

had long experience in responsible administrative posts and possessed a wide and intimate knowledge of the United States, where he was already on terms of personal friendship with the leading figures in the United States Government." (1)

Minister to the United States

Christie presented his Letters of Credence to President Roosevelt on September 25, 1939. His appointment was almost in the nature of an emergency. Canada had just entered a state of hostilities with Germany, the United States was a neutral and its Neutrality Act interposed difficulties in essential cooperation and supply problems between Canada and the United States, and the diplomatic problems in this connection were extremely acute. At that very moment of urgency, Sir Herbert Marler was incapacitated by a fatal illness, and his place had to be filled at once. Mr. Christie was at that time in closest charge of the "American desk" in Ottawa and was most familiar with the legal and diplomatic problems; it was almost natural to throw him into the breach by sending him to the crucially important post at Washington, and no time was lost by Mr. King. His intimacy with the British Ambassador, Lord Lothian, who was faced with the same problems of circumventing the United States Neutrality Act, and his acquaintance with American officials and Departments, were of course additional recommendations for the position.

Mr. Mackenzie King told the House: "After a

(1) H. of C. Debates, February 17, 1941. p.815.