

Mr. MEIGHEN: Not quite?

Mr. DENIS: No, it is not. I think our country can very well be compared with the nations of South America, or to other countries in the world that have no navy.

Mr. MEIGHEN: If we are sure to be swallowed up in the event of a conflict do we not just exist on the sufferance of the United States?

Mr. DENIS: My hon. friend knows better than that.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Just explain that.

Mr. DENIS: There is no relation at all between our inability to resist pressure coming from the United States in case of war, and our being a dependency of the United States or under its control. Let us take Mexico for example. Could Mexico defend itself against United States? Has Mexico got a navy? The answer will be that Mexico is in the throes of civil war just now. But supposing the civil war had ceased, could Mexico defend itself against the United States? Has Mexico a navy, or has it an army? It has neither, and yet it is not a dependency of the United States or in a dependent state with respect to that country—not for a minute. Notwithstanding, if the United States should go to war with Mexico the latter could not resist its powerful neighbour any more than Canada could.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I do not say that the hon. gentleman intends to argue that we are technically a dependency, but if he is correct both Mexico and ourselves exist purely on the sufferance of the United States.

Mr. CAHILL: Where do you get that idea?

Mr. DENIS: I do not quite understand the meaning of the phrase "sufferance of the United States." It is a new expression to me and I fail to grasp its meaning.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I mean that because of her grace and kindness they desist from declaring war upon us. That is the only reason we exist according to the argument of my hon. friend.

Mr. DENIS: Not for a moment. My hon. friend knows better than that; he is too logical to hold that view.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Just explain the difference.

Mr. DENIS: My hon. friend has a logical mind and knows much better than that.

[Mr. Denis.]

Mr. MEIGHEN: Well, what is the difference?

Mr. DENIS: There are like examples to be found all over the world. For example, Belgium, before the war, would have been in the same position towards France and Germany if it had not been for the treaty which was then in existence. Belgium may perhaps be a poor comparison, I will take a better one.

Mr. MEIGHEN: It is very bad.

Mr. DENIS: Let us take Mexico which is a neighbour of the United States. Mexico is in exactly the same position as we are. Is Mexico not a free and independent state? Is it not absolutely free of any dependency upon the United States? Mexico does not depend upon United States for its liberty; Mexico has all the attributes of a sovereign state; but the undoubted fact remains that in case of war, we all know, it could not defend itself against the United States.

Mr. GRIESBACH: Who knows that?

Mr. DENIS: I take it for granted, without any fear of contradiction. But even if that example is not a good one others can be cited. Throughout the world there are small, weak nations that are neighbours of strong and powerful nations. The weak and the powerful nation live side by side, and yet no one pretends that the small and weak nation is a dependency of the strong nation or is dependent upon it. The weak nation conserves its dignity and its state of complete independence, but should a conflict arise it might happen that the weak nation could not defend itself. Now I was just saying this: The only nation that England can ever fear in the future—if there is any cause for fear at all, which I do not know; but we believe from all we hear that there is possibly some fear—is the United States. To-day the English navy is the strongest in the world, and if the policy of the Imperial authorities is carried out Great Britain will continue to be by far the strongest naval power in the world, with the exception of the United States. My information is that since 1914 the strength of the British navy has been more than doubled, and the British Government is about to undertake a very extensive naval programme. But the United States are doing the same, and in five years from now we will be confronted by a condition of affairs which has not obtained for over a century, namely, the spectacle of a great nation ready to contest the supremacy of