

sponds in its functions very largely with the War Trade Board which has been established in the United States. It is under the chairmanship of Sir George Foster and Mr. F. P. Jones is vice-chairman. It is to see that materials are not wasted in non-essential industries and to make recommendations with regard to the regulation of imports or exports. It is to see, in co-operation with the War Trade Board of the United States that the resources of the two countries which should be used for essential war purposes shall be so used and not devoted to less important purposes. It has other important powers and duties which are set forth in the Order in Council. The gentlemen who compose it are men of great ability and experience; they are devoting their full time and energy without remuneration to the work, and I am confident that they will render excellent service to the country.

In addition, we have given our attention to abolishing patronage absolutely in respect of all purchases. Hon. gentlemen who were members of this House in the last Parliament will recollect that in the spring of 1915 the War Purchasing Commission was established for the purpose of controlling the purchase of all articles required by the Government for the purposes of war. It has done good work and given excellent service; the gentlemen who compose it have given their services freely and voluntarily as a patriotic duty. We have passed an Order in Council that not only war purchases but purchases of all articles, commodities or materials required by the Government shall be made through the War Purchasing Commission and by tender and contract.

**Sir WILFRID LAURIER:** Who are the members of the commission?

**Sir ROBERT BORDEN:** Hon. H. Laporte, of Montreal, chairman; Mr. Gault, of Winnipeg, and Mr. Gundy, of Toronto. On the retirement of Sir Edward Kemp from the board when he went overseas, Mr. Laporte was appointed chairman, and Mr. Gundy became the third member of the board.

We have had under our consideration necessary relief in connection with the appalling disaster at Halifax. I shall speak more fully as to this at a later date. A commission was appointed of three very capable men, Mr. T. S. Rogers, Judge Wallace and Mr. Fowke, who are devoting their whole time to the work. Recently they made a report, which has been laid on the table of the House, and later in the session, the Government will have certain proposals to present with respect to relief. The princi-

[Sir Robert Borden.]

ple which has been adopted is to make restitution to small householders whose claims are not more than \$5,000, and in respect of claims above \$5,000 to proceed upon the principle of just and reasonable relief, not upon the principle of restitution.

The Minister of Railways and Canals has had under very serious consideration the provision of rolling stock and equipment for railways. We are confronted with the immediate acquisition of some ten thousand miles of railway, which will bring the total state railway mileage of this country up to about fifteen thousand. It is useless for us to have that railway unless it is properly equipped. The great crops that we hope for during the present year and next year, which are so essential for war purposes, must be transported—and, more than that, expeditiously. Full details of what we propose will be given at a later date.

I should also mention that the Soldier Settlement Board has been established under the Act passed last session. The Minister of the Interior is devoting a large part of his time to the administration of the Act. The members of the board are, I believe, presently proceeding to the western provinces in order that they may have under their immediate supervision the arrangements by which soldiers can be placed on the land during the present year.

Negotiations have been entered into with the United States in regard to certain matters of difference respecting the fisheries. It is too late for me to speak of this as I intended to do. The Order in Council embodying the results have been placed on the table of the House. I believe that the results are in the interests of both countries, especially as they assist in the production of a greater quantity of food than would otherwise be possible.

With respect to fuel control, we have had very important and difficult questions to deal with, and we found it necessary in this country to place ourselves upon an equality of inconvenience with the United States of America in respect to certain restrictions. I do not think the Canadian people complained of that. As a matter of fact, they would have no reasons to complain of it. In so far as the provision of fuel is concerned, the United States Government treated Canada precisely in the same way as it treated all the States of the Union, and we should have the most grateful appreciation of the attitude of the United States in that regard. So when, in the judgment of the Government of the United States, it became necessary