

H. S. CONGDON

REAL ESTATE, INSURANCE, ETC.

DARTMOUTH, N. S., CANADA

March 3rd, 1924.

Sir Arthur Currie,
Montreal, Que.,

Dear Sir:-

I note you say that there is no real national policy. It is quite true. It is also true there is need for a real live policy. I am not providing one, but think there is one plank that should be adopted. That is, that Canadian trade should be done through Canadian ports.

When the Confederation was entered this province was promised that the trans-Atlantic trade of Canada should be done through the Maritime ports of Canada. There is a little book written by a member of the Conference named Phelan, from Prince Edward Island. He gives the speeches made at all the various banquets by the delegates. You may not be aware that there were no minutes kept of the proceedings. The practice was the same as the meetings of the cabinets of all British countries. The statements made, at the time the Conference was sitting, were made at the banquets. They were the conclusions arrived at and must be taken as official. Another book, more easily obtainable ~~was~~ is a book published by Colonel J.H. Gray, another delegate from New Brunswick. This was published a few years later, and is much fuller. It contains about all the first book gives and more. In these you will find that the statement I have made is borne out by the facts therein contained. The reasons are given in full. They are very convincing.

Effect was never given to the bargain then made, and the bargain would never have been struck if that particular clause had not been agreed to. The result is that these provinces have been stranded, because of this betrayal of our interests. The Fathers believed this was necessary to the building up of a sound position. It was not only necessary for us but for all Canada. That, I think, as true today as it was in 1864, the date when the agreement was made. If that had been done at the time there is no doubt that today the Maritimes would be prosperous. They are not prospering ~~as~~ to the same degree as the rest of Canada. There is much unrest here now which threatens to increase as time passes.

against
When the agreement was made there was a feeling in Ontario that to balance the expenditure in building the Intercolonial railway none of the money would be expended in Ontario, and that as a consequence there was a possibility that opponents to the union might use this as an argument, the union. Hence a promise was given that money would be voted by the new union to extend the canal system, then in its infancy. The extensions have been made. But the Maritimes have never got the promised trade. That seems to us to be utterly unfair.

We believe it is to the interests of Canada today that all the trade of Canada should be done through our own ports. At present we are dependent, almost entirely on the United States ports for our export trade and most of the imports come through the same ports. Population follows the trade. Millions of tons of Canadian goods pass through the ports of the U.S. and the business we should have goes to enrich our neighbours.