

number of men; and it is the greatest national enterprise that a country can have, greater than the manufacture of guns and weapons of defence. We should undertake the work of building carriers, because the money that is paid to foreign carriers to convey our products from Canada to Great Britain and other countries is a large sum which we should retain in our country. As I pointed out, we should immediately assume the position of establishing a local defence of our own. Our local defence should consist of torpedo boats and destroyers, and they could convey our merchant ships, in case of war, to England and save them from the attacks of cruisers.

And he added:

I think we are all presumed to be at one upon that question.

So we were at one upon that question; and my hon. friend from North-Simcoe can perform no greater public service than to bring his political friends around to the view which they held in March, 1909, on that subject.

Mr. Speaker, you have had placed in your hands by the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Turriff) an amendment to the motion for the second reading of this Bill. That amendment in effect provides that, before this Bill is read a second time, redistribution based on the returns of the last census should take place and that the people of this country should be consulted. In the speeches which my hon. friend from Assiniboia and my hon. friend from Weland (Mr. German) made in support of that amendment, they presented an unanswerable case, a case so unanswerable that I do not believe any attempt has been made on the opposite side of the House to reply to the arguments advanced by these hon. gentlemen. They submitted to the House in support of the amendment figures which showed that at the present time the East is over represented and the West under represented. Put in another way, the figures that they submitted established that at the present time there are five eastern representatives in this House to each western representative, and further that, if redistribution took place, there would be only three eastern representatives in this House to each western representative. Some hon. gentlemen on the opposite side of the House have said that there is no occasion for the Government to take the course suggested by this amendment, for the reason that when the late Government brought in a naval policy, we did not go to the country on that question. My hon. friend from Weland effectively answered that by pointing out that we, as the representatives of the Canadian people, were all united upon that question at that time, and that there was no necessity for going to the country because there was no diversity of opinion.

Another thing which differentiates the position of the late Government from the

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position of the present Government is that we proposed to build a navy whose cost of construction was to be borne out of revenue. The present Government propose to pay this \$35,000,000 out of capital. That, in my judgment, constitutes a vitally important difference between the two policies and affords one other reason why the people should be consulted.

But there are still stronger reasons, and I find these reasons contained in promises made by the right hon. gentleman during his trip to the West in the summer of 1911. In the course of his visit to the western provinces, my right hon. friend spoke at some forty places. At many of these places he was presented with memorials by the Grain Growers and by the United Farmers' Associations. In every one of these memorials a request was made that redistribution should take place as precedent to any general election and in every case my right hon. friend agreed with the request of the memorialists. Let us see what he said at one particular place. The Winnipeg Free Press in its issue of June 21, 1911, contains a report of the visit of my right hon. friend to Brandon. It publishes at length the memorial there presented to him by the Grain Growers. In that memorial there occurs this sentence:

Having an election before a redistribution Bill is passed, based on the census that is now being taken, would be a gross injustice to the prairie provinces of western Canada.

The Prime Minister, then the leader of the Opposition, met the request fairly and squarely, and in the same paper is reported as saying:

No one would regret more than he would to see the Government go to the country before a redistribution Bill had gone through the House.

The West was entitled to more members. Mr. Borden said he had himself suggested to the Prime Minister that he should hurry up with the taking of the census in order that the West might get its increased representation before the mandate of the country was taken on the great question of reciprocity.

Speaking at Maple Creek on June 23, 1911, the right hon. gentleman is reported as saying:

It was a bad thing to have in power a political party that broke its promises.

I would especially commend this sentence to the Minister of Public Works. Later on the same paper reports a meeting at Lacombe, on June 27, 1911, at which the United Farmers of Alberta presented a memorial, of which the paper says:

They also asked that a redistribution take place before the next general election.

The right hon. gentleman made the same reply to that delegation. Unless the Prime