

*Supply—Trade and Commerce*

did something similar to what has been done now. The minister of trade and commerce who was at that time Senator Euler; the minister of finance, who was at that time, Mr. Dunning, and I as minister of agriculture went to Britain. Our reason for going was the fact that in 1932 there had been one of these conferences which had determined many things that had influenced our trade with Britain. We went there to discuss that matter and to try to arrive at some conclusions as to what might be done in order to overcome some of the difficulties created.

One of them affected the selling of apples in Britain, another the selling of bacon and another the selling of wheat and other products. It is sometimes forgotten that we had 298 million bushels of wheat in storage in western Canada elevators and other elevators across Canada at the time we came into power 22 years ago. In other words, this is not the first time there has been a surplus of wheat in Canada. At a later date still we had some 600 or 700 million bushels and now we have about that amount again.

But on this occasion we went over to Britain for the purpose of discussing these problems and we had some rather extended discussions which began on the 14th of August of that year. After our return we sent over a delegation of eight men. Someone has objected to the present delegation having about 50 members, but on that occasion we did send a smaller delegation. They were only dealing with the sale of agricultural products and there were only eight men. I have here a report of that mission which I am not going to read. I brought it with me, however, in order to demonstrate that there is such a report. There is a report that I made personally with regard to agricultural matters and there is a report prepared by the delegation of eight who went over there and discussed agricultural marketing at that time.

Out of that there did grow something which I am going to call to the attention of the minister because it was more or less inoperative at the time the government changed. At that time it was recommended by this group that, apart from the representatives of the Department of Trade and Commerce, there should be representatives of agriculture in Great Britain and that their special mission should be that of seeing to it that more and more agricultural products were sold in Britain. I am not going into detail with regard to it other than to say that until we came to the end of the war that policy had obtained very good results. We did sell more and more products in Britain right down to the end of the war, but at that

time it became necessary for one thing to re-establish the old provisions that had been set up under the conference of 1932 which meant that bacon and many other products had to be bought in considerable quantities from countries other than Canada. That has had some influence, although it has not been the greatest influence in the matter over there.

When the gentleman who was in charge of that set-up in Britain at the end of the war and for some time after the war was superannuated no successor was appointed. He retired not so many months ago and no one has been appointed to replace him. There is provision in the estimates of the Department of Agriculture for the appointment of a head of that organization, some of which is still there. I think that organization did good work and I think it could still do good work.

But my intention at the moment is simply to draw attention to the fact that there have been delegations sent before to obtain trade, sometimes led by the minister of trade and commerce, sometimes led by others. But it has been a function which has been carried out before, and the hon. member for Victoria-Carleton referred in his remarks to the mission that went to South America. I would say that some good can come out of these missions, but I think those that were sent before were largely sent for the purpose of selling Canadian products. As was intimated a few moments ago by the hon. member for Macleod should be the case, I believe they were sent for the purpose of selling Canadian products, we always believing that it was necessary not only to buy products from other countries but to sell products to them.

I wanted to bring these two matters to the attention of the house, first, the fact that we have had conferences with the Americans before and, second, that we did have these delegations go out to sell our products before and with considerable success. I also wanted to call attention to two or three statements made by the minister yesterday. The first is to be found on page 1968 of *Hansard* towards the bottom of the page and is in these words:

Encouraging progress has thus been made toward two of the objectives of the present administration, the reduction of our large deficit on merchandise trade and the expansion of the share of our imports coming from the United Kingdom. We shall continue to pursue both these aims vigorously in the future.

In the next paragraph he goes on to state:

I do not think any government in Canada's history has done so much in such a short time to implement its trade policies. Within a few days of assuming office the Prime Minister went to London—