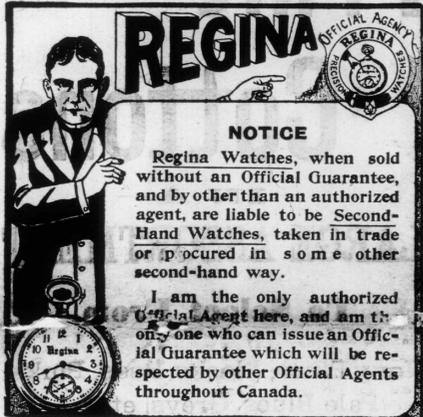


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REGINA OFFICIAL AGENCY

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Naval Assistance to Britain

(Ottawa Citizen).

It may be taken for granted that all Canadians are in favor of the Dominion sharing a portion of the burden of the naval defence of the Empire. The only questions at issue are when and how this should be done. Many of the strongest Imperialists have hitherto seen a difficulty in accomplishing this, in what may be termed a businesslike way. There are certain principles of national organization which it is unwise to ignore. Where money passes between individuals in the way of contribution for the general advantage there is always a formal business agreement or partnership. It would be a very loose way of doing business if a number of individuals were associated together for a specific purpose and contributed money towards the carrying out of a purpose, and yet had no say as to the business policy. In the same way until there is some sort of definite Imperial partnership, which all the over-sea dominions would gladly enter into, it would not be a businesslike proceeding, under ordinary conditions, to vote money to the mother country. Enthusiastic patriots, guided by sentiment, insist that this be done and point to the advantages which Canada derives from the mother country and never pays for. That is very true, but why not have a proper partnership agreement which will put all concerned on a businesslike basis? The humblest country lawyer could draft such an agreement. Whereas, Great Britain does so-and-so, and so-and-so, for the benefit of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa—it is agreed that each one of these shall contribute so much to the Imperial navy; that there shall be an Imperial council of which the various high commissioners shall be members and that each and all of the over-sea dominions shall be represented in that Imperial council in proportion to their interest in the partnership, as represented by its proportion of the total expenditure on the navy. And there you are.

A whole fabric of the British Empire rests upon Britain's naval supremacy and, if possible, the over-sea dominions are more interested in the maintenance of that supremacy than Great Britain is itself. In contributing to the navy they would be guaranteeing the integrity of the Empire. It takes but a little thought to realize that in case Great Britain lost command of the sea tomorrow, the immediate loot of the conqueror would be Britain's colonies. Britain might be invaded, as France was invaded, and a war indemnity exacted, after which her shores would be auctioned, even as in the case of France in 1870. But even as Germany annexed Alsace and Lorraine, the conqueror would undoubtedly annex Britain's colonies and the Indian Empire. If the conqueror did not, some other nations would, for the moment the British fleet disappeared off the sea. Britain's over-sea possessions would be like a flock of lost children straggling over the globe, with nobody to protect them. Australia would look well as a German colony, and it might fret and fume and talk about "Renevance," even as Alsace and Lorraine did, for a quarter of a century. At one fell swoop Germany would own the greater part of Africa. As for India, that country might put up a fight but it would be a hopeless sort of futile resistance which would be controlled by the sea route to India; and it may be taken for granted that if Germany once got control there would be an end to the sizzling of socialist dissonant under the iron hand of a military despotism. Malta, Gibraltar and all the little colonies would fall like ripe plums from the tree into the hands of the nation that ruled the waves.

Canada would be in a different position from any other portion of the Empire in the event of a naval disaster. If the conqueror tried to absorb this country, the Monroe doctrine would not automatically prevent it. The theory of that doctrine is that no European power shall extend its holding of real estate on this hemisphere, and the practice of that doctrine would be that if any real estate belonging to European powers changed hands on this hemisphere it would be into the possession of the United States. There is no use of blinking what the fate of Canada would be if Germany became the dominating naval power. Canada would be the price of the United States' refraining from inter-

ference in the general looting of Britain's possessions that would ensue.

Previous to the crisis which now seems to threaten Great Britain's dominion of the sea, many Canadians, who were warmly in favor of a contribution to the navy, thought it best for Canada to spend her money on a good land force until such time as an Imperial partnership could be formed under which Canada could consistently, and in a businesslike way, vote money to the general insurance scheme. But circumstances alter cases and Canada and the rest of the over-sea dominions are confronted with what may be termed an emergency necessity of taking action. Out of that condition of affairs, the question arises whether our money should be spent in protecting our own coasts or in a direct contribution to the Imperial fleet. That question is easily answered. So long as Britain's fleet dominates the seas, Canada does not need anything more than land defences to protect her coasts. The moment Britain's power on the ocean is broken, Canada will need no coast defences, for the simple reason that the United States will see that Canada is protected from every nation, but itself. The same reason would apply to every other British colony so far as maintaining their own fleet is concerned.

With the Japanese fleet dominating Asiatic waters, we did not observe Japan having any trouble defending its own coasts and cities.

It must therefore be apparent that the place for the colonies to defend their coasts is in the line of the British Dreadnought fleet. The fate of that fleet will decide the fate of the colonies. If that fleet met with disaster, any trifling squadron of warlike revenue cutters, or cheap warships that the colonies might maintain, would be only so much more loot for the conquerors. On the other hand the money saved from the construction and maintenance of these little defences invested in British Dreadnoughts in the Imperial battle line might turn prospective defeat into triumphant victory and save the whole Empire, colonies and all.

