

glishmen held. Why not? Is not my hon. friend who spoke to-day, as much of a British subject as my son, who happens to be of English and Dutch extraction? You may as well say that if England was in difficulty with Denmark, that I who sprung from the Danes when they invaded Britain, should not be interested! Suppose difficulties should arise between Britain and Denmark, why should I say my sympathies are not with my native country because I am descended from the Danes? It is not the spirit which should actuate any man, and more particularly a public man who controls the destinies of the country at a serious period in our history. It will be interesting to read his order in council which was passed, and of which, no doubt, my hon. friend opposite could let us know the secret history—but he cannot do that because of the oath of office he has taken—but I should have liked very much to have been behind the scenes and heard the discussions between the different ministers and the Minister of Public Works on this question of precedent and what should be done. Take this order in council which was passed on the report of the Prime Minister, and you will come to the conclusion that, like some other portions of the address now before us, would lead one to suppose that there is a good deal of truth in what Talleyrand said, that language is given to hide men's thoughts. Here is this order in council.

The Committee of the Privy Council have under consideration a despatch dated 3rd October, 1899, from the Right Hon. Mr. Chamberlain.

That is the despatch which I read a few moments ago, giving information to those who had volunteered to serve in South Africa. The order in council continues:

The Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, to whom the said despatch was referred, observes that the Colonial Secretary, in answer to the offers which have been sent to him from different parts of Canada expressing the willingness and anxiety of Canadians to serve Her Majesty's government in the war which for a long time has been threatening with the Transvaal Republic and which, unfortunately, has actually commenced, enunciates the conditions under which such offers may be accepted by the Imperial authorities. These conditions may be practically summed up in the statement that a certain number of volunteers by units of 125 men, with a few officers, will be accepted to serve in the British army now operating in South Africa, the moment they reach the coast, provided the expenses of their equipment and transportation to South Africa,

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are defrayed either by themselves or by the colonial government.

The Prime Minister, in view of the well-known desire of a great many Canadians, who are ready to take service under such conditions, is of opinion that the moderate expenditure which would thus be involved for the equipment and transportation of such volunteers may readily be undertaken by the government of Canada without summoning parliament, especially as such an expenditure under such circumstances cannot be regarded as a departure from the well-known principles of constitutional government and colonial practice, nor construed as a precedent for future action.

Already, under similar conditions, New Zealand has sent two companies, Queensland is about to send 250 men, and West Australia and Tasmania are sending 125 men each.

The Prime Minister, therefore, recommends that out of the stores now available in the Militia Department, the government undertake to equip a certain number of volunteers, not to exceed 1,000 men, and to provide for their transportation from this country to South Africa, and that the Minister of Militia make all necessary arrangements to the above effect.

The committee advise that Your Excellency be moved to forward a certified copy of this minute to the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

All of which is respectfully submitted for Your Excellency's approval.

JOHN J. MCGEE,
Clerk of the Privy Council.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—What is the date of that?

Hon. Mr. MILLS—October 5.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—No, October 14, some eleven or twelve days after the receipt of the despatch. Now, compare that language with the language of the Prime Minister which is quoted by Mr. Bourassa in his letter to the Prime Minister, and see how the one contradicts the other. On October 4, the day after the receipt of the Colonial Secretary's despatch the right hon. Premier of this country had an interview with the *Globe* reporter, and this is the language which he used:

There exists a great deal of misconception in the country regarding the powers of the government in the present case, said Sir Wilfrid Laurier, as I understand the Militia Act, and I may say that I have given it some study of late—our volunteers are enrolled to be used in the defence of the Dominion. They are Canadian troops to be used to fight for Canada's defence. Perhaps the most widespread misapprehension is that they cannot be sent out of Canada. To my mind it is clear that cases might arise when they might be sent to a foreign land to fight. Spain has or had a navy and that navy might be got ready to assail Canada as part of the empire. Sometimes the best methods of defending one's self is to attack, and in that case Canadian soldiers might certainly be sent to Spain, and it is quite certain that they might be so despatched to the Iberian Peninsula. The case of the South African Republic is not analogous.