Chief Secretary:

In reference to Mr Lloyd George's letter of the 2nd inst I have to forward herewith a copy of a letter which I sent to the Food Controller on .

The following are additional points for consideration in the matter:

1. - There is the danger of the supply of potatoes in Ireland completely running out before the new crop is in, in which connexion it must be remembered that in parts of Ireland the potato is still the staple food the people.

2. - A considerably increased quantity of potatoes for use as seed are, of course, required in Ireland this year in connexion with the scheme for increased tillage. Last year it was estimated that 390,000 tons of potatoes were used for seed purposes, and this year it is considered that the quantity required will approximate 500,000 tons. Any stoppage in the Irish seed supply can only mean a stoppage in the new tillage scheme.

3. - If the Prime Minister desires that the Department should raise the embargo for, say, 50,000 tons to be sent to Scotland, I suggest that the potatoes should be consigned to the Scottish Board of Agriculture, and not direct to traders. I am quite aware that the Ulster exporters and the Scotch and English merchants are strongly in favour of raising
raising the embargo and nothing is more certain than that the interests of both these classes lie in the direction of not leaving a potato in Ireland. I consider disaster ultimately lies in the way.

4. - I am not aware that any arrangement was ever agreed to by Department as to ensuring any export to Great Britain. Mr Campbell informed me that at some meeting with the Food Controller Mr Prothero spoke of obtaining 300,000 tons of potatoes from Ireland for use as seed. Mr Campbell at once dissented, saying that this was impossible, that such a supply was not available but that, later on, the Department would see if anything could be done. I heard nothing further about that suggestion since. In my judgment, looking at all the facts, I do not believe the embargo can be raised without very grave risks.

(Sgd.) T.W. Russell

Vice President