

this time? Should you not get people together, and should you not have them thinking, making plans, mobilizing for the work of the future? Now, I looked upon that in a somewhat different light from some other people. My view was that there was a time at which such an attempt would have been premature. But things have developed by the very force of necessity. The work of Canada had first to be devoted to the furnishing of munitions and war supplies. That took all the energy, and, for the time being, all the thought, all the enterprise, and all the capital, that could be got. The demand was less in normal lines, and consequently less enterprise could successfully be devoted to ordinary production. The time has now pretty well arrived when we can see far enough through the mists to enable us to make up our minds fairly well as to what future conditions will be, and hope has so far come into the dominant position as to lead us to think that we are getting somewhere near the end of this war. So I believe that now, outside of all these aids and all this work which we have been carrying on, outside of what the manufacturers' associations have been doing, outside of what boards of trade have been doing, and what individual business men in this country have been doing, the time has come when we ought to sit down together in council, and when the business men of this country ought to exchange ideas, formulate plans, and take measures to mobilize and systematize the industry, the business capital, and the business enterprise, which are to attack the problems of the future. So what I propose to do is this, within a reasonable time to call together a convention of the business men of Canada, from the Pacific to the Atlantic—men in every kind of business, the captains of industry, the experts in industry, the scientific men in industry, the engineering men in industry, the transport men, the banking and financial men representatives of all kinds of enterprises and industries; to have them sit down together in conference here in the city of Ottawa for three or four days in a heart-to-heart talk about these matters, and to come not unprepared to give definite views with reference to different phases of the great industrial and economic questions which are looming up before us, and which must be solved by us. At that convention I propose to have the report of this commission of which I spoke a while ago; and I propose to have here also the permanent Canadian trade commission-

ers in other countries, who are gathering information for this very purpose, and who will be on hand to give that information to the people who are assembled.

That, in brief, outlines a line of action which, I think, may well be undertaken, and which my department is undertaking. For all of that I must ask this House for money. For all of that it is requisite that we shall have added ability. But added ability and money for purposes of that kind constitute a demand with which no reasonable man in this country will find fault. There is nothing outside of the problem of its defence, with which it is more necessary that this country should busy itself than the problem of production and distribution of products. That is the problem of trade and commerce, which must be founded on production, with which it is twin sister, and most intimately connected. I have been taunted sometimes with being too economical in my department. I believe in economy; I hate extravagance.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Hear, hear.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: I hate the idea of taking money from the people's pockets, putting it into the people's treasury, and then spending it for that which is nought and worse than nought.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Hear, hear.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: But I do believe that there is nothing which this House or this country, if reasonably asked, would deny to the departments and to the ministers who wish to engage in the kind of work where money goes to its proper objective, and is actually needed.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Hear, hear.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: And where that proper objective is likely to result in benefit to the public interests.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Hear, hear.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: How my hon. friend rolls his sturdy form in front of me as I make that declaration, as if to say: "That is hard for you chaps on that side of the House." How was it for my hon. friend? The tu quoque argument is not worth a snap of your finger; but large men like my hon. friend from St. John (Mr. Pugsley) sometimes use it and sometimes laugh it, and sometimes give it representation as my hon. friend has just done, as much as to say: "We on this side have never let money go aside the proper objective."