

CHALLENGED BORDEN TO SHOW THAT EMERGENCY EXISTS

(Continued from page three)

idly by and see Great Britain smashed? By no means. I think my hon. friends are not doing themselves justice in discussing this question entirely from the German standpoint. I know not what Russia would do, but it is generally understood that Russia is in combination with France and Britain to-day, and we know that there is also an alliance between Great Britain and Japan. If, for any reason, this alliance should be broken, does any hon. gentleman say we should assume that splendid isolation which was discussed in this Parliament many years ago, and be in a position to defend ourselves against every combination?

Again referring to the tables submitted by the hon. member for Sunbury and Queens, I wish to refer to the condition of affairs which, it is supposed, will exist in Europe in 1915. Taking into consideration the dreadnoughts of the six great fighting nations, what do we find? Britain will have thirty-six dreadnoughts, France ten, and Russia four—a total of fifty. On the other hand Germany will have twenty-three, Austria four, and Italy six, a total of thirty-three. These figures do not take into consideration torpedo boats, destroyers, protected cruisers, second-class cruisers, and other component parts of the great flotilla of vessels going to make up a navy?

Hon. gentlemen talk glibly about what the personnel of the German navy will be in 1920; but 1920 is a long way off, and many things may happen before that time. I wish to talk about conditions as they are to-day. According to these tables, there are 134,000 officers and men in the British navy, and the Germans have only 60,805, and even if the latter country proceeds with its present programme up to 1920, eight years hence, and even if Britain stands stock still during that period, Germany will have only 102,000 men as compared with our 134,000. In the face of such a condition of affairs as this, who can say there is an emergency or that it is necessary that we should give \$35,000,000 to Britain when it is required?

I have a lot of data before me, but I will not weary the House by putting them on Hansard, although I could go on almost indefinitely piling up evidence against the statement that a condition of emergency exists in England to-day, and that we should enter into this unreasonable, and I think, almost unconstitutional expense of \$35,000,000 of our money.

I am sorry that the right hon. Prime Minister is not in his place, as I wish to ask him some questions; but I trust that one of the ministers present will bring them to his attention. I have tried to place before the House all the evidence we have in favour of the existence of an emergent condition of affairs, and as against that I have read some facts that have come to light tending to show that no such condition exists. My right hon. friend intimates in his speech, and the hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) stated that in their conversations with the British Admiralty they had obtained some secret information—something of a terrible nature, something which showed the Empire to be almost on the verge of collapse, something which makes it necessary to take immediate steps materially to increase the naval defences of the Empire. I hope the Minister of Finance will do the honour of asking his leader to state to the House whether anything new has come to light, whether he has any information in addition to what he gave us, whether he knows anything about the alleged agreement between Germany and England, which provides that the ratio shall be as sixteen to ten. If he cannot do that will he not give the information to the right hon. leader of the Opposition, who is a privy councillor, a gentleman in whom he must have confidence, a gentleman who is sworn to regard as secret any information that comes to him in that way, in order that we will be able to take from him—not the facts, he could not disclose them, but his conclusions as to whether the facts as narrated do create an emergent condition of affairs. After exhausting every particle of information we have on the question to-day there is no man who can logically reason this matter out and ask any jury to come to the conclusion that there is any reason for this preposterous legislation.

Coming as I do from the Maritime provinces, I have not only a feeling of disappointment, but I might almost say a feeling of animosity, against the members of this Government for the way they have treated the Maritime provinces and Quebec over this question of the naval defence of the Empire. Apart from the emergency portion of my right hon. friends' speech, to my mind the next most important part was his statement that we cannot build ships in Canada, that it is an impossibility to build ships in Canada for from twenty-five to fifty years. I find that this idea is not as new in the mind of the right hon. gentleman, I find that he voiced the same sentiments in 1910 although at that time he was a little more modest than he is today and only limited the range of possibility to fifteen or twenty years. Now he makes it twenty-five or fifty years. I tell my right hon. friend and his followers that when he makes that statement he is practically insulting the intelligence of the people of this country. Go up to the great lakes, you will find there steel ships being built to-day practically as long and as big as a dreadnought and not very different.

Mr. CROTHERS: Oh, oh. Mr. CARVELL: My hon. friend laughs. He should go up and look for himself.

