

must be disturbing to business men and labour, besides being embarrassing to the Acting Prime Minister. In Ottawa it is freely stated that the cabinet committee formed for the express purpose of trade development or reconstruction on a peace basis has not made progress. Now, taken by surprise, trade commissions are being hurried to London and other commercial centres but it must be disturbing to Canadian industries and business men generally that so much valuable time has been lost. As Dr. Cutten of Acadia College so well stated recently: 'In time of war prepare for peace.' It has been known that peace was coming: only its time and terms were at all uncertain."

In concluding his statement Mr. McCurdy said: "While willing to serve in any capacity assigned me, I have come to the conclusion that I can in the circumstances better serve in a private capacity, and from the point of view of a citizen and a business man it will be my duty to urge the Government to greater activity and courage in all things."

As Mr. McCurdy states, a commission was appointed to accompany Sir Robert Borden to Europe, in order to try to obtain orders from abroad, and, it was clear after the first of September that the Allies were soon to force peace upon the enemy. Mr. McCurdy claims that there was procrastination, and that we were surprised by peace.

I admit that the Borden Government of 1916 did think of doing something towards preparing for peace, and sent an important delegation to France, with Mr. F. W. Woods, of Toronto, as chairman. That mission had undoubtedly done good work. It had been received in France with open arms by chambers of commerce and by the authorities in every town and city which it visited. The mission returned and made a report. What did the Government do upon the reception of that report? I am informed that no action was taken up to the time Sir Robert Borden and Mr. Lloyd Harris's Commission left for France. Nothing was done to take advantage of the relations which had been created by the trade mission to France, and we find that nothing has been forthcoming from France to this day. What is the situation to-day? We are informed that after the first of March next, by the action of the Imperial Government, Great Britain will refuse to accept manufactured goods from abroad, even from the dominions themselves, except under a special license, and it is stated that we cannot hope for any advantage in the British market under these conditions. Now, should we not hope to participate in the reconstruction of the devastated portions of France? It was officially stated by one who is familiar with conditions, that it was expected that 100,000 men working to rebuild the destroyed portions of France, would have to work for over twenty years to do so;

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and yet we are now informed by Mr. Lloyd Harris himself that he has been to Paris lately, and that the French Government told him that the French people intended to retain their orders for themselves and that France would do its own rehabilitation, and Mr. Lloyd Harris has returned to London very much discouraged.

As I said, the mission which went to Paris in 1916, presided over by Mr. Woods of Toronto, was splendidly received. I have under my hand a book written by one of the strong men of France, Senator Herriot, who has been one of her ministers during the war, and who is the mayor of Lyons. He speaks highly of the Canadian mission which he met in France. He speaks of Mr. Woods as a clear-headed business man, and refers to the necessity of increasing our commercial relations after the war. Senator Herriot also speaks of a colleague of ours, the honourable gentleman from Montarville (Hon. Mr. Beaubien), saying that his eloquence is equal to that of their best national orators.

Two things could have been done to forward the interests of Canada in France. That Commission suggested that a railway train containing an exhibit of Canadian products should be sent about on the railways of France from town to town, and that in return we should give reciprocity to French goods on our railways. This idea secured the enthusiastic co-operation of the French Government, of the railways, of the chambers of commerce; and the honourable gentleman to whom I have referred obtained a resolution of this Chamber;—and to this date nothing has been done by the Government. Perhaps the leader of the Government can explain why, when the French Government showed its ardent desire to exhibit our goods throughout the length and breadth of France, such an opportunity has not been taken advantage of.

There is another matter which he will have to explain. In 1916 the Canadian Government sent to France a delegation composed of selected men. That delegation reached the heart of France, judging from the reports which I have read in the French press; it created relations which were invaluable and yet it did not occur to any one to add to the Lloyd Harris Commission two or three representatives of that delegation of 1916 to come in contact with the men with whom they had already had correspondence, and who had received them so cordially. Mr. Lloyd Harris has gone to Paris, he has interviewed the French Government, and he has got the answer