

workers of this country lost at least 30% on their purchases.

Mr. Chairman, it is a recognized fact that the government's Department of Supply picked their favourites when appointing their committees or groups, call them what you like. Perhaps these are the parasites that Governor Walwyn referred to in his farewell address, in which he said:

The cost of living here is terribly high, but I hope it will tend to fall before long. I am assured on the highest authority that this high cost of living is not due to the high duties on necessities, but is due to the high profits and the excessive profits being made locally. There are too many middlemen and commission agents, who are really parasites on the community.

This expression, coming from no less a person than a past chairman of the Commission of Government, does not speak well for that body, but rather verifies my statement of what can be and is being done with the help of governments to feed parasites rather than destroy them. It has been said that it was rather late for the past chairman to make this expression in his farewell address. Maybe it was a little late, but it was much earlier than the rest of the Commissioners.

I know that none of the Commissioners will attempt to say that they fail to see where any evil was committed. If they do, we could all rejoice that such men did not have charge of the government of England at the time when Hitler began his threat to dominate the world. If they could not see from the very day that the Supply Department was instituted and its committees formed, that it meant the domination of the trade of this country by a few, then they were too small or indifferent to realise what was going to take place; I hope we won't, as a body of Newfoundlanders entrusted by our fellow men to help to put things right. In order to put things right, we must regard this Convention as a declaration of war against domination, manipulation and intrigue, and I hope we will meet with the success that the Allied armies met with against Hitler's domination.

Mr. Chairman, again I do not want to be misunderstood. I know and agree that price control and the control of the distribution of food and other necessities for the winning of the war was essential; but the handling of the textile business by the Department of Supply was abused right

and left, and the outport importer was discriminated against. If there is any person who would like to dispute what I have said, let us ask ourselves the question, "Did we know of any ceiling price on a suit of clothes, or anything in the drygoods line during the war?" No, sir, we did not, and I say without fear of contradiction that the Commission of Government did help big business, and in doing so took a delight in upsetting the business of the outport importer; and again I repeat, the fishermen and workers of this country lost at least 30% on their purchases.

Mr. Chairman, perhaps you do not grasp the means whereby monopolies were created by the establishment of the Supply Department. I will make an attempt to point it out to you. When an outport importer needed goods from any foreign country, the first thing he had to do was apply to the Supply Division of the Commission of Government for a certificate of essentiality. That application had to go before a committee of men who were that man's competitors. In other words, they were the wholesalers of St. John's. They were given the privilege of being able to dive into that man's private business, and even prevent him from getting any goods. Perhaps you may ask in what way they could do that. Well, here is an example. I know of a man who in 1942 applied for a certificate of essentiality for a quantity of goods from New York. When his goods were packed and addressed ready for shipment, an agent from Newfoundland appeared at the warehouse in New York and seeing the address on two cases of goods he inquired from that firm if they shipped to that man. When being told they had been shipping to that man for a considerable time he simply put the gun to the shipper by saying, "If you ship that man these two cases you will have to cancel our ten", with the result that that man got no goods from the firm since.

Now these are the acts of the Commission of Government, and I will leave it to my listeners to decide for themselves if it was through ignorance on the part of the Commission of Government of how business is conducted, or was it to help their favourites? Whatever it was, the people of this country had to pay two profits, one to the wholesaler and another to the retailer, which amounted to at least 30% more than if imported by the outport importer.

I know we have had bad governments in the