

Great objection has been taken in my province because the power is there given the Governor in Council to call out the fleet before summoning parliament. It is said that this is a derogation from the rights of parliament and that parliament should exercise its control first. Well, Mr. Speaker, the answer is obvious. The conditions may be such that the government may be forced to take immediate action. Parliament will be called immediately to approve or disapprove, but the conditions may be such as to compel us, without the loss of a minute, to avail ourselves of all our resources in order to come to the rescue of a part of the country which might be threatened. British Columbia, for instance, is exposed to attack from the Orient. I do not think there is any danger at present, because British diplomacy has secured us an alliance with Japan. Nor do I think there is any reason to fear an attack from Russia, because Russia has been crippled by her war with Japan. But all these things may change. Japan may cease to be an ally, Russia may recover her strength; and if we have to wait until parliament meets before we can act in conjunction with the British forces, the results may be disastrous. Circumstances may be such as to force us to do what Japan did—strike the enemy before the enemy strikes us.

I now come to the composition of our fleet. Here again we have not had the good luck to satisfy our friends opposite. It is said in the press, and no doubt will be repeated here, that we should have followed the advice of the admiralty and put a fleet unit on the Pacific ocean. Is there a man who will blame us because we said to the admiralty that we could not agree to put all our forces on the Pacific ocean, that we have also a large sea-board on the Atlantic and must divide our forces between the two. But we are asked why did you consent to such an insignificant navy as the one you propose. Well, we thought it prudent, for reasons I shall explain in a moment, to commence moderately. Two plans were proposed to us. One was to have a fleet of seven ships and another a fleet of eleven ships. The seven ships were to be composed of three Bristols and four destroyers; the eleven were to be composed of four Bristols, one Boadicea and six destroyers. For the reason that we have to protect our coasts on the Pacific and the Atlantic and consequently to divide our fleet, we thought it better to have eleven rather than seven ships. In this we acted on the advice of the admiralty. Still we are blamed because we are not to have an armoured cruiser of the 'Dreadnought' type. Perhaps I can quote an authority on this point which will satisfy hon. gentlemen opposite. Those staunch imperialists will

not be satisfied unless we have a 'Dreadnought' in our navy. While that view is respectable, it does not compare with the opinion of a competent man qualified to speak on the question. I am sure every one will agree that I could not quote a better authority than the old tar, Lord Charles Beresford—as good a sea-man as there is in the British navy. In an interview published in the 'Times' of last summer, Lord Charles Beresford said:

His view of the situation was that our great Dominions could best help us, not by spending two millions on battleships to serve in British waters, but by making proposals for defending themselves.

But he questioned the wisdom of their putting money into torpedo vessels and submarines and sending a large amount over here to build a battleship, the life of which was only twenty years, with luck, and might be only twenty months. If they invested two millions in home defence, and in having cruisers which could go out and protect their trade routes, he thought it would be a better investment than in helping to defend the shores of this country.

That, Sir, is what we are doing under this Bill. In another interview, also in the 'Times,' Sir Charles Beresford spoke as follows:

For the colonies, cruisers are much better, as the idea of protecting Britain and weakening the defence of the colonies is all wrong.

These were the reasons which actuated us, and I think they are of such a character as will command the approval of this House.

With regard to our scheme, as I stated on the first reading, it is our intention to build eleven ships—four Bristols, one Boadicea and six destroyers. I have given the character of these ships. It is our intention to have them, if possible, built in this country. That will cost a little more and we are prepared to pay a little more provided the difference is not extravagant. We intend to call for tenders as soon as this Bill becomes law, in order to see whether we can have this plant put in this country with the view of building these ships. I have been asked also how long it would take. I must say that I am not able to-day to give these details; I shall be better informed when we come to the committee stage. My colleague, the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, has been unwell, and I have not been permitted, to have as many interviews with him as I could wish; but giving the matter the best attention that I can, I may say that it would take probably one year to complete a plant for building the ships in this country, and then probably four years to complete these eleven ships. As I said at the first reading of the Bill, the cost of these ships would be a little over \$11,000,000, and the total cost of mainten-