What Shape Shall it Take?

The question of assisting in the naval defence of the Empire has been brought to a head much sooner than was expected by the surprising information regarding Germany's aggressive policy in naval matters. There appears to be a unanimity of sentiment that Canada should do something, and at once. The opinions collected by the newspapers from the mayors of various municipalities are practically unanimous that something should be done. The proposals as to what should be done may be summarized under three heads:

1. That Canada should present a Dreadnought to the mother country as its contribution to the building program to defeat the aim of Germany.

2. That one or more Dreadnoughts should be built and manned by Canada and retained at Halifax under Dominion control to reinforce the Imperial fleet if required.

3. That Canada should inaugurate its own fleet of smaller vessels for the defence of its own coasts.

There are objections to be urged in connection with all three proposals and the question to be thrashed out is which is the most practical and most effective course to take at the present time. In deliberately considering the situation it must be recognized that any decision must be arrived at with a due regard to the contingency which has precipitated the urgent consideration of the matter. Otherwise, the whole question might be approached with a deliberation suitable to a fixed future policy as distinguished from action necessary in an emergency. It has been said that the Empire is being stampeded into action by panic mongers. Opposed to this idea are two cold facts. One is the alleged sensational statement of conditions which has led to the present agitation has been made by the premier of a British government whose policy is retrenchment in military expenditure, rather than augmentation. In the second place Britain is confronted for the first time in a century by a nation whose avowed ambition it is to rival her supremacy on the seas. Such being the case it is necessary for our government to decide whether it will take action on an emergent condition, or will decide on a fixed future policy, or deal with both phases. A strong argument in favor of dealing with the situation as an emergency proposition is that

prompt and decisive action on the part of the over-sea dominions of the Empire may have the result of discouraging German emulation for control of the seas, and that being achieved all portions of the Empire will be afforded time to deal with the great question of safeguarding the naval supremacy of the Empire with that deliberation and forethought which such a great problem renders necessary.

The course which would most completely meet with the approval of the different schools of thought so far as Canada is concerned would be the construction and manning by Canada of one or more first class battleships of the Dreadnought type, which would be retained under our own control, either for the protection of our coasts or for the reinforcement of the Imperial fleet in time of need. This would have three advantages in that these warships would be the nucleus of a Canadian navy, they would not involve a contribution without representation which is objectionable in theory to many Canadians, and they would be an effective answer to Germany's pretensions. To this is opposed the practical difficulty that Canada has not and could not have for a number of years the necessary trained officers to take charge of these battleships. It would necessitate having for some years to come Canadian warships chiefly manned by British officers and petty officers. Whether this would present itself as a condition so undesirable as to dissuade the government from adopting the plan remains to be seen.

Next comes the question of presenting the Imperial government with one or more battleships built at Canadian expense and to become an integral part of the Imperial fleet. The strong argument in favor of this is the likelihood that such reinforcement of the British building program would discourage the persistence by Germany in its determination to construct a fleet which will menace the supremacy of Great Britain on the seas. This is a tangible consideration of our present and future importance as to command the serious attention of our government. If such a result can be accomplished by a present contribution it will go far to ward off the necessity of future naval expenditure both on the part of the mother country and the over-sea dominions because Germany is the only power avowedly threatening that supremacy.

So far as the third proposal is concerned, that Canada should spend its money on a fleet of inferior vessels for so called coast defence, it is an absolute waste of expenditure from which neither the Empire as a whole nor Canada as a unit would reap any adequate advantage. Such a mosquito fleet would have absolutely no effect on the vital point of whether Britain or any rival power shall control the seas. So long as Britain controls the sea no European power can invade Canada. If Britain lost control of the seas, the Monroe doctrine would come into effect and the United States would not allow any European power to invade Canada. Apart from these two contingencies any annoyance by isolated vessels of the enemy in the case of a European war would be amply met by our fortifications at Halifax and on the St. Lawrence below Quebec, and by the construction of shore batteries armed with heavy ordnance.

In conclusion it may be well to point out that the lesson of the Russo-Japanese war which caused Britain and other nations to adopt the Dreadnought type of battleship is to the effect that the ultimate question of naval supremacy is decided by the clash of battleship fleets. Cruisers, armored and unarmored, are useful auxiliaries for scouting and annoying the enemy as exemplified by the career of the Vladivostok squadron in the East, but they can effect nothing conclusive. When once the Dreadnought fleets of two nations have met and decided which is victor the hunting down and destruction or capture of all smaller craft is but a question of time. This is the vital fact which should be kept in mind in any action on the part of the Canadian government with the object of assuring British supremacy on the seas.

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Driver: 'Tain't intended for a ton. It's two tons.

Coal merchant: Beg pardon, Go head.

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"No," she answered.

"I'll go out and look it over," he muttered. When he came back he shook his head. "Guess they ain't created yet," he said.

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Don't let worms gnaw at the vitals of your children. Give them Dr. Low's Pleasant Worm Syrup and they'll soon be rid of these parasites. Price 50c.

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Liver Complaint may be cured by avoiding the above mentioned causes, keeping the bowels free, and arousing the sluggish liver with that grand liver regulator,

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