

That was the whole gist of his argument at that time—not that there was no danger, but that the danger had actually increased and he was compelled to alter the opinion he had expressed a few short months before.

As I understand the problem presented to Canada, it is two-fold. First, is there an emergency? Or better, if some of our friends object to the word 'emergency,' is there a danger to the naval supremacy of the empire? If there is, what is the duty of Canada and how best can that duty be performed? Dealing with the first question, after weighing all the evidence, all the records and the opinions of the leaders on all sides of politics in Great Britain—Mr. Asquith, Mr. Balfour, Mr. McKenna, Sir Edward Grey, Lord Milner, Lord Roberts, Mr. Blatchford and others—I cannot but come to the conclusion that the danger does exist. That being the case, what is Canada's position and what is her duty? I want to deal with this question for a moment from a purely Canadian standpoint. I believe that the sentiment among all classes of our people from the Atlantic to the Pacific is overwhelmingly in favour of our doing something substantial in assisting the empire. I am further of the opinion that if we are to have a permanent navy, to be added to from time to time as required, that navy should be built in Canada, manned by Canadians; but accompanying that opinion is the uncertainty that we shall thereby be plunging into a large and increasing expenditure from which we shall receive no commensurate benefit. Having regard to the past record of this government, that fear is not without foundation. When we consider the way this country was committed to the construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific, when we consider the fact that the right hon. the Prime Minister, who was supplied, as he told us, with mountains of information, resulting from the most careful surveys, declared that this railway would cost only \$13,000,000, and when we realized that its estimated cost has now reached the enormous sum of \$114,000,000, and when we take in that connection the Hodgins charges and the charges in connection with the resignation of Mr. Lumsden, and when we consider further the fact that a fair and full, investigation into those charges has been voted down, by a straight vote of the Liberal party—when we consider all these things, are we not justified in opposing the construction of this navy?

Further, we were informed by the right hon. the Prime Minister that this navy is to be under the jurisdiction and control of the Department of Marine and Fisheries. Well, after the result of the investigation into the management of that department, after the evils which came to

light through that investigation, hon. members on this side, are warranted in hesitating before they commit the people to this expenditure without giving the people an opportunity to pronounce upon it.

It has been said that the leader of the opposition is shirking his responsibility in asking for a plebiscite. I do not so understand the resolution. What I understand by the resolution of my hon. leader is that as this is an entirely new policy and as the carrying of it out, as proposed in the government Bill, may involve serious changes in our relationship to the empire, the whole question should be put before the people, not as a plebiscite, but as the National Policy was put before them in 1878, on the public platform and through the public press. That is my understanding of the resolution of the leader of the opposition.

I want to refer to another matter. The Prime Minister said that he was much impressed by the statement made by the leader of the opposition that England had time and again subsidized the nations of Europe to enable them to defend their autonomy and independence against the oppressor. Then he went on to say:

She was able to do so. Why? Because of all the nations of Europe, England was the nation which had spent least upon armaments. She had never spent any of her resources as other nations did, purely on her arms. She had extended her trade and her commerce, she has developed her resources, &c.

Assuming that these statements are correct, we in Canada have an immense territory with a comparatively small population. We have many problems to solve that require a large expenditure of money. We have the completion of the Grand Trunk Pacific, we have the deepening and enlarging of the Welland canal, we have the building of the Hudson Bay railway, we have the building of the Georgian Bay canal. We have, over and above all these things that are great problems for us as Canadians, a far greater responsibility in assuming our duty rightly towards the great British empire. So I say, taking all these things into consideration, I believe it is a very strong argument why we should make a direct contribution. Following out the argument of the First Minister himself, let us follow in the footsteps of the mother country, gradually developing our commercial shipping, our plant and industries, until we are in a position to build such war vessels as may be needed. With this object in view, we must enlarge our docks on both the Atlantic and the Pacific, and encourage the establishment of ship-building plants in Canada, not based on the number of Dreadnoughts we can lay down, but rather on the fact that we have all essentials in the way of coal, iron, steel and nickel