Mr. CROTHERS: I have been there. Mr. CARVELL: And you know it, of course you know it.

Mr. CROTHERS: I do not know anything of the kind.

Mr. CARVELL: I do not say they are dreadnoughts; I say as big as. And after all what is a dreadnought? A dreadnought is simply a combination of steel in various forms, that is all there is to it. You start with the keel. There is no real difference between the keel of a dreadnought and a torpedo boat destroyer. The only difference is that one is bigger and broader and longer than the other, but they are only made of sections of steel and we have the steel in various places in Canada, and mechanics with sufficient skill to make the keel of a cruiser and therefore with sufficient skill to lay the keel of a dreadnought. Then you have ribs and after that a steel frame riveted together. That frame is covered with boiler plate just as in a merchantman plying on the great lakes. Thus far I think even my hon. friend from Lincoln (Mr. Lancaster) will agree that we have the means in Canada to-day to go that much of it. But if my hon. friends from the Maritime provinces want any further information or proof let me give it to them. In 1911 tenders were called for the construction of ten vessels for the Canadian navy, four cruisers and six destroyers. Various British firms were invited to tender and five or six British firms did tender. Among them was the firm of Cammell, Laird & Company, of Birkenhead, and Vickers, Maxin & Son, Vickers, Maxin & Son have said within the last three months that they are prepared within a year to lay down the keel of a vessel which you can describe in the port of Montreal. I have not actual proof of that, I am only speaking now of what has appeared in the papers and has been said in this House. But I shall tell something I know something about. In the summer of 1911 a provisional contract was drawn up and executed between Cammell, Laird & Company and Norton-Griffiths & Company, of London, and the condition was that if Norton-Griffiths & Company were the lowest tenderers, and secured the contract for the construction of the harbour works and dry-docks in St. John, and Cammell, Laird & Company were the lowest tenderers and received the contract for the construction of the Canadian naval vessels, they would commence the construction of those Canadian vessels in St. John within a year of the signing of the contract. Norton-Griffiths & Company were the lowest tenderers for the harbour works and dry-docks at St. John, they got the contract, they are to-day carrying on the work and have a large portion of the excavation already done. Cammell, Laird & Company were the lowest tenderers for the construction of the naval vessels. That was a matter of public knowledge. When the late Government went out of power they returned all the cheques accompanying the other tenders and left in the hands of the new Government the cheques of Cammell, Laird & Company and Norton-Griffiths & Company, leaving it open to them

to go on and make the contract with the lowest tenderers. In the tender of Cammell, Laird & Company to this Government they agreed that within a year of the signing of the contract they would lay down the keel of the first vessel and within two or three years deliver the finished article. If the hon. members want to secure confirmation of what I have said they can do so from the representatives of these firms in Montreal. Hon. gentlemen opposite say it would cost us so much to erect a ship-building plant. I shall not go into that because the hon. member for St. John took the trouble to go to a modern ship-building plant on this continent not 500 miles away from Ottawa, where they are building dreadnoughts, where they started on an open field ten years ago and since then have built something over 100 vessels—and they are building dreadnoughts of the very highest type which science can devise or money supply. They have erected a shipyard and done all that in twelve years. They erected a shipyard in two or three years and they have turned out over one hundred vessels in twelve years. I can tell you more than that. In the negotiations with Cammell, Laird & Norton-Griffiths, it was understood that one million dollars added to the cost of the dry dock for which there is a contract by this Government now, would have enabled you to build these naval vessels. If the Government had signed that contract as they should have done, as the hon. the Minister of Marine and Fisheries should have done, one million dollars, over and above what this Government has provided in the way of a dry-dock, would have been all that was necessary to carry out the construction of these vessels.

Mr. WILCOX: Why did the late Government not sign it?

Mr. CARVELL: My hon. friend is asking a question that has been answered a great many times. There was an election on the 21st day of September, 1911. Does the hon. member know about that?

Mr. WILCOX: Yes.

