

military defence of the empire with special reference to the Canadian resolution.

That was on April 30, 1909. What was the answer of Canada to that plain and respectful invitation? The Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) answered on February 8:

The ministers wish to point out that the views of the Canadian House of Commons on the question of naval defence have already been expressed, and, in pursuance of the resolution of that body two ministers, as already announced, will shortly go to London to discuss with the admiralty the best methods of carrying out that resolution. My ministers have not sufficient information to warrant them advising the necessity of such a formal conference as that suggested, but there will be no objection to postpone visit till July so as to suit convenience of imperial government.

One sees there in a moment the difference in the manner in which this invitation was received and accepted by New Zealand and Australia, and the manner in which it was received by Canada. The New Zealand government declared that, in the opinion of the ministers, a representation of all parts of the empire at the conference was essential, and that the course which the home government was taking was the right one and in the best interests of the empire. The Transvaal gave a similar answer, but every one in this House knows the position in which the Transvaal was at that time. Every one knows that the Transvaal was not in a position to give the same answer as New Zealand or Australia.

According to the admiralty memorandum this is their opinion:

In the opinion of the admiralty the Dominion government desirous of creating a navy should aim at forming a distinct fleet unit; and the smallest unit is one which, while manageable in time of peace, is capable of being used in its component parts in time of war. The operation of destroyers and torpedo boats are necessarily limited to waters near the coast or to a radius of action not far distant from the base, while there are great difficulties in manning such a force and keeping it always thoroughly efficient.

Will any hon. gentleman pretend that the navy contemplated will, in time of war, be of any material benefit? I do not think they would be able to line up to the war line. In any case, they would be of no benefit in protecting our trade routes. Outside of our sentiment in favour of protecting our empire, and looking at the matter only from the commercial side, I think that what we want is something that will assist in protecting our great trade routes.

I believe that the time has come when we should say what we think in these matters. While I have not the slightest desire to give any offence, I must say that I be-

lieve, from the bottom of my heart, that this Bill is framed, in the manner in which it is, in order to please our friends from the province of Quebec. For that province and its people I have the greatest respect. It is one of the oldest provinces in this Dominion, and one of which we have a great many reasons to be proud, but I must say that ever since I have been in this House, it seems to me that in all questions of importance everything has had to be subsidiary to the interests of Quebec. That is hardly fair. I do not care whether you take the Autonomy Bill or any Bill that has ever come before this House, you will find the facts to bear out what I say. But I am delighted to see a glimmer of light in that province in that one respect. There is lots of light there in many other respects, but I find there to-day what I never saw before, and what I do not think any citizen of Canada ever saw before, I find one of the leading papers in that province asking, in connection with this question, is it fair or right that one province out of nine should stand up against the other eight. These are the words of one of the leading French papers in the province of Quebec. I say that this is as it should be. We ought not to legislate in this country for any province, but for the Dominion in the very broadest possible way.

Mr. RIVET. Give us the name of that newspaper to which you refer?

Mr. SCHAFFNER. It is 'La Patrie.'

Mr. RIVET. Which number?

Mr. SCHAFFNER. I really cannot tell. I had the quotation here, but it was very lately—within the last three or four days.

Mr. RIVET. We do not object.

Mr. SCHAFFNER. I do not think you do. I believe that every right thinking man, when we sit down and talk these things over, will say that is the right sort of sentiment, and that it is one which every Canadian should be willing to express.

Mr. ERNEST ROY. That is alright.

Mr. SCHAFFNER. I want to say in closing that I am absolutely honest and sincere in supporting the amendment of my leader. If I believed that this Bill brought down by the government were of any practical value in the protection of this great empire I would be bound to support it, but I do not see how it can be. I have tried to prove by the very best authorities that to-day there is an emergency. My good friend from Nanaimo (Mr. Smith) said that if we had started twenty years ago we might have had a fleet of some service to-day. There is something in that statement. But twenty years ago Germany