

Q. And the result was Mr. Scott—

A. —did not send the telegram.

Q. And we are still without that information?

A. As far as I am aware.

Q. Although you knew we were waiting for it, you did not tell the minister we were expecting you to get it?

A. No, I did not tell the minister because it was a matter I was going to attend to myself, not a matter that I was getting his authority for, as if I had the paper I would have produced the information. You did not, as I understand it, ask me to send a cable myself.

Q. No, I asked you to get that information any way you could?

A. I was going to get it from the files of the department.

Q. Have you looked at the papers in the committee room to see if the information was there?

A. No, I did not. I understood I could not get access to the papers while they were in the custody of the other committee.

Q. Having regard to the fact that this committee wanted that information, and evidently the other committee wanted the information, do you not think that the course taken to give us that information, the course taken is a good way of not doing it?

A. No, that was not my intention, which was to do it as soon as I could do so by getting the papers.

Q. Knowing that we were going to meet here to-day?

A. At that time I did not know, this meeting was not called then, and I thought it was not going to be held until next Wednesday. I was going to send my secretary over to see if he could get the files. I got notice yesterday afternoon for this meeting, but it was too late then to send him.

Q. Would not the sending of that cable have assisted you?

A. I did not understand it that way. That was from another committee, and I did not think—

Q. That was the same information?

A. The same information.

Q. Do you think you are really trying to get information for the committee?

A. I was trying to get the information that I understood the committee was asking me for.

Q. The information was precisely the same?

A. I do not know that it was.

Q. Putting the two things together, do you honestly think you were trying to get any information for us?

A. I would have got the information, certainly, if I had the file, exactly the information that you asked me for, if it was on the file.

Q. Had one of your subordinates acted in that way would you have considered he was carrying out your wishes?

A. I would have thought that was a reasonable action for him to take.

Q. No wonder there is delay in getting information from the departments if this is the way of doing business. You said you would try and find any information about this contract?

A. That is what I understood you wanted.

Q. You were under the impression that the negotiations began with Lord Strathcona?

A. That is my impression.

Q. I find on October 20, 1899, a proposition from this Trans-Atlantic Trading Company, of October 20, 1899, No. 285, file 2614 C. That begins this way, it is addressed by the Trading Company to Mr. Preston: