

In reply Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who was the leader of his party in this country for many years, and whom I and thousands of others regarded with great respect and adoration, said this:

We are British subjects. Canada is one of the daughter nations of the Empire and we realize to the full the rights and obligations which are involved in that proud title. It has been, it is, it shall be our unalterable determination to meet and to carry out every duty which is implied by the title of "British subject."

May I say that only last week, after a period of thirty years, these sentiments of Sir Wilfrid Laurier were acknowledged in another place in this building. These are the words of a man who during the 1911 election was described in the English-speaking provinces as disloyal to the British Empire, and who in his own province was said to be a traitor to his race and creed. In these days even his opponents admit that he was right.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier went on to say:

Nay, more, not only will Canada fulfil every obligation which is implied by that title, but I think I may make bold to say that we will rise to every sacrifice that may be needed in order to maintain unimpaired the rank and status which is occupied by Canada in the British Empire and the rank and status which is occupied by the British Empire throughout the world.

Then Sir Wilfrid Laurier, after quoting from the report of the Imperial Conference of 1902, said:

The Canadian Ministers who were present attending that conference did not view that project with any favour.

He is referring now to the giving of a contribution to the British Navy.

They received it with respect, but they declined to accept it, and they presented their views in a state paper wherein they stated what they were prepared to do so far as Canada is concerned. Their views thus stated have often been quoted in this House, but I think it is opportune that I should quote them again. This is the statement:

"At present Canadian expenditures for defence services are confined to the military side. The Canadian Government are prepared to consider the naval side of defence as well. On the sea coasts of Canada there is a large number of men admirably qualified to form a naval reserve, and it is hoped that at an early day a system may be devised which will lead to the training of these men and to the making of their services available for defence in time of need."

In conclusion the Ministers repeat that, while the Canadian Government are obliged to dissent from the measures proposed, they fully appreciate the obligation of the Dominion to make expenditures for the purpose of defence in proportion to the increasing population and wealth of the country. They are willing that these expenditures shall be so directed as to relieve the taxpayer of the Mother Country

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from some of the burdens which he now bears; and they have the strongest desire to carry out their defence schemes in co-operation with the Imperial authorities and under the advice of experienced Imperial officers, so far as this is consistent with the principle of local self-government, which has proved so great a factor in the promotion of Imperial unity.

Then, after this matter was discussed, Sir Wilfrid Laurier moved the following resolution:

The House fully recognizes the duty of the people of Canada, as they increase in numbers and wealth, to assume in larger measure the responsibilities of national defence.

The House reaffirms the opinion, repeatedly expressed by representatives of Canada, that under the present constitutional relations between the Mother Country and the self-governing dominions the payment of any stated contribution to the Imperial treasury for naval and military purposes would not, so far as Canada is concerned, be a satisfactory solution of the question of defence.

The House has observed with satisfaction the relief afforded in recent years to the taxpayers of the United Kingdom through the assumption by the Canadian people of considerable military expenditure formerly charged upon the Imperial treasury.

The House will cordially approve of any necessary expenditure designed to promote the organization of a Canadian naval service in co-operation with and in close relation to the Imperial Navy, along the lines suggested by the Admiralty at the last Imperial Conference, and in full sympathy with the view that the naval supremacy of Great Britain is essential to the security of commerce, the safety of the Empire and the peace of the world.

The House expresses its firm conviction that whenever the need arises the Canadian people will be found ready and willing to make any sacrifice that is required to give to the Imperial authorities the most loyal and hearty co-operation in every movement for the maintenance of the integrity and the honour of the Empire.

Now, Sir Wilfrid Laurier was not the only one who expressed these views. Not only Sir George Foster, but also Sir Robert Borden said during the debate that it was necessary that something should be done for the naval defence of this country. While I should like to read part of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's speech, perhaps the resolution is sufficient. So I will content myself with reading what was said by Sir Robert Borden, a Nova Scotian who for many years had taken a great interest in public affairs in this country, and who afterwards was Prime Minister. Here are his words:

I come now to a consideration of the resolution which has been moved by the right honourable the Prime Minister, and I will say that with many portions of it I am in entire sympathy. But I would like to make one or two suggestions to the right honourable gentleman, and I do not make them in any party spirit or in any carping spirit, because if there is one thing more than another that I