

meant to pay him a compliment. At all events, this is the motion he offered:

That in the opinion of this House, in view of her great and varied resources, of her geographical position and national environments, and of that spirit of self-help and self-respect which alone befits a strong and growing people, Canada should no longer delay in assuming her proper share of the responsibilities and financial burden incident to the suitable protection of her exposed coast line and great sea ports.

I repeat that as I construed the language of this motion—unless my hon. friend is a disciple of Tallyrand, who said that language had been given to man to disguise his thoughts—this meant nothing but an endorsement of our policy. It was so interpreted on the other side of the House. If we are to believe the tardy disclosure that we heard the other day from my hon. friend from Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk), who told us that this motion created some stir in the ranks of the party, and that he at once had taken the position that he could not support it. Whether it was for this or some other reason, the fact is that my hon. friend from North Toronto, whilst he had been hasty in putting this motion on the notice paper, was very slow to move it.

Mr. FOSTER. My hon. friend knows exactly the reason why. Will he state it?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I do not know; perhaps my hon. friend will tell me.

Mr. FOSTER. My right hon. friend knows quite well that the motion was postponed from time to time because of conference with my right hon. friend.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I am not aware that my hon. friend—

Mr. FOSTER. Then my right hon. friend had better refresh his memory before he makes the statement.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Pardon me—I have not finished my sentence. I am not sure that my hon. friend ever spoke to me about it, but if he did, it was simply to suit the convenience of the House, and not because there was on this side any opposition to his motion.

Mr. FOSTER. I did not say there was.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Neither did I imply anything derogatory of my hon. friend because he postponed moving it. But the fact is that he postponed it for two months; I do not know what the reason was. My hon. friend suggested to my hon. friend from Jacques Cartier that if they agreed the matter could be put over.

Mr. MONK. My right hon. friend's memory is evidently deceiving him in saying I opposed the motion. I stated the

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other day that I thought it was inopportune.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Yes, and my hon. friend is still of the same mind. My hon. friend from Jacques Cartier thought it inopportune, my hon. friend from North Toronto thought it opportune, many other members on that side of the House thought it opportune, and we on this side of the House all thought it opportune. Be this as it may, it is not worth while having any discussion on this point, why the motion was not moved at the first opportunity. The fact is that it was not moved for two months, until the 29th of March. At that time the atmosphere had become very much charged with electricity. A debate on the condition of the British navy had taken place in the Imperial House of Commons; attention had been directed to the armament going on in Germany, and the news had been flashed across the ocean that New Zealand had made the offer of a Dreadnought to the imperial government. Then it was that for the first time we heard in this House the suggestion of an offer of a contribution to the imperial navy. That suggestion came from my hon. friend from North Toronto, but it came in a very mild and tentative manner. I will give to the House the very language my hon. friend used on that occasion. This is how he spoke:

To-day peril stands at the gateway. It is not for me to say how great it is, but I cannot brush it aside. To-day it impresses itself upon the greatest statesmen of the old country; to-day it appeals to Australia until public subscriptions are taken, and the government is being importuned to do even more than its settled policy to meet the emergency; to-day little New Zealand gives one Dreadnought and offers a second, and to-day Canada faces that position of peril and emergency. Let me say to my right hon. friend, that if after careful consideration he proposes to this parliament a means for meeting that emergency adequately, now and as it should be, whether it be by the gift of Dreadnoughts or the gift of money of this country, this side of the House will stand beside him, and stand for Canada in supporting that measure.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. This was not very effective language coming from my hon. friend from North Toronto (Mr. Foster), it was not as incisive as his sentences generally are. I do not think he had yet found his sea legs. My hon. friend spoke rather tentatively, simply suggesting a contribution, and adding that if we proposed it he would agree. We did not think it was advisable to depart from the policy we had laid down. We said that we would maintain the position we had taken, and after some consideration the