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The War Trade Board

Why it was Organized—Who it is Composed of—What it Does
BY THE GUIDE OTTAWA CORRESPONDENT

Q.—What is the Canadian War Trade Board? When, and by whom, was it appointed? What are the duties and powers of the Board? Who are the members of the War Trade Board, and what are their salaries? What positions did they occupy before they were appointed? What permanent organization has the board, and what is the cost of maintaining it? What has the War Trade Board accomplished since it was appointed?

A.—The Canadian War Trade Board is an organization of business men and one representative of labor called into existence with the idea of more effective organization for the purpose of the war, and to establish better and more effective measures for maintenance of essential industries for that purpose.

The Board was appointed in October last by the Dominion government, after much consideration had been given by the government to the question of the necessity of better business organization and the conservation of Canada's resources in raw materials, manufactured and partially-manufactured products.

Duties and Powers

The duties and powers of the War Trade Board as defined by the order-in-council creating it are as follows:—

1.—To have direction of licenses for export and to make recommendations with regard thereto.

2.—To have direction of licenses for import and of applications to the proper authorities of exporting countries for permit to export to Canada and to make recommendations with regard thereto.

3.—To undertake and carry out such supervision as may be necessary of all industrial and commercial enterprises and by co-operation with producers to prevent waste of labor, of raw materials and of products.

4.—To make recommendations for the maintenance of the more essential industries as distinguished from those of a less essential character.

5.—To investigate and keep stock of the country's stock of raw materials, partially finished products and finished products, and when necessary to direct their distribution so as to obtain the best results in the national interest.

6.—To consider and recommend methods of curtailing or prohibiting the use of fuel or electrical energy in the less essential industries.

7.—To direct priority in the distribution of fuel, electrical energy, raw materials and partially finished products.

8.—To investigate generally conditions of trade, industry and production (except food production), and to make recommendations with regard thereto.

9.—To work in co-operation with the Canadian War Mission at Washington, and through that mission or otherwise to co-operate with the War Trade Board of the United States or other bodies constituted for the like purpose with

a view to securing the most effective unity of action by the two countries for war purposes.

The Board was instructed to co-operate with the various departments of the government in any matters requiring common or united action, and all departments were authorized to assist and co-operate with the board and its officers.

Composition of the Board

The members of the War Trade Board are a number of prominent business men of Eastern Canada, who, under the guidance of Sir Geo. Foster, minister of trade and commerce, give a considerable portion of their time to the duties outlined in the above order-in-council. The members of the board, who serve without remuneration, are: Frank P. Jones, of the Canada Cement Company, Montreal; John W. McConnell, of Montreal, a prominent financial man; James H. Gundy, a Toronto broker; Charles B. McNaught, a leading business man of Toronto; and John Gibbons, of Toronto, who represents organized labor on the board; C. A. McGrath, Dominion Fuel Controller; and Hon. H. Laporte, chairman of the War Purchasing Committee, are members of the board ex-officio.

The board has an organization at the capital consisting of a considerable clerical staff and a number of officials loaned from government departments, more particularly the departments of trade and commerce and customs. No statement has as yet been made public as to the cost of operation, but the money expended comes from the general war appropriation of five hundred million dollars, voted last session.

What the Board Has Accomplished

The chief thing accomplished by the Canadian War Trade Board, has been the control and restriction of imports and exports by means of license. In other words the importation and export of goods has been reduced by making it necessary for those responsible for international movements in a long list of products and articles, to secure licenses from the board. The effect has been more particularly to materially reduce the volume of importations and to improve exchange conditions as between Canada and the United States. There has been considerable reticence as to the operations of the board up to the present time along other lines. Apparently, it has not been deemed advisable to have too much publicity in connection with the work of the board. While it is regarded as doubtful that the board has been able to accomplish as much as was thought possible when it was appointed, it is claimed that much has been accomplished to conserve the industrial resources of the country and to secure unity of action by Canada and the United States in war effort.



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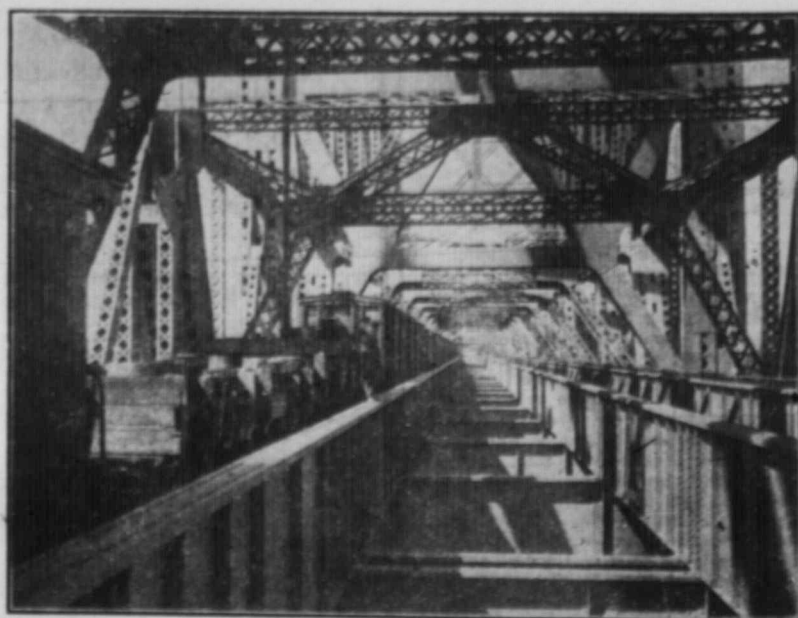
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