Mr. CARVELL: I thought he would. You always get a response from the other side when that is mentioned. The tender was submitted to this Government in the month of May. It was taken to England by the then Minister of Marine and Fisheries who consulted with the Admiralty. He did not return to this country until some time in July. The House was in session, but on the 1st day of July, I think, Parliament was dissolved, and the late Government were too good constitutional advisers of His Excellency to ask him to sign a contract of that magnitude in face of going to the people. But they left that \$100,000 in the hands of the department, and when the new Government came in, they found it there, and they had not only the right, but the duty to sign that contract. But I am sorry to say that they were recreant to their duty, and the city of St. John to-day is not receiving and will not receive the advantage to which it is entitled, and the Dominion of Canada will not receive the advantage to which it is entitled by reason of the present Government's failure to act.

Mr. McCURDY: How does the hon. gentleman reconcile the statement which he has just made with that made by the right hon. the leader of the Opposition in this House on December 12?

"I say now that the Government in power would have been better advised if they had awarded the contracts, and had they done so, we would at the present time have under construction on the stocks at Montreal four cruisers and six destroyers."

Mr. CARVELL: It is not my business or duty to reconcile the statements. I have only given the facts as they exist to my knowledge. I have only given to this House some information which I think may convince even the most skeptical, that we can build ships in Canada. It is not a question of where you are going to build them. My right hon. friend says we cannot build the ships in twenty-five years. I say we can, and I am trying to give you my proof, and I think I will even convince my hon. friend from Queens and Shelburne that I have some reasonable ground for what I say. We can build the ships in Canada, and if the Government had done their duty we would have been building the ships in Canada to-day. I think that is an answer sufficient to satisfy even my hon. friend from Queens and Shelburne.

But they say not only that we cannot build the ships in Canada, but that we cannot manufacture the guns in Canada. I think that is right. But they do not manufacture the guns at Fore River. They do not manufacture the guns on the Clyde. They do not manufacture the

guns at Belfast, at Harland & Wolff's. We were all through their establishment, in fact when I was in the Old Country there was not a ship-building firm that did not try to impress the Canadian representatives with the view that they were the only people in the world who could build ships. We went through a number of establishments, and we got a lot of valuable information. We saw their magnificent industries. In one case, I think it was at Belfast, they were employing 50,000 men. At the great works at Newcastle-on-Tyne, I think they said they were employing 20,000 men in one establishment. But that only gives us an idea of what could be done in Canada if we had a government with the nerve and patriotism to go so work this question out. If you are going to develop a shipyard, you will not allow it to lie idle. As I have said, they do not manufacture guns at Harland & Wolff's establishment in Belfast. They do not manufacture them on the Clyde, or at Newcastle. A number of us were through the works of Armstrong, Whitworth & Co. where they do manufacture the guns and build the ships as well. There is one place where you can assemble the ships and the guns at the same point, but on the Clyde and at Belfast they get the guns from some other place. At Fore River they do not manufacture the guns; they are built at Pittsburgh and placed on the vessels at Halifax. St. John, or Vancouver, I do not think we would start manufacturing guns at once, because we would not need a sufficient number to justify the expenditure. We would bring the guns from England, subject of course to the consent of the Admiralty, and place them on our vessels.

Then they say we cannot make plate. I do not believe it. We have not made it here before because we did not have any sale for it. We have got the iron, the steel, and the nickel, and the industries ready to make it. Give us a sale, and you will get the product. You might as well say that we cannot build an automobile because we do not make the engines and the different parts. I do not believe that there is a complete automobile manufactured in Canada. Personally I think it would be a great pity for those who use them if they were all manufactured in Canada, speaking from my own experience. The manufacturers import certain articles which they would not be justified in manufacturing themselves, on account of the cost, and they assemble them. Some firms manufacture more than others, but the result is that you get the finished product, and you have an industry employing tens of thousands of people, and doing a great work in Canada. Incidentally, I may say that I think they have a little more protection than they need. However, we have got the industry, and we are importing many of the most intricate parts that go to make up that machine. Give us a contract to build those ships in Canada, and we will get the industry. We will spend probably from \$20,000,000 to \$50,000,000 in our own country, and we will import the intricate parts which will not pay us to make at home. When the shipyards were not engaged in building war vessels, they would be engaged in building merchant vessels. They would employ tens of thousands of people in the next twenty-five years if the present Government were true to their pledges, would withdraw this legislation, and go on in a plain commonsense way to construct those ships, employing the men in Canada, manning them in Canada, and maintaining them in Canada. So much for that.

