

appointed. I am dealing with the reorganization of the headquarters of the department, and I shall leave to those skilled men the task of advising whoever may be the minister with reference to the regulations which should be formulated.

To come back to the question of the departure from our present system and the adoption of the English system, I am satisfied that the present system is unworkable. It has been found unworkable in England, and I think the experience, not only of myself, but of previous ministers in this country, abundantly prove that it is not workable here. If the system of utilizing commander-in-chief is not workable in England, it is much more likely to prove unworkable in this country. The imperial government, after trying in vain for about half a century, to make the system effective, has come to the conclusion that it is absolutely unworkable. I think I may perhaps on this point read the conclusions reached by the Esher Committee in this regard.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. The conclusion is arrived at upon the ground of the desirability of decentralization.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN (reading) :

It was recognized both by the Hartington Commission and by the members of the War Commission who signed the minority report, that the high office of Commander-in-Chief, as hitherto defined, is inconsistent with the principle of the administration of the army by the Secretary of State and a board or council. Attempts to combine the administrative and executive functions of the army have led to confusion, to reduplication of work, to expense, to dual control, to divided responsibility, and ultimately to the conditions revealed in the evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the South African War.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Does the hon. gentleman not see that is put upon the ground that its jurisdiction is too expensive? Therefore, it is divided up into eight in the hope that in that way the office of commander-in-chief can be filled in a manner beneficial to the army and the country :

In order to secure effective control, the commander should be in constant touch with the units of his command. Owing to the wide extent of the King's dominion, this necessary condition cannot be fulfilled by a commander in chief.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Here is the quotation I was looking for. It is on page 8, section 8 :

8. The relations of the Secretary of State to the military heads of the War Office are not such as to enable him to discharge his duties to the best advantage. The centralization of a vast number of incongruous functions in the Commander in Chief results in the neglect of work of primary importance. The War Office, as was pointed out by the 'Hartington Commission,' has no thinking department, and the branches concerned with preparations for a

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campaign, and with the collection of necessary information, are weak, and not sufficiently in touch with the Secretary of State. At the same time, the duties and the responsibilities of the military heads are ill-defined, and their relations to each other and to the Secretary of State are not such as effective administration demands. No distinction between policy and routine work exists, and the military heads, absorbed in work with which they have nothing to do, have no time for the proper consideration of questions of real importance, or for exercising foresight and initiative. Leaving out of consideration numerous minor flaws in the machine, the above conditions alone fully suffice to account for evils ramifying through the whole structure of the army, and rendering it inefficient for war. No scheme of reconstruction can be worthy of the acceptance of His Majesty's government unless it provides substantial and permanent guarantees against the continuance of these conditions.

9. The Hartington Commission stated that 'the complete responsibility to parliament and the country, of the Secretary of State for the discipline as well as for the administration of the army must now be accepted as definitely established.' At the same time, it was premised that, in practice, 'the responsibility of the Secretary of State appears to be still, in some respects, less real than that of the First Lord' of the Admiralty. It is now clear from the evidence given before the War Commission that real power has been divorced from responsibility, with results injurious to the military advisers of the Secretary of State, and fatal to his authority with his colleagues in the cabinet.

And I may say that in the speech which Mr. Arnold-Foster recently delivered, in bringing down the war budget, he makes the following statement :

It is absolutely necessary to make a change in the organization, composition, and distribution of the army.

The late war, and the commission on the war, which has recently reported, have made it abundantly clear that the army in its present form is not suited to the requirements of the country, or adapted for war.

All branches of the army are raised on a system which exaggerates the difficulties that must always attend purely voluntary enlistment, and, both in the regular and auxiliary forces, there exist endless sources of friction which lead to wasteful effort, to bad work and, in some cases, to discontent and misunderstanding.

Then he goes on to say :

His duty is to provide a remedy for the evils that exist. Not a partial, but a complete remedy; not a remedy for one, but for all the evils complained of; not a remedy for want of organization only, but a remedy for over-expenditure as well.

Can such a remedy be found? The answer is, 'Yes.' It can be found if both parties are prepared to consider the question of the army outside the arena of party discussion, and if successive administrations are prepared to agree upon a scheme of reform, and to carry it out consistently and progressively. On no other terms can the army be reformed and its cost diminished.