

C o p y

B e r n e ,

July 9. 1918.

Reference

6349

Monsieur le Président,

With reference to my note of to-day's date, I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the attention of His Majesty's Government has been drawn during the present struggle to the extent to which their present enemies have made use of foreign organisations for the purpose of pushing their trade. These organisations claim the benefits of foreign nationality while retaining all the elements of enemy control.

To minimise the risk of misunderstandings with foreign Powers with whom they have commercial Treaties, His Majesty's Government think it well to explain that in their view commercial treaties are intended to benefit the trade of the two countries which are parties to the treaty, and must be presumed to have been drafted upon the footing that the interests to be protected were bona fide national interests of the party concerned, and not foreign interests.

His Britannic Majesty's Government feel bound to take precautions lest, during the period immediately succeeding the war the provisions of the commercial treaty of 1855 between Great Britain and Switzerland should be used indirectly for the purpose of securing the commercial advantage of their present enemies.

The war has put an end to the commercial treaties between Great Britain and the enemy Powers and when the time comes for considering their renewal the need for facilitating the commercial recovery both of Great Britain and her Allies may prevent His Majesty's Government from agreeing to accord to the enemy Power, at any rate during the period of reconstruction, the benefit of any most-favoured-nation clause.

Son Excellence,

Monsieur F. Calonder,

etc. etc. etc.



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In the same way they feel bound to declare that they cannot regard the provisions of the treaty with Switzerland of 1855 as enuring to the benefit of any persons who are or have been since the outbreak of hostilities subjects or citizens of the countries with which Great Britain is now at war, or of any undertakings, companies or ships owned or controlled by such persons, nor can they regard as Swiss exports or imports goods originating in or destined for such enemy countries.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the assurance of my highest consideration.

signed: Horace Rumbold.