safeguard the Canadian consumer against those price rises in the United States.

But since that time two things have happened. Prices in the United States have continued to rise, and Canada has gone a long way in her policy of decontrol. The question I am now asking the government is this: Does it propose to allow Canadian prices to continue to follow the pattern of prices in the United States? If so, what technique does it intend to use (a) to raise the wages of workers in Canada to the same level as wages in the United States; (b) to raise the level of farm prices to the same level as farm prices in the United States, and (c) to provide purchasing power for persons of small fixed income such as civil servants, pensioners, and perhaps those living on small annuities or the income from small investments?

Speaking of the prices in the United States, the president of that country almost every day warns business that they must not and cannot continue to exploit the consumer. We hear statements like these, which appeared in the *Toronto Star* of April 21:

President Truman today warned business leaders that continuation of present high prices threatens the nation with an "economic cloudburst."

"If we are to avoid a recession . . . prices must be brought down. Present business conditions permit, in fact, they require lower prices in many important fields. There is one sure formula for bringing on a depression or a recession. That is to maintain excessively high prices. Buying stops, production drops, unemployment sets in, prices collapse, profits vanish, business men fail.

I believe that we as a nation can prevent this economic cloudburst. But it requires prompt, preventive steps."

But it was at the doorstep of business that he laid the greater responsibility for preventing a depression. To business he said:

[Mrs. Strum.]

"If we are to avoid a recession we must act before it starts.

Profits in the aggregate are breaking all records. In 1946, corporate profits, after taxes, were 33 per cent higher than in 1945. In the first quarters of 1947 they ran even higher."

"There are some who say that prices are not too high so long as buying stays at high levels. From the human standpoint, I reject this argument. It provides no answer to those living on fixed incomes, such as teachers, civil servants and widows. It provides no answer to those veterans who must pay substantially more for houses than they are able to afford."

"Our system of private enterprise is now being tested before the world. If we ignore the needs and shirk the responsibilities of our economy, we shall lose both our power to help others and our capacity to inspire others."

This is what President Truman thinks of the economic policy of the United States. I submit to the government that we have the machinery to control the profits of industry, but we are gradually throwing it out the window and allowing business to take the place of government. We should be unworthy of our responsibility as representatives of the people if we did not object to that under this clause.

I now wish to put on the record the difference between Canadian food costs and United States food costs; because if we are to allow our prices to reach the levels of the United States prices, this is what we can expect in the matter of price increases in the various articles of diet. These Canadian figures are taken from chain store advertisements of April 2, 1947, in the *Ottawa Journal*, and the United States figures from a quotation by Mrs. Douglas, congresswoman from California, and placed on the record on April 2, 1947. With the permission of the house I should like to place this table on *Hansard*. The figures are as follows:

Comparison of Food Prices
U.S.A. and Canada

	U.S.		Can.		Difference	
	Mar. 12	Apr. 2	Mar. 12	Apr. 2	Price	Percent
Flour . . . .	.08½	.06½	.08	.06	.02	30.7
Butter . . .	.82	.45	.82	.45	.37	82.2
Milk . . . .	.17	.15	.17	.15	.02	13.3
Eggs . . . .	.69	.44	.69	.44	.25	56.8
Pork chops	.73	.49	.73	.49	.26	....
Bacon . . .	.79	.59	.79	.59	.20	33.8
Shortening	.42	.21	.42	.21	.21	100.0
Coffee . . .	.49	.49	.49	.49	.00	....
Peas . . . .	.19	.13	.19	.13	.06	46.1
Bread . . .	.20	.07½	.20	.07½	.12½	166.6
Soap chips	.34	.24	.34	.24	.08	41.6
Sausage . .	.49	.32	.49	.32	.17	53.1

That gives us an indication of what we can expect in the rise in the cost of living if we accept the fact that our prices must reach the levels which prices have now reached in the United States.

What about the difference in wages? Here are some wages in the industries of manufac-