

anything in the public press tending to indicate that we are receiving similar reductions in this country. There may have been a drop in the price of some articles, I do not pose as an authority on the matter, but although I have followed the Canadian press very closely I have not noticed that material reductions in the prices of important commodities have taken place in Canada, but rather the contrary. In view of all these circumstances I suggest to the Government that if food prices continue high in this country while they are getting lower on the other side of the international boundary line, and promise to be even lower yet, it can very properly take the duty off articles upon which a duty is exacted. It can very properly say to the vendors of such articles in Canada "If you do not give the people on this side the same opportunities of living that the people on the other side under similar conditions, are enjoying, we are not going to maintain any Chinese wall to protect you against competition from the country to the south. I think, Sir, that if the Government will do this it will be a very proper step to take. Not only should the Government avail itself of the services of the Board of Commerce to keep down the high cost of living, but it should also put an end to the present protection to producers of this country who refuse to concede to the Canadian people the same opportunities which are granted to people in other parts of the world.

Our legislation directed against the high cost of living is, if I understand correctly, of earlier enactment than similar legislation in the United States. Yet very substantial results therefrom have accrued to the people in the United States, whereas in this country we have as yet received no benefit whatever from the Board of Commerce which has been created.

The hon. gentleman (Mr. McIntosh) spoke in complimentary terms of the leader of the Government in seconding the Address in reply to the speech from the Throne. While desirous of paying the Prime Minister every compliment to which his personality and individuality entitles him, still if I find him lacking in the discharge of his high duties I should be false to the position I occupy if I did not bring that fact as vigorously as possible, to the notice of the people generally. The hon. gentleman has stated that the labouring classes of Canada should have great confidence in the Prime Minister because of the latter having been so closely identified with the drafting of the provisions of the

Peace Treaty with respect to labour. I would like to point out that last session when we were urging upon the Government the necessity of establishing an eight-hour day we were told by the representatives of the Cabinet that this Parliament had no power to pass such legislation. One would suppose, ordinarily speaking, that the representatives of the Canadian people sitting in Ottawa would be as closely identified with the proposal for the establishment of an eight-hour day as the Peace Conference sitting in France. But while the Prime Minister and the Acting Minister of Justice, occupying their places on the Treasury benches here, told us that the Government were absolutely tied hand and foot, and could do nothing towards regulating the hours of labour through federal legislation, nevertheless the leader of the Government and his colleagues the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Trade and Commerce, sitting in France, away from the jurisdiction of the Canadian Parliament, experienced absolutely no difficulty in formulating resolutions with respect to this subject and submitting them to the Peace Conference for approval. This is procedure of a somewhat extraordinary character, but it is quite in line with other actions of the Government. The members of the Cabinet are splendid as theorists, they are fine speakers and good orators, but when it comes to enacting practical legislation they are absolutely at a loss and do not seem to know what to do. It would be very much more consoling to the man who has to don his habiliments before daylight in the morning and who returns to his little family after dark each evening, if this Government would take the necessary action to reduce his hours of labour and afford him more opportunity for recreation and sleep than he now enjoys, than to find that high-sounding conditions have been embodied in the Peace Treaty which cannot by any possibility be implemented into concrete legislation if the information given to us by the law officers of the Government is correct. Notwithstanding this, we are told by the seconder of the Address (Mr. McIntosh) that the Prime Minister's action with respect to labour matters as dealt with in the Peace Treaty should inspire the labour men of Canada with confidence in the Government. Let me remind the Prime Minister and those of his colleagues who accompanied him to Paris that when they were formulating the resolutions referred to and getting them inserted in the Peace Treaty, another very