

were arbitrarily and violently seized while pursuing their legal calling on the high seas, and, Sir, to this day, not one particle of compensation has, through any remonstrance from the British Government, been granted to our people to indemnify them for the wrongs they have sustained. This is not the first time this kind of apathy has been displayed by the British Government. I am old enough to recollect when Canadians were shot down in their own land by marauders from the United States, when Canada was put to considerable expense, and when Canadian interests were seriously injured, and I am old enough to remember how those interests were put entirely aside as too insignificant for mention when Great Britain and the United States came together to adjust their differences over the Alabama claims. Sir, the present is a parallel case, and while it is well to practice patience and forbearance and to avoid as far as we honourably can aught which may prove a cause of war between two great and kindred nations, yet there are worse things than war, and there is a point where forbearance becomes cowardice. But while I neither acquit, for my part, the American Government of overbearing action towards us, nor the British Government of undue apathy and indifference in protecting the rights of Canada and of Canadian subjects, I am bound to say that if there be one thing which could excuse or justify the indifference of Great Britain, it was the perversity and wrong-headedness which marked the conduct of the present Government and their predecessors in all their dealings with the United States for the past eight years. That, Sir, is the sole and only justification which can be urged in defence of the British Government, and I deeply regret to say that they can make out far too strong a case against us in that matter to be pleasant. Now, what are the facts, even on the showing of the hon. gentleman? He and the members of his Government go before the Behring Sea Tribunal with a case which was absolutely unanswerable. What has been the result of their conduct of that case? To my mind, looking to that award, remembering their own contentions, bearing in mind the evidence that has been laid before us on this subject at various times, it appears to me beyond doubt that my hon. friend was strictly and literally correct when he stated that with an absolutely unanswerable case we had succeeded in losing everything for which we had contended. We have gained the verdict, yes, but we have lost the property and pay our own costs. Now, I have to tell the hon. gentleman that this may be a moral victory, but it is an exceedingly barren one. I have to tell the hon. gentleman more, that while I am not here in the slightest degree to defend the policy or the conduct of the United States Government towards the British Columbia sealers, in a great number of respects, what occurred at Paris

was but the fitting and natural climax of the policy of the hon. gentleman and his predecessors towards the United States during the last seven or eight years. Sir, the policy of those hon. gentlemen may be defined in these words: it was first to bluster and snarl, and then to cringe. We have, with respect to this award, three witnesses of very unequal value—we have the Minister of Justice, we have the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, and we have the award itself. As the Minister of Justice is in an arithmetical mood to-night, I may say that if I were to designate the value of these witnesses by algebraical symbols, I would be disposed to describe the value of the evidence of the Minister of Justice by the sign of zero, of my hon. friend the Minister of Marine and Fisheries by minus zero, but the award remains as a plus and positive quantity. Now, Sir, I desire to call the attention of this House for a few moments to what this award which I hold in my hand, declares. First of all, let me say to the Minister of Justice that when he gave the House to understand that the United States arbitrators declined to agree to this same award, I think he went too far. I find that five separate points were passed upon; I find that as to four of these points Mr. Justice Harlan, the United States Commissioner, concurred with the other commissioners; I find that on the fifth point alone Mr. Justice Harlan dissented. It is true that Mr. Senator Morgan, who has special political exigencies as well as the hon. gentleman, did not affix his signature to the award, but the Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, if this copy of the award which I hold be a correct one, did assent to four out of these five propositions. Now, what does that award declare? That award—and if I am in error, the hon. gentleman and his friends will correct me—that award, as I read it, and I think I can understand English quite as well as the hon. gentleman, declares, first of all, that Canadians were within their legal rights from start to finish, a position the hon. gentleman will not dare to controvert. It declares that the United States had no ground to stand upon, moral or legal, a position also he will not dare to controvert. It shows clearly and distinctly, in the facts detailed in the appendix to this award, that Canadian ships, as he said himself, were illegally seized, that Canadian subjects were illegally imprisoned, and that the trade of Canada, so far as regards one important portion thereof, was arbitrarily interfered with and stopped for no less a period than eight years. Now, what result should follow from these facts laid down by these arbitrators? Sir, I say that in all reason and conscience two results should follow most assuredly: first of all, that the United States should be ordered to make compensation for the wrong done, and next, that Canadians should be free thenceforward to follow their legal occupation. What was the result?