



CANADA

"To the Homes of Canada"

Radio Speech

by Dr. CHARLOTTE WHITTON

A NATIONAL BROADCAST

DECEMBER 18, 1941

In behalf of

THE WARTIME PRICES AND TRADE BOARD

Canada's greatest single resource is the strength and courage of the Canadian family, and especially of the women-folk, in the Canadian home. It is to these homes that I now appeal—to the homes of our men in the fighting forces, to the homes of our straining munition workers, to the homes in our teeming cities, to the homes of the mining, the oil, the timber, the fishing and the shipbuilding areas, and to the thousands of rural homes, upon whom the food of warrior and worker alike depends.

To all of you in these homes, but, particularly to you women, guardians of our hearths, your country calls to-night. You control four out of every five dollars, paid for the essentials of life in this land, this land that, in dire need, pleads with you at this hour. You are called to mount guard within our homes, with the same courage and determination as our men who, at this moment, are battling in besieged Hong Kong.

Will you prove worthy of the nation that has bred you, given you strength and security,—for the time of testing is upon her and her need is great?

THE BATTLE OF PRODUCTION

You hear daily of the evils of inflation. You cannot dismiss it as a banker's bogey, for inflation is bred from a grave and frightening cause. The real danger which you must face and understand, as you shop your own or your family's needs, in this. Especially now with the United States also at war, Canada may not prove equal to the task of production and supply. Do you want to see brave and gallant troops crushed, as at Crete, for want of equipment? Will you realize that there is a limit to Canada's man-power, to her machinery and money power? Canada has only so many machines for making the supplies of war, only so many men and women to work those machines. She can speed up, even further, but there is a limit to human strength. Her men and women, her machines must not be used for anything that we can do without. This extra money in new payrolls, is not new wealth: it is the price of blood, the cost of survival. It must not be used to purchase luxuries which put burdens on our machines and shove costs and prices higher and higher. Everything possible is being done, to-day, to assure all things needful for your health and strength, without impairing the life line

of supply. Will you put yourself this question? Do I need this so much that my country must release war machinery to make it for me? Must I be so different from other women that workers and machines, needed for blankets, uniforms and parachutes, are to be used on elaborate styles and silk stockings for me?

A few days ago you read that Canada will now make only seven, instead of fifteen, kinds of planes so as to rush her output. Will you not help in bringing the same sort of patriotic common sense into the provision of our food and clothing, and all our other needs?

WHAT IS INFLATION?

Panic and stampede can develop right here on the home front, unless we face up to these things, and it is the women who must face up, you who buy 80 per cent of all the food, clothing, fuel, and shelter for the homes of Canada. We shall have enough to go around for all of us, if we keep our heads, but, if we go, each on her own, like cave women, disaster will follow. We have more money now in the hands of consumers than we have machines to produce consumer's goods. So we must spend less and save more, save it for the war, save it for buying after the war is won.

You have all been at auction sales. You have seen something put up for sale and the crazy bidding that follows, when everyone wants just one particular article. It's likely "knocked down", not to the person who needed it most, but to the person who had the most money and who, "like as not", paid three times what it was worth. That is inflation in its simplest, crudest form.

Do you want that to happen in terms of the food you eat, the clothes you wear, the fuel you burn or the home you rent? It all depends on you.

A PROGRAMME OF CONTROL

The Government is doing its utmost to prevent such things in Canada by price controls, which say that no article may be sold in retail stores above the highest price paid for it between September 15th and October 11th, 1941. Now, the whole

plan of your country's war economy can only succeed if you women—every one of you three million women—make up your minds not to pay a cent more than the highest price for which anything was sold during this control period September 15th to October 11th, 1941.

How are you to know and hold that price line? Well, here's your obligation, your duty, your solemn responsibility. Last night, Donald Gordon, Chairman of the War Time Prices and Trade Board, told you how to make up your price list. I hope you have it right in front of you, ruled into its four columns for the name of the article, its grade or quality, the store where you bought it, and the highest price you paid for it, in the control dates.

I hope you have read the advertisement issued under the authority of the Board, in today's papers; it will be in the weeklies, next week. Start your list from that: don't worry if it hasn't everything in it which you use: it's just a sample. Make up your own list to suit your own purchases.

Now, get everyone in the house into this, around the radio, at the dining-room or kitchen table. Get the dog and cat into it: it affects the price of Towser's bone, of pussy's milk. (When you're all through, your family will have a new respect for this job of yours of "just running the house".)

Look at that advertisement! Read it; learn it; mark it; you'll be talking a lot about it in the days and months to come.

YOUR PRICE LIST

All set to go, now? All right. Block out your items under six main headings.

FIRST—FOOD

In the blanks, under this head, list the foods you buy often.

SECOND—CLOTHING

Take DAD'S first—(he likes to think he is the head of the household, you know). In the blank spaces put down the things he just has to have: he'll help you—without any urging.

Then put down next "THE BOYS"—and list the things they need.

Next, "THE GIRLS"—(resist the impulse to list yourself here). Put down their requirements. Put their cosmetics up to them!

Then, as usual, for any time and space and money that is left, put "MOTHER'S", and list what you hope you may have.

THIRD—FUEL

Under this put down whatever you use—wood, or coal or oil.

FOURTH—SHELTER

This is a big item in any budget, but, rents are now fixed: they cannot rise unless authorized: be sure, therefore, that you get yours down at the right figure.

