

to pass judgment upon them. But I say this: if I were the food controller, I would know within a week whether excessive prices had been charged, and under the powers vested in me I would intervene if the prices were found to be too high. That is what the food controller is doing in England every day. What is true of food is true of coal, gasoline, coal oil, all the necessities of life, which have been increasing in value since the war began. I called attention the other day to the long discussion that we had in connection with the Bill which was to-day read the third time in the House. It is not discussion we want; it is action, intervention on the part of the food controller where excessive prices have been charged. I believe that our food controller has no lack of assistance, and if his work is properly organized he should be able to give the people that for which they are asking; control and regulation of excessive food prices during the period of the war. If we do not have action soon, encouragement will be given for other kinds of extortion.

While what I say may not be quite germane to the subject before the House, it is certainly germane to the situation in the country which calls for immediate regulation and for the reduction of the excessive charges made in connection with ordinary foodstuffs and ordinary necessities of life.

Mr. TURRIFF: Possibly the cold storage plants that have been reported on more particularly by Mr. O'Connor may not be included amongst those that the Government have assisted, but the Government for years back have been advancing large sums of money for the purpose of securing the erection of cold storage plants with the idea that they would enable food products to be carried over from one season to another to the advantage of the consumer. According to Mr. O'Connor's report, however, these cold storage plants are being used for the purpose, not of helping the farmer or the consumer, but of buying the product at a low price and storing it and later on making the consumer pay an enhanced price for it. Somewhat the same thing existed in connection with the terminal elevators in the West, and it was found necessary for the Government to intervene and to take over the control of the terminal elevators. Has any action been taken by the Government to look into this matter in order to find out if it is in the interest of the consuming public that these cold storage plants should be placed under

the absolute control of whatever department looks after that particular class of work? I presume it would be the Department of Agriculture. If no action has been taken, it is time something was done along that line. Will the investigation that is going to take place under this new commission that has been appointed to investigate Mr. O'Connor's report ascertain the amount of profit that the William Davies company made during the past year, and will it ascertain if the amount this company paid in under the excess profits tax is the correct amount or not? The O'Connor report shows that this firm sold 120,000,000 or 130,000,000 pounds of bacon, and that there was a difference of five cents per pound between the cost of the bacon delivered at their warehouse and the selling price. The company did not give Mr. O'Connor the cost of storage and of delivering, but Mr. O'Connor got those costs from other storage plants, so that his figures cannot be very far wrong. According to his figures, there is a profit on what was sold to the War Department of between four and five million dollars. There is, of course, to be deducted from that the amount chargeable for storage and delivery, but there is to be added to that, the profit on all the bacon sold 10 p.m. by this company to the people of Canada at a very high price.

Perhaps the Minister of Finance could say whether his department is making any investigation, in view of the facts that have come to light by the O'Connor report, as to whether the amount turned in as this company's share of excess profits—I think it was \$107,000—is the proportion they should pay, or whether their true profits have been hidden, as I understand it is customary for companies to make profits show as low as possible during the years in which they have to pay taxes to the Government. If the report of this new commission is unsatisfactory, a third commission will have to be appointed to investigate the report of the one now being appointed. Unless this commission makes a thorough investigation from beginning to end, the people of this country will be very much dissatisfied, and at the present time they are very much exercised over what has come to light. If some of the members of that commission are appointed for the purpose, not of bringing out evidence, but of keeping evidence from coming out, the commission will be most unsatisfactory, and it will not clear up anything and the people will be still more dissatisfied than they are at present.