

ished like Banquo's ghost from the feast of Macbeth. Our premier came to Toronto and spoke there and received a banquet beyond anything given to any previous premier. Every man in the audience rose up and applauded, and in their hearts if not vocally sang 'The Army and the Navy Forever,' but there was no navy or naval policy that gave piquancy or permanency to their enthusiasm. What is it that is said in this paragraph? We have to find out more about it. We have to compliment the premier upon his ability to, shall I say play? That is not exactly the word I want to use, but to speak of the subject and say nothing about it. What is said here? In the first place it is said that four of the ministers went. That is proper. It is a large number and I believe is a quorum of the Cabinet, and I think is quite a sufficient number. I do not complain of that. The subject was great enough for a delegation consisting of four members, and I think the government was wise in proceeding to the old land and to consult with the premier. The paragraph says:

Conferred in London with His Majesty's government on the question of Naval Defence.

I do not know where they could go or where they could get information of a more conclusive character, and I do not know wiser men whom they could select, and so they went and they consulted no doubt, and it says important discussions took place. What are these discussions? We are told at the end of the clause, as by a sort of irony, after that a Bill will be introduced accordingly. When this Bill comes what will 'accordingly' mean? In the first place by this clause it would mean that important discussions took place. We must know what these discussions were. Perhaps there was no dictograph to take them down. My position as a member of this House and a Canadian is that, before a Naval Bill is brought down, this House ought to know as much about the basis upon which a grant is paid as the members of the government know. Whatever information they possess we should have. We should know the character of these discussions. Did they refer to a grant of ten, twenty or thirty millions,

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or what did they refer to? Did they include a permanent navy, or what is commonly called an emergency grant? Did they discuss our ability to give thirty or forty million, or did they discuss the necessity for a grant being paid because of the impoverished condition of the British exchequer? Did these discussions occur and how was the decision arrived at? The next expression is that 'conditions have been disclosed.' What does it say?

Conditions have been disclosed which in the opinion of my advisers render it imperative—

Notice that strong word—

--that the effective naval forces of the empire should be strengthened without delay.

Now we are on the brink of a volcano. We are confronting a yawning chasm. The empire is in process of dissolution. If not it looks as if this commission of four members, after conference with the Imperial government, after important discussions, came to the conclusion that conditions had been disclosed which, in their opinion, rendered it imperative—not optional—not a matter of discretion,—but rendered it imperative that the effective naval forces of the empire should be strengthened without delay. Now what are these conditions? What is the matter with old England? Has she lost her virility? Has she no sailors to man her ships? Is her exchequer impoverished? Has she reached the limit of her resources? Pray what were these conditions? Is she no longer able to float her navy and are the conditions so serious that her effective naval forces must be strengthened? If it is not within herself the danger lies, is she imperiled from without? Is the Kaiser prepared to pounce upon her like a lion upon his prey? Have her enemies strengthened their naval equipment beyond her capacity to do so? Who is to attack her? From what source is the danger to come? Who is the enemy who is at her gate? What are the conditions which make the peril so great? If her exchequer is being so impoverished and she is no longer able to defend herself, then let us out of our abundance replenish that exchequer and see that the peril is overcome