FIFTH—SERVICE

This is an important heading: here come your gas, electricity, water rates, telephone, laundry, cleaning, etc. They all come under «services» and their prices are pegged too.

Oh! and here, too, come your "hair-do", your dry-cleaning, your dress-making, and what have you.

And the last heading—

SIXTH—HOUSEHOLD SUPPLIES

Under that you should put—bedding, towels, soaps, floor-wax, all the dozen and one things that you need in the home to keep the place clean and that men never think of as having to come out of the pay envelope!

SINGLE PERSONS

Single women "on you own" won't have all these headaches, but you, some half a million working women, have the same job to do on all your clothing and personal needs, and don't forget your board and lodging. They have to stay pegged, too, at the highest mark in those same dates.

Now you all have your basic list. You'll perhaps add, perhaps change it, but the real job, which we are asking you to take on for Canada, is just beginning, and it depends on you—on how accurately you fill in the prices you paid your own retailers between September 15th and October 11th, 1941.

From December 1st, the highest price which you can lawfully pay or be asked to pay for any of these things, anywhere, is the highest price at which these articles or similar articles were sold at retail between September 15th and October 11th.

It is only a couple of months back—get out your old bills—look up your old accounts, ask your neighbours, or members of whatever organizations you belong to,—to help you establish the proper price for all the things you have to buy.

A FEW "THINKS"

Do not bother your dealer about it! He has enough worries right now trying to figure out his end of this price control. It is hard for him to get the goods you want. In most cases he has to pay more for them even though he cannot charge you more. He is nearly crazy with his Christmas business and likely one clerk has enlisted, and another gone into a munitions plant.

And, after all, you know your dealer pretty well; isn't he apt to be just as honest, just as patriotic as you are, just as anxious to win this war?

Remember, too, that there are brands and brands, and quality varies and prices with it. Remember, too, there have been sales, there have been increased costs before the "ceiling" was put on—be sure the price you list is the highest regular price.

And remember this: you pick your own store; and different stores may charge different prices, quite legally. You pay for what you get, say, in delivery service, in credit facilities; such services are a part of the cost of any such business, and may mean that higher prices prevailed in one store than another in this September-October period, and such prices may still be lawfully charged in those stores.

You may buy at a little store and you must understand the small retailer's special problems.

If you just can't fix what you paid in these base dates, you are reasonably safe in putting down present prices.

Cross-country reports coming in, through the Board, show that, on the whole, merchants are keeping in line. Where they go above the ceiling, they will be brought down at once.

Whatever you do, get that price list of yours complete, at once!

Keep in mind the problem of seasonal prices. Tomatoes, for instance, vary from season to season, and such things call for special provisions, but seasonal prices will be watched, and, if necessary, changed to suit the season. Watch carefully for such announcements.

And watch prices. Once you get your list fixed, it's your patriotic duty to keep prices there and to report any boosts at once in writing to the Board's Regional Prices and Supply Representative, or, directly, to Ottawa.

CANADA'S HOUSEHOLD CORPS

Are you ready to sign up in Canada's Household Corps as a guardian of the new Price Law? There's another way of doing this, if you fall down. The government can provide a large staff, a great deal of money, and, after months of effort, have a list for you.

But, the officers of Canada's national women's organizations came to Ottawa on Monday. They met the Chairman of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board, and they told him that the women of Canada could take on this job themselves and save this manpower and money. And, they told him that we would do it with high hearts and pride in the task. You will, won't you? You'll show the world, won't you, that Canadian women can do this? And, let us so do it, that we are not called "sour-pusses"! Let us be good "price pusses", watching present prices as cats watch mice and keeping them from jumping outside the ceiling prices in the list which each of us has compiled. You can do this by working with the retailers for we have good evidence of their good will and their readiness to co-operate with you.

CANADIAN WOMEN WILL DO THIS

It is a daring experiment, this great war effort of Canada, to assure her people of a stop-block against mounting prices, to keep consumer demand from choking the flow of the tanks, planes, guns and ammunition so desperately needed by our allies and ourselves.

Our enemies hope that this great attempt to keep down the price of the things we need will fail. Never has a finer tribute been paid to the women of Canada than your country's willingness to entrust to you this terrific task of having three million of you work out these price lists in the next few days, and then to leave to you the duty of keeping prices there.

This war will be won by the nations with staying power and staying power comes from faith in our purpose and unity in our cause. There is only one power in the world strong enough to defeat the almost perfect organization which the tyranny of dictatorship can impose; that power is the self-control and self-mobilization of free men and women. The ability of each to order his own life for the good of all has been the glory and the strength of the British people.

Oh! you will not fail Canada and the faith that she has placed in her women, will you?

Donald Gordon, the Chairman of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board, and his associates have declared their faith in the courage, capability and unselfishness of Canada's three million women. Others say Canada can't do this thing. **We say Canada can and her women will.**

You sit, in comparative calm and security to-night, because, at this very moment, men of our breed fly His Majesty's planes in all the heavens, others sail His ships wherever the laneways of free men cross the dangerous seas, and still others keep watch on our own and foreign strands. Your safety is served by the suffering women of a dozen ravaged nations. Is any inconvenience, is any sacrifice, is any service too much to ask of you, safe in your own homes, to-night?

Evensong is hushed in silence:
And the hour of rest is nigh;
Strengthen us for work to-morrow,
Son of Mary, God most High!
Thou who in the village workshop
Fashioning the yoke and plough
Didst eat bread by daily labour
Succour them that labour now!"

May we find the strength, greatly to attempt, and greatly to achieve.