

if we could have constituted the board at an earlier date, but I desire to assure my hon. friend that the matter was taken up immediately after the close of last session. Immediately after the Act had become law, communication was had with the gentleman who has been appointed chairman of the tribunal. At first he found himself unable to undertake the new duties which we desired him to accept. He had asked some time in which to consider whether his answer would be in the negative or the affirmative, and finally he gave us what we regarded as a negative answer on account of certain considerations personal to himself which appealed to him very strongly. At a little later date, however, we found that Judge Robson was inclined to reconsider the question, and after some further necessary delay which he requested for the purpose of making his arrangements, he finally agreed to accept the position. Hon. gentlemen will recollect that it was urged upon us, and especially from the other side of the House—by my hon. friend from Brome (Mr. McMaster) for one, I remember—that the success of this board would depend very largely upon its personnel, and we did regard, and we do regard, Judge Robson as possessing in a very eminent degree the qualities, the experience and the knowledge which are essential in the person who undertakes those duties.

We have succeeded also in having Mr. O'Connor accept a position on the board, and he has been very glad to associate himself with Judge Robson in the very important duties which they are called upon to discharge.

So far as the third member of the board is concerned, we thought it desirable to make a temporary appointment until we could consult more fully with the chairman of the board and his associate as to the qualities that should be looked for in the third member. In the meantime we have appointed a very capable gentleman who has had a very great deal of experience in work of this character—the Deputy Minister of Labour—and upon consultation with the Minister of Labour as to his qualifications I was perfectly satisfied that as a temporary measure the best course in order that the work of the board might proceed at once was to appoint Mr. Acland to the position which he now holds as a member of that board without salary.

My hon. friend the leader of the Opposition has indulged in some criticism. He has run over the various efforts of the Gov-

ernment during the past two or three years to investigate and, so far as possible, to provide a remedy for the high cost of living in this country. So far as I could understand, he must have convinced even himself that the Government had approached this subject from every possible standpoint and had established every kind of machinery that might be useful for the purpose of providing a remedy for such conditions. I will not at the moment go over the details of all that the Government has undertaken during the past three years, but my hon. friend doubtless remembers that we conferred distinct powers, powers of a very wide character, upon every municipality in Canada to abate profiteering and to bring down excessive prices. There was not a municipality in Canada that was not armed by the statute law of this country or by Orders in Council passed under the War Measures Act, with powers which should have been effective, if they had been utilized, to remedy the conditions complained of, in so far as those conditions can be remedied by any legislation.

We all know that these conditions are not confined to Canada alone. They are world-wide and to a very great extent they depend upon world-wide conditions which cannot be remedied by legislation of this Parliament or of all the parliaments of the world combined. But in so far as excessive profits are concerned, there ought to be a remedy in this country or in any other country, and we sought to give that remedy by legislation which we passed at the last session of Parliament, and by the appointment of a tribunal of commerce for the purpose of carrying out its provisions. My hon. friend has made a statement with regard to relative prices in the United States and Canada. Let me remind him that the late Minister of Agriculture, whose desire to give public service, whose experience, whose ability, and whose devotion to public duty will not be questioned by any man who knew him in this House or elsewhere, had this very matter under his direction for eighteen months or more, and devoted his best efforts and attention, to providing a remedy for the conditions which prevail. And I have yet to hear in this House any effective criticism of the policy and the action of the hon. member for Marquette (Mr. Crerar) in that regard. Apparently my hon. friend has not read the report of the Canada Food Board for 1918 in which this very question that he has dealt with was discussed. The relative prices of many necessities of life in the one country and