



# The CANADIAN COURIER

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## A GREAT NATIONAL APPEAL

HON. SIR GEORGE FOSTER has issued a call to action. The full text of this economic call to arms appears in last week's issue of the Weekly Bulletin, issued every Monday by the Department of Trade and Commerce. It is signed—George E. Foster, Minister of Trade and Commerce. It could not be more impressive and rousing to a nation by reason of its contents had it been signed by such a name as David Lloyd George. The call to action is a real inspirational call from a man of big, patriotic and unifying brain to men of both parties, of all nationalities, creeds, or economic pursuits whatever in a new country, to engage in a line of national action. The call is to consider now and afterwards reconsider, to begin to organize now and in the fall of 1916 to organize completely, a movement which will mean as much for the reconstruction era after the declaration of peace as

### A CALL TO ACTION By SIR GEORGE FOSTER



the organization of our army has done for the prosecution of the war.

With the inspiring message of this call to arms for the sake of the reconstructive labours of peace, the Canadian Courier is in thorough sympathy. We believe that no call has ever been issued by any department of Government, outside the office of the Premier, equal to this as an incentive to national united action for the sake of the Canada that is to be and to grow after the war. We believe that no Minister in any Cabinet in Canada is better entitled by reason of brain-power, nationalizing sense and national machinery under his control to expect united results from such an appeal. Therefore, we reprint the main part of the message just as Sir George Foster gave it, with the expectation that in so doing we are helping thousands of Canadians to aid him.

FOR nearly two years a colossal and far-reaching war has convulsed the activities and disturbed the avocations of the world, has destroyed an incalculable amount of accumulated wealth, killed and disabled millions of the world's best workers, abstracted millions more from beneficent productive work to provide munitions for the destruction of life and property and involved the warring nations in expenditures and debts which pass the powers of man to comprehend, the burden of which must remain for long years to cripple and restrict the progress of mankind.

Though no one can foresee the end of this war, yet the end must be drawing appreciably nearer and peace must eventually come. Until that time comes production will be largely abnormal and every possible energy must be directed to the great purpose of preparing soldiers, providing munitions of war and supplies for its maintenance. The normal work of industry and productive power must for the time give precedence to war work.

But the date draws continually nearer when this abnormal activity will cease, and the world, and Canada along with it, move back towards normal. This transition period will, I believe, prove more grave and critical than that which marked the plunge from peace to war in 1914.

In the belligerent world fully 20,000,000 adult men will lay down arms and flood back into the fields and factories, the cities, towns and country-sides, whilst millions more will lay down the tools now being used in making war munitions, and take up again the tools of peaceful pursuits, and still other millions, now engaged in the vast subsidiary services of the war, will be thrown out of employment and have to look for work in other lines.

Therefore it becomes necessary for business men and men of knowledge and experience to begin an earnest study of the situation that must soon be faced.

As one means to this end the Department of Trade and Commerce has thought it wise to convene in the coming autumn a convention of the business men of Canada to advise together out of their practical and varied experience and knowledge as to the best means of meeting the coming situation and of mobilizing the business forces of Canada so as to employ our labour, increase our production and enlarge our markets along peace lines.

Before such a convention meets it is necessary that much spade work be done, much study and thought bestowed, and much consultation and interchange of views be had in each great branch of production and distribution.

In no other way can such a gathering be rescued from becoming a mere theatre for declamation and debate, and turned into a useful and effective means to the great end desired. Therefore I am venturing to solicit most earnestly the help and co-operation of Boards of Trade, the Manufacturers' Association, the great transport corporations, the bodies of scientific and industrial research, the engineering associations, the labour bodies, the mining, fishing, lumbering and agricultural interests, the banking institutions and generally of all men of knowledge and experience.

If these will begin at once to examine, to think, to discuss and to confer with one another in their respective fields of work and activity, they will be better prepared to answer certain fundamental questions which must be asked and answered before our productive and distributive capabilities become properly mobilized and energized for the great work that lies before us.

In the two years of war activity our iron and steel manufacturers, for instance, have set aside much of their machinery used in peace times, and installed in its place machinery adapted to war purposes—have organized and co-operated and systematized for war work and in doing so have learned valuable lessons

business, for himself—put back the old peace machinery or adapt the new war machinery to peace production and betake himself to the old peace methods of hunting up business, but then, let it be remembered, in an atmosphere hot with the keenest competition. Are we thinking out now what we will do then, and how we will do it?

The object of this appeal is to challenge attention, to evoke thought and devise means to bring about industrial and commercial preparedness.

The question which it seems to me each should face is this: "What will be the situation as regards our industry in Canada when the war ends and how can we best meet it?"

Will our steel industry, our textile industry, and all our great industries, our transport corporations, our banking people, our agricultural and lumber and fishing and mining interests, our engineering, chemical and scientific research associations—in a word, all our lines of production, natural and industrial, our labour associations and our great educational institutions take up and canvass and work out their ideas along the line of this question?

And to do this effectively, will each one of these interests in this time of great national need, take the trouble to get together a select number of their best and brightest representatives, who will make it their business to conduct a thorough examination and be ready to counsel and advise their Canadian co-workers?

And then, will they be prepared after such examination and thought to meet in the proposed convention, ripe in well-based conclusions, fertile in well considered plans, and ready for co-operation each with every other in one united, intelligent systematized national effort to increase production and capture our share of home and foreign markets?

If, for the next two or three months, spade work like this were carried on, the succeeding convention should be made an epoch in the economic and industrial development of Canada.

This is the nation's own work, a reconstructive work, greater even than the work of war. Shall we take it up in dead earnest and prove ourselves equal to the task?

GEORGE E. FOSTER,  
Minister of Trade and Commerce.

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NO doubt Canadians will come to the line chalked out by Sir George Foster in this inspiring call. There is to be no waste of energy, no sparring for time or jockeying for place, but straight businesslike grappling with a very practical and pertinent problem. It will be of no consequence how many or how few knights assemble in that convention next fall. The test of any man's fitness to be a delegate to that convention will be his measure as a man of experience, a patriot and a shirt-sleeves worker.