

the case, does it not show what a splendid part Canada has taken in this war of the Empire, and that our people are entitled to the utmost consideration? Does it not show the strongest possible reason why, so far as possible, the manufacture of munitions should be continued in Canada? I think that this House and the people should be informed as to what effort the Dominion Government has made to induce the British Government adequately, so far as the manufacture of munitions and purchase of supplies is concerned, to recognize the splendid efforts which Canada has put forward, not only in finance but in sending troops to the front. Canada has done her part, and, so far as financing is concerned, has done more than her part; and I repeat that instead of there being any reason why this extraordinary order should have been given out by the chairman of the Munitions Board, there are the strongest possible reasons why the manufacture of munitions should continue on as large, if not larger, scale than in the past. I wish to emphasize the position taken by myself and other members of this House since the manufacture of shells in Canada began, that the work should have been undertaken by the Government as a government work. Shells should have been manufactured under the direction of the Government, and should have been supplied at actual cost. Reasonable wages should have been paid to the workmen engaged in the manufacture, but no such large profits should have been given as have been given to the manufacturers of munitions. We know—because the facts cannot be controverted—that early in this war, and in the early stages of the manufacture of shells, upwards of one hundred million dollars was wasted by the Shell Committee appointed by this Government under the direction of the late Minister of Militia. If good fair business methods had been adopted that amount of money could have been saved to the country and the Empire, and it would have represented, and represents to-day, all the surplus which the Minister of Finance (Sir Thomas White) boastingly says this Government has provided for the Imperial Government. Up to that period this enormous sum of money was wasted, and we have every reason to believe that, even since the Imperial Munitions Board has taken charge, very large profits have gone to manufacturers which might have been saved if the Government had undertaken the production of shells as a Government work, and with a determination to supply the shells

and other munitions of war to the Allies at actual cost, instead of having the work carried on by private parties, in many cases at enormous profit.

In conclusion, I desire to ask the Government to inform the House whether or not they have, as a Government, taken up this communication from the Chairman of the Imperial Munitions Board; whether they have communicated with the British Government and endeavoured to ascertain the reason why this notice has been sent out, and why it is proposed to discontinue, or greatly reduce, the manufacture of shells in Canada? If the Government has any information on the subject; if any correspondence has taken place between the two Governments, that information should be placed before the House in order that Parliament and the country may be fully informed in the matter.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: I do not wish to prolong the debate, but it seems to me to be necessary to make a few comments upon the discussion which has taken place. I wish to point out the peculiarity of the position that some hon. gentlemen on the other side have taken and the inconsistency of that position as compared with that heretofore taken by them. I shall refer only to the chief of these inconsistencies; my remarks will be brief.

The member for Pictou (Mr. Macdonald) suddenly becomes a champion of the munition industry in this country. He asks questions as to what has taken place, what will take place, and why. He says: why should the shell industry be stopped; should we not assist in the war by going on with the shell industry to the same extent that it has hitherto been proceeded with in Canada? He was brim full of enthusiasm, energy, vigour, insistence, when he urged that we must do our part in assisting in the war by making shells. I thought to myself that if he had only shown the same inconsistency, the same vigour, the same strength in an effort to assist in some other way in the prosecution of the war, he would be further ahead and this country would be further ahead than at present. Does my hon. friend not see that in this new born zeal for the munition industry he and his friends are becoming the champions of what they have hitherto denounced as a profiteering industry? He made a most plaintive appeal to the Minister of Finance to keep up the munitions business in order that profits might be obtained therefrom and in order that the minister might get from