

bacon in Canada. Two cents a pound is a very serious matter to the producers of hogs in Canada, and it is a matter of sufficient importance to claim the consideration of this Parliament and of this Government. If it is a fact that the price of hogs has fallen two cents a pound because of the inability of this Government to finance the purchases by Great Britain in Canada, it is a serious situation, and the people of Canada should understand it. They should know why it is so. If it can be avoided, it should be avoided. If it cannot be avoided the public should understand it thoroughly. Let us know exactly where we are.

Sir THOMAS WHITE: Let me interrupt my hon. friend. The regulation in Great Britain to which he refers has not yet become effectual against Canadian bacon, which is still going forward. The drop in the price of hogs had no relation to immediate financing. The question may arise in the future, but it does not arise immediately.

Mr. OLIVER: There is no doubt of the fact that the announcement and the drop in price absolutely synchronized, my hon. friend will admit that; and I am prepared to believe there was an absolute and direct connection between the two events.

Sir THOMAS WHITE: What about the Chicago price and the Buffalo price?

Mr. OLIVER: I am not able to answer that question. I am not familiar with those prices. I am prepared also to believe that, although my hon. friend is able at the moment and for several months to come to finance in regard to munitions, it is understood that he will not be able to continue to do so, and therefore munitions plants are going out of business in expectation of the time when that condition will arise. As I understand it, the position in regard to bacon is that from this time forward the demands of Great Britain for bacon will be filled by the United States, and our Canadian hogs will find their market in the United States instead of going directly to Great Britain, and the profit in the handling will go to the United States instead of remaining in Canada.

Sir THOMAS WHITE: Not if we can finance it, and we shall certainly endeavour to do so.

Mr. OLIVER: If we can finance it, that will not occur; but if we cannot, it is bound to happen. This is a serious matter

[Mr. Oliver.]

to the people of Canada, and it is something they should not be deceived about. They should not have any misunderstanding about it. They should know what their position is in regard to these questions. The conclusion of what I desire to say is, that since the war began we have not been in an absolutely sane condition in regard to matters of finance in the Dominion of Canada. It has been necessary to incur obligations, as the members of the Government have said, undreamed of at any previous time, obligations never contemplated and which possibly would never have been undertaken under any other circumstances. We have become accustomed in this House to voting money not by the millions, or tens of millions, but by the hundreds of millions, and all under the inspiration of the needs of the war.

As long as it only meant the voting of the money, and as long as it meant the expenditure of the money in Canada, with high prices for munitions, munitions plants running night and day, enormous wages to employees, high prices for farm produce, and everything going splendidly, it was only a matter of voting more and more millions. But it is perfectly clear, from what has been said here to-day, that a condition has been reached when this performance cannot go on. We have come to a crisis in our national affairs. My hon. friend said that the British Empire had come to a crisis in its Imperial affairs connected with this war. We, in Canada, have come to a crisis in our national affairs, and we cannot continue the expenditures that we have hitherto been making. It is not possible. Our credit, so far as I can see, is becoming exhausted, and we have the evidence of that in the shutting down of the munitions plant, and the purchase of bacon through the United States. We have changed our financial position within the last few months, and the people of Canada should know it. The Government should take the people into their confidence in regard to this matter, so that we would know exactly where we were. At this time, and under these circumstances, I want to hold the Government of Canada, the gentlemen who sit on the treasury benches, and above every one else the Minister of Finance responsible for the fact that we are in this position at the present time. Since my hon. friend took office, and since this war broke out, there has been no brake placed upon the expenditure of the Dominion of Canada. The same idea of extravagance that prevailed in the purchase of war