

those plans are based; so that not only the public at home, but every one of our colonial fellow-subjects should know how much it is that the government are prepared to undertake in the defence of the colonies, and the duties which in their turn they think ought to be undertaken by the colonies themselves. These principles are as follows: The maintenance of sea supremacy has been assumed as the basis of the system of imperial defence against attacks from over the sea. This is the determining factor in shaping the whole defensive policy of the empire, and is fully recognized by the admiralty, who have accepted the responsibility of protecting all British territory abroad against organized invasion from the sea. To fulfil this great charge they claim the absolute power of disposing of their forces in the manner they consider most certain to secure success, and object to limit the action of any part of them to the immediate neighbourhood of places which they consider may be more effectively protected by operating at a distance.

It is recognized, however, that Her Majesty's ships engaged in hunting out and destroying the squadrons of the enemy may not be in a position to prevent the predatory raids of hostile cruisers on British ports. The strength of such an attack will vary in the different parts of the world according to the strength of possibly hostile navies, the proximity of their bases and the troops that are or could easily be brought there in anticipation of war. It also varies from time to time with changing political combination. But it is improbable that this raiding attack would be made by more than a few ships, nor could it be of any permanent effect unless troops could be landed. In no case could a greater force than a few thousand men be collected and conveyed without such arrangements and preparation as would bring the operations under the category of those which the navy has undertaken to prevent.

Against a raid of the nature indicated, it has been considered necessary to make secure those places which are essential to the navy for coaling, refitting, and repairing. Ports for this purpose have been selected by the admiralty, and imperial resources in men and money available for use abroad have been concentrated on their defence. Apart from the harbours fortified for the navy, there are other ports which, though they do not enter into what may be called the general strategic scheme, are also liable from their commercial importance to predatory raids, and which require measures of defence for the protection of the special interests involved. The resources of places which, in the opinion of an enemy, would justify the very considerable risks which a raid on them would involve, are generally sufficient to admit of the provision of local defence by local means; and where the liability to attack and the resources to resist attack co-exist, it has been held to be the duty of the colony to make provision for adequate defence. In dealing with places of this nature the committee have advocated the creation of sufficient fixed defences to prevent their unmolested occupation by hostile cruisers, but more especially the provision of

troops sufficient to deal effectually with such forces as an enemy must put on shore to enable him to secure any permanent advantage from his attack. Troops without works may detect an enemy and frustrate his object. Works without troops are useless and delusive. It is necessary to lay stress on this fact, as fortifications give an appearance and feeling of security which is not justified unless they are fully garrisoned by well-trained men and supported by mobile forces, and because expenditure on defences involving a heavy outlay at one time and little at another, can be more easily fitted into the exigencies of fluctuating budgets than expenditure on troops which must be constant to be effective.

I will not continue this quotation, but it results therefrom that the British government itself, in 1894 or thereabouts, formulated a plan which was based on close application and study; and the Duke of Devonshire stated: 'We communicated officially this plan to the colonies in order that they might govern themselves accordingly.' That was one clearly enunciated plan under which we did not depart from the policy we had always followed of defending our own shores. But there ought to be added to that the proper equipment of dry-docks and coaling stations and such armaments as would enable us fully to defend ourselves against sudden raids. Nobody that I know of in this country is opposed to that, or would deny—because a raid is always possible—that we should guard against any attack of this nature. What I say is this: That at the conference of 1907, which my right hon. friend attended, and in which he denied absolutely that we should accept any scheme of this kind, no very different plan from this very one was laid before the conference. There was a small addition. Lord Tweedmouth, in addressing the conference, stated first and foremost, and as the representatives of the British government had always stated: We demand as a sine qua non the complete control in time of war of all naval forces, whether colonial or otherwise; but he stated there, what the Duke of Devonshire had stated to the British League in 1897, and what he stated also on a memorable occasion in the House of Lords, when questioned by Lord Minto, that all they asked from us was this very thing. Lord Tweedmouth added that we should have light torpedo boats or destroyers, which he said could not cross the ocean under any circumstances, but which might be used as a complement to this scheme of defence. He did not go any further. And let me point out this to my right hon. friend, who used such violent language in regard to myself at the time of the first reading of this Bill—very violent language. In fact, to use the words of the rhymster: