

If the right hon. gentleman had spent more time on section 18 of his Bill, I think he would have better justified the expectation of this House. Clause 18 is as follows:

18. In case of an emergency the Governor in Council may place at the disposal of His Majesty, for general service in the Royal navy, the naval service or any part thereof, any ships or vessels of the naval service, and the officers and seamen serving in such ships or vessels, or any officers or seamen belonging to the naval service.

What is the meaning of that? The plain and direct meaning is that the Governor in Council may refrain from exercising the discretion which is there provided for. If the government should so refrain, what will be the result? Are we to be face to face with the condition which the hon. gentleman says is demanded by our autonomy—that Great Britain being at war we shall declare that we are not at war and that our fleet shall not take any part in it. If the clause does not mean that, I would like to know what it does mean. So far as I can understand the English language, it means just what I have said. I have just this to add, that when Great Britain being at war, the Governor in Council shall declare that our fleet shall take no part in it—and they may do that simply by inaction, by standing still, by making no order in council—I say that when that occasion comes then, such inaction or declaration will amount virtually to a declaration of independence.

I have the further objection that unity of organization is not effectually provided for. The Prime Minister of Great Britain used this language in announcing the results of the Defence Conference:

It was recognized that in building up a fleet a number of conditions should be conformed to. The fleet must be of a certain size, in order to offer a permanent career to the officers and men engaged in the service; the personnel should be trained and disciplined under regulations similar to those established in the Royal navy, in order to allow of both interchange and union between the British and the Dominion services; and with the same object, the standard of vessels and armaments should be uniform.

As a matter of fact, there is no unity of training. The men to be engaged in the Canadian navy are to be three-year men; and, if I understand rightly the lessons I have endeavoured to learn in regard to naval training, it takes at least six years to make a sailor efficient in these complicated and mighty engines of war used on the high seas at the present time. So there will be no unity of organization, and apparently there is to be no unity of training, because the officers are to depend for their training, not so much on the British service as on the schools which it is proposed to establish, and I have not ob-

served any very distinct provision in the Bill as to the character of the training which is to be given in those schools.

Now, I would like to read one other extract upon that point. The admiralty most distinctly recommended a fleet unit. It declared:

In the opinion of the admiralty, the Dominion government desirous of creating a navy should aim at forming a distinct fleet unit; and the smallest unit is one which, while manageable in time of peace, is capable of being used in its component parts in time of war.

The fleet unit to be aimed at, should, therefore, in the opinion of the admiralty, consist at least of the following:—

1 armoured cruiser (new 'Indomitable' class) which is of the 'Dreadnought' type.

3 unarmoured cruisers ('Bristol' class).

6 destroyers.

3 submarines, with the necessary auxiliaries, such as depot and store ships, etc., which are not here specified.

Such a fleet unit would be capable of action not only in the defence of coasts, but also of the trade routes and would be sufficiently powerful to deal with small hostile squadrons should such ever attempt to act in its waters.

Then in paragraph 11:

As the armoured cruiser is the essential part of the fleet unit, it is important that an 'Indomitable' of the 'Dreadnought' type should be the first vessel to be built in commencing the formation of a fleet unit.

On that I would like to remark that Australia accepted at once the proposal for the establishment of a fleet unit and did it under the conditions which I find set out on page 26 of this blue-book in the following words:

The Australian fleet unit should form part of the eastern fleet of the empire to be composed of similar units of the Royal Navy, to be known as the China and East Indies units respectively and the Australian unit.

So that Australia has not only carried out the recommendations of the admiralty in that regard, but has gone further: it has distinctly declared, if I may rely on the blue-book, that its fleet unit shall be a part of the eastern fleet of the empire.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Will my hon. friend look at the bottom of page 25, where it is said:

When placed by the Commonwealth government at the disposal of the admiralty as in war time, the vessels should be under the control of the naval commander-in-chief.

It would seem as if the commonwealth government had the power to place them under the control of the admiralty or not.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. As far as that is concerned, my position is as distinct as I can make it. I say that any proposals for the establishment of a naval unit of