

the British Government with regard to that. If my hon. friend were acquainted with those terms, I am sure he would regard them as expressing, as forcibly as it would be appropriate to do, the views of the people of Canada and of the Government of Canada in regard to this matter. I would be very much surprised to learn that any department of the British Government—

Mr. MACDONALD: I did not say "any department."

Sir ROBERT BORDEN: —or any person authorized to speak for any department, or any person speaking with any authority had said that no order for supplies could be given to Canada unless they could be furnished cheaper here than in any other country, because I have the assurance of the British Government and of the permanent officials of the great purchasing departments that, other things being equal, they would in every case give a preference to the productions of this country, and would in the first instance, look to the resources of this country. When I went over the matter with the Contracts Department of the War Office last summer, I asked to be furnished with a comparative statement and it was furnished to me. After my return from Great Britain, I made that statement public. I think it dated from the commencement of the war up to the beginning of July or to the end of July last—I am not quite sure which. That statement was accompanied by an explanation in every case why the order went elsewhere than to Canada, and I would be very glad, indeed, to show it to my hon. friend or to any other hon. gentleman opposite who might care to look at it. The results which were set forth in that statement were more favourable than I had anticipated from the rumours as to orders which had been placed in the United States. Of course, hon. gentlemen will remember that, particularly in the first four or five months of the war, there was hurry and confusion, and the most extreme haste to obtain certain supplies which were vitally and absolutely necessary. Hon. members must also bear in mind that at the commencement of the war the industrial resources of Canada were not as well understood in the United Kingdom as they afterwards were. Notwithstanding the haste, the urgency, the necessity that supplies should be procured with the utmost possible expedition, and in very large quantities, I was informed by the

[Sir Robert Borden.]

director of contracts, in this statement to which I have alluded, that up to the beginning or the end of July last—I am not sure which—the orders placed in the United States ran up to £101,000,000, and the orders placed in Canada ran up to £48,000,000. One would have imagined, from the reports in the press, that the discrepancy would be infinitely greater than that. I was distinctly informed by various members of the British Government, to whose attention I brought this matter, and by the permanent officials of every department, that Canada would receive the preference in respect of orders for supplies necessary for the war. Further than that, I was assured that, in so far as they had any influence with any of the Allied Governments—and I think they have some influence—they would endeavour to procure for the producers of Canada all orders that could be supplied at reasonable terms, with expedition, and of a good quality. I have no reason to believe that the assurance given to me at that time has been since departed from. If there is any ground for believing that the promise then definitely made to me is not being carried out I would greatly appreciate the advantage of having the information as to the specific instance afforded to me in order that I might bring it, as I would feel it my duty immediately to bring it, to the attention of the British Government, and particularly to the attention of the department concerned.

From my experience in London I know that Sir George Perley is in the most intimate and close touch with the purchasing departments and the permanent officials of those departments. He goes to see them daily in connection with some matter or other of this kind, and he did so while I was there. I should be glad, indeed, if any additional organization were necessary, to have it provided. But I might say this in connection with the whole subject, that the Canadian Manufacturers' Association have had their attention directed by the Government to the importance of making some effort in this regard themselves. It is not too much to say that during the early weeks or months of the war the manufacturers of the United States were, perhaps, a little more alive to the situation than were the manufacturers of Canada. When the war broke out the American manufacturers immediately sent across the Atlantic the best men they could secure for the purpose of soliciting orders