There were two other reasons advanced by the right hon. Prime Minister why this Bill should be passed and the money sent to the other side of the water. The first was that we were going to have representation on the Imperial Defence Committee. That has been referred to before, but I wish to discuss it from my standpoint for a few moments, as I think it is of the very greatest importance. I do not say that the right hon. the Prime Minister deliberately intended to deceive the people in the first place, I have too high a regard for that right hon. gentleman to make such an assertion, and in the second place, it would be unparliamentary to do so. But I have no hesitation in saying that the way the matter was put to the Canadian people did deceive the Canadian people, and especially the Conservative portion thereof. For a month or two before the right hon. gentleman made his speech in this House on December 5, every Canadian newspaper had been pointing out to its readers what a wonderful advance had been made by this Government in securing the right to appoint a representative on

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the Imperial Defence Committee. Henceforth no war can be entered upon by Great Britain, no change in foreign policy can take place, without consulting Canada! We are going to have a representative in London, one of the Cabinet ministers. Many of their newspapers go so far as to pick out the hon. member for Argenteuil (Mr. Perley), member of the Cabinet without portfolio, as the gentleman who is going to occupy that high and honourable distinction. I want to read what the right hon. gentleman said about that, so that there will be no contention that I am juggling with his statement or that I am giving my version of it. I want to give my right hon. friend's version of it. You will find it on page 714 of "Hansard" in his speech of December 5:

"While the committee does not control policy in any way, and could not undertake to do so, as it is not responsible to Parliament, it is necessarily obliged constantly to consider foreign policy and foreign relations, and especially naval defence, is inseparably connected with such consideration."

Think of that for a moment. He states that it is necessarily obliged constantly to consider foreign policy and foreign relations. Then he goes on to say:

"I am assured by His Majesty's Government that, pending a final solution of the question of voice and influence, they would welcome the presence in London of a Canadian minister during the whole or a portion of each year. Such minister would be regularly summoned to all meetings of the Committee of Imperial Defence, and would be regarded as one of its permanent members. No important step in foreign policy would be undertaken without consultation with such a representative of Canada."

Think of that, Sir; something entirely new in the annals of British Government; no important step in

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foreign or naval policy to be taken without the consent of this member of the Imperial Defence Committee!

"This seems a very marked advance, both from our standpoint and from that of the United Kingdom."

He calls attention to this marked advance, that we are to enjoy something in advance of anything we have enjoyed here before, something which the right hon. gentleman and his colleagues had obtained from the British Government which never was obtained before. A marked advance!

"It would give to us an opportunity of consultation, and therefore an influence which hitherto we have not possessed. The conclusions and declarations of Great Britain in respect to foreign relations could not fail to be strengthened by the knowledge that such consultation and co-operation with the overseas dominions had become an accomplished fact."

That statement was made by the right hon. gentleman in his speech in this House on the 5th of December. I do not believe that in the history of Canada such a rebuke has been handed out to a colonial statesman as that which was handed to the right hon. gentleman and his colleagues by the Secretary for Colonial Affairs as a result of this making that statement in the House of Commons. I think you would look in vain, you could not go even to pre-confederation days, to find an instance where the British Government felt it necessary to call down in as plain and unmistakable language a responsible minister of the Crown for statements which he had made. Let me read from this despatch, bearing date December 10, 1912, and addressed to His Royal Highness the Governor General:

"Downing Street, Dec. 10, 1912. My Lord, I am forwarding by post for the confidential information of your ministers, a record of the proceedings of the Committee of Imperial Defence of May 30, 1911 (during the Imperial conference), and of August 1, 1912 (during the visit of the Canadian ministers to London)."

