

*Supply—Trade and Commerce*

A year or so later there developed another question of a similar nature which we were concerned about and which the Americans were concerned about. We were shipping great quantities of oats into the United States; we were shipping them into Chicago, and at that time the state of Illinois and the other corn states around about had enormous surpluses of corn for livestock feeding. Then senators from those states rose in their places in their house and criticized the importation of these large quantities of oats right into the midst of an area where they had such great quantities of corn. Well, the discussions reached considerable heights of criticism, and then it was suggested to the Americans that it might be well for us to sit down and discuss such questions before they got to the floor either of the Senate of the United States or to the floor of this house here, and that we should understand one another's position prior to that.

The result was, as is known, that we did have two of those conferences before this government came into office, one in Washington and one in Ottawa. The same members of the government of the United States took part in those discussions, not the same individuals but those occupying the same positions, and the same departments were represented here.

We had two of those conferences, I think two years apart, before the present government came into office. The discussions which took place with regard to oats brought out the fact that after all there was need for feed oats in the eastern part of the United States, in the state of Maine and in other states in that section of the country where the production of corn was not in competition with oats at all, and where there would be no difficulty. Out of that kind of discussion we arrived at the idea that it would be a good thing to have such discussions periodically in order to settle some of the questions outstanding or to give full information to one another with regard to some of the discussions which might take place.

Well, I remember one of the criticisms made of that kind of meeting by the now Prime Minister when he was sitting on this side of the house. He said that we left Ottawa in silence, we sat in silence in Washington, and we returned to Ottawa in silence. Well, I only wish to suggest that in regard to a matter of that kind and taking into consideration some of the reports that came out about the last discussion, our purposes would have been just as well served if that discussion had been in silence, too.

The purpose of a meeting of this kind is not to have a lot of publicity all over the

[Mr. Gardiner.]

country as to what happens or what might happen. The purpose is to exchange information in a meeting which is usually held behind closed doors.

I think at the previous meeting we had there was a time toward the end when it was more or less thrown open and reports were given to the press. But the discussions themselves, at a meeting of that kind, are of necessity carried on behind closed doors and the results will be better if they are.

Therefore I do not take exactly the same attitude toward some of the discussions which have taken place recently as some others who may never have taken part in them. I do think we should fully understand what that kind of meeting was intended to be for when it was first set up and govern ourselves accordingly, in order to keep the records as straight as we possibly can as between this country and the country with which we have the greatest amount of trade.

At one o'clock the committee took recess.

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**AFTER RECESS**

The committee resumed at 2.30 p.m.

**Mr. Gardiner:** Mr. Chairman, when the committee adjourned for lunch I had just opened a discussion of some ideas which I wish to present in connection with the estimates of trade and commerce. I suggested at that time that we in western Canada had reasons for being somewhat pleased with the fact that we have a minister of trade and commerce from the prairies. I had also referred to the fact that there had been Canadian missions to Washington and Washington missions to Ottawa for some four years prior to the coming into power of the present government and that during that period there had been two of these missions.

I did wish to say a word or two with regard to the other matter of the mission to Britain and to say what I would judge the minister already understands, that this is not the first occasion upon which missions of a similar nature have gone to Britain. I hesitate to say this because of some remarks made during other debates by one or two of the younger members of the house who seem to have some objection to going back 20, 30, or some other number of years in order to obtain illustrations as to what could happen in connection with similar missions now or anything else similar that happens at the present time. However, since I am the only member left in the house who was in the government when we came into power 22 years ago I think I should mention that we