

-7-

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND COMMERCE

Trade Commissioner (supervising British Isles)

73, Basinghall Street, E.C.2.

Ground Floor - Commissioner's Room and two others,
about 700 sq.ft. £400 inc.
Rates & Taxes.
Lease until March, 1925.

These premises have been occupied by the Trade Commissioner for 25 years. The activities of the office do not appear to have demanded additional space, but I am informed by the Trade Commissioner that it is the view of the Director of Commercial Intelligence of Canada that more space is urgently required; that available offices have been inspected by the Director of Commercial Intelligence in company with the Trade Commissioner, and that these offices (particulars of which are available) should, in their opinion, be in the "City", and not distant too far from present site.

The Staff is as follows:- Trade Commissioner; Chief Clerk; 3 Stenographers, and a Trade Commissioner (L.D. Wildgress) attached for special duty - 6 in all. It is the reported view of the Director of Commercial Intelligence that the Staff should be increased by an Assistant Trade Commissioner, and the necessary clerical assistance to meet the increasing business of the office. Further, that the offices under view provide 2,000 sq.ft. at a rental of £1,500 p.a. plus rates.

This office is administered and financed from Ottawa. On matters arising on trade points as between H.M. Government and Canadian Government (i.e. matters of high policy) the channel of communication is through the Office of the High Commissioner. I am unable to trace any co-ordination in other matters. There appear to be certain questions upon Trade dealt with by the High Commissioner's Office, but not with the knowledge of the Trade Commissioner. Overlapping may thus occur, and I therefore suggest it is advisable to set out more clearly the principles to be followed - this may be difficult and almost impossible unless the administrative head (The Trade Commissioner) is brought into closer contact with the High Commissioner's Office, which can be accomplished by allotting him space in the proposed new building.

The Director of Commercial Intelligence (H.R. Poussette) has, I am informed, expressed an opinion that the principal office of the Trade Commissioner (and the Trade Commissioner supports him) should be in the "City". I am not suggesting an opinion, but co-operation, to say nothing of co-ordination of effort is not easily obtained when consultation is practically impossible by the distance of one office from the other.

The Trade Commissioner for India is the only other one occupying City offices, and he is reported to be out and out for a City office.

I have heard it expressed by a senior official of the Department of Overseas Trade (British Board of Trade) that it was a good move of the Board of Trade when the Department of Overseas Trade (principal offices) were brought from the City to Whitehall, or to within 200 yards of the Board of Trade.

W.L. Mackenzie King Papers
Memoranda & Notes