My right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) was Premier of this country, and was present at the conference as one of the Canadian delegates. This record deals solely with the representation of the Dominion on the Committee of Imperial Defence:

"Your ministers, who were present on the first occasion, will remember that the matter arose out of a resolution by Sir Jos. Ward on the Agenda of the Imperial conference, asking that the High Commissioners of the dominions should be summoned to the Committee of Imperial Defence when naval and military matters affecting the overseas dominions were under consideration. The unanimous view of all those present on May 30, 1911, was that the representation of the dominions should be not by the High Commissioner but by ministers who would be responsible to their own colleagues and Parliament and at the same time it was decided that a defence committee should be established in each dominion which would be kept in close touch with the Committee of Imperial Defence at home. The resolution ultimately put forward by His Majesty's Government and accepted unanimously by the members of the Imperial conference at the Committee of Imperial Defence were as follows: (1) That one or more representatives, appointed by the respective governments of the dominions, should be invited to attend meetings of the Committee of Imperial Defence when questions of naval and military defence affecting the overseas dominions are under consideration."

Note that they were invited to be present when matters of naval defence affecting the overseas dominions were under consideration:

"(2) The proposal that a defence committee should be established in each dominion is accepted in principle. The constitution of these defence committees is a matter for each dominion to decide."

The Canadian Government having changed in the Autumn of 1911, it was necessary when Mr. Borden and his colleagues visited England this summer, to put these proposals before them, as of course they were unaware of the previous proceedings."

I do not know whether that is meant sarcastically or otherwise. My own opinion is that it is meant to be sarcastic, because surely the right hon. Prime Minister must have known what took place in the Imperial conference of 1911:

"Subject to consultation with his colleagues in Canada, Mr. Borden provisionally accepted the resolutions as passed and stated that he saw no difficulty in one of his ministers, either with or without portfolio, spending some months of every year in London in order to carry out this intention. Mr. Asquith and

I had, subsequently, several private conversations with him, at which he expressed the desire that the Canadian and other dominions ministers who might be in London as members of the Committee of Imperial Defence should receive, in confidence, knowledge of the policy and proceedings of the Imperial Government in foreign and other affairs."

The right hon. gentleman asked the Premier of Great Britain to allow his minister to have a say in foreign affairs. Listen to the answer: "We pointed out to him that the Committee of Imperial Defence is a purely advisory body and is not, and cannot under any circumstances become a body deciding on policy, which is and must remain the sole prerogative of the cabinet, subject to the support of the House of Commons. But, at the same time we assured him that any dominions minister resident here would at all times have free and full access to the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary and the Colonial Secretary for information on all questions of Imperial policy."

When you compare the castigation which the right hon. gentleman received at the hands of the Colonial Secretary for the statement deliberately made by the Premier of this country in this House on the 5th of December last, I think you will come to the conclusion that the right hon. gentleman was very hard pressed in order to find some reason to put before the Canadian people as to why they should accept this proposition. But another reason was given why they should accept it. This was held out as a sop to the people of Canada. We must remember that on that delegation to London in 1912 was the representative of the city of Halifax (Mr. Borden) and the representative of the city of St. John (Mr. Hazen), the two cities in Canada which, probably more than any other, are interested in the construction and maintenance of a Canadian navy. These hon. gentlemen, when they were coming back to Canada to ask the people of this country to contribute an enormous amount of money to be sent out of this country—to be given, as my hon. friend says, as a free gift to the British Admiralty—felt that something must be done to satisfy the feelings of their friends in the Maritime provinces and in the other maritime portions of Canada. Therefore they concocted this scheme of building small cruisers, oil tanks, and auxiliary vessels in Canada. While it may be a little wearying, I wish to read to the House the statements made by both the right hon. the Premier and by Winston Churchill, the First Lord of the Admiralty, on this question. I shall then be willing to leave it to the Conservative members of this House to decide whether in their judgment there is the least ghost of a chance of ever having one of those British vessels built in Canada. I will be willing to leave it to a jury of Conservatives anywhere as to whether or not it does not almost amount to an insult to the intelligence of the people of the maritime portions of this country. The right hon. gentleman says:

"I have discussed this subject with the Admiralty, and they thoroughly realize that it is not to the Empire's advantage that all shipbuilding facilities should be concentrated in the United Kingdom. I am assured, therefore, that the Admiralty are prepared in the early future to give orders for the construction in Canada of small cruisers, oil-tank vessels, and auxiliary craft of various kinds."

This was cheered to the echo by my friends on the opposite side. Then he went on to say:

"The plant required is relatively small as compared with that which is necessary for a dreadnought battleship."

(Continued on page nine.)



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