

Mr. MORPHY: I asked the hon. gentleman, if he has forgotten that there is such a thing in the world as a French navy?

Mr. CURRIE: And an Italian navy and a Japanese navy?

Mr. DENIS: Yes, there is a French navy, and there is an Italian navy and a Japanese navy.

Mr. KEEFER: And there is the League of Nations, too.

Mr. DENIS: Yes, there is the League of Nations, too. But all that would not save Canada from the United States if war was declared. By the time those navies would be here, and by the time transports could convey troops overseas to this country, Canada would be overpowered. Canada could be conquered ten times over and all the warriors in those countries could not defend it against the United States.

Mr. KEEFER: Why did not Germany try to break through Switzerland?

Mr. DENIS: I will answer that question as I did a minute ago. My hon. friend is too well informed to ask me a question like that. He is too well informed to make a comparison between a mountainous country like Switzerland and a country like Canada.

Mr. KEEFER: What about Switzerland?

Mr. DENIS: The conditions are altogether different. It is harder to go three miles through a mountainous country like Switzerland than it is to go 500 miles through a country like Canada. There is no comparison between the two countries at all.

Mr. KEEFER: What about the mountains of Italy? Austria got through those mountains into Italy.

Mr. DENIS: I do not quite see where the argument comes in. How long did it take Austria to do that? It took Austria three years to push its way through those mountains. It would not take the United States three years, or even three months, to get into Canada; their armies would be in this country within a few days. Now, I want to be well understood in the argument that I have made. I do not say that we should not do our duty in this matter, not for a moment; but I want the House to understand clearly that because we are neighbours of the United States our position is an exceptional one. If we were living in Australia, in New Zealand, or in any other British colony, the question would appear to us in a different light altogether.

Then it would be a matter of policy. We might say that it was convenient, or it was not convenient, it was proper or it was not proper, that we should construct a navy, organize an army, and pool our resources, naval and military, with England in case of war with the United States. But when we are neighbours of the United States we cannot pool our resources in that way. Even supposing we should construct a navy—and a strong navy—that navy instead of ensuring peace to Canada would only be a cause of inconvenience and a source of danger because it would have to be immediately placed in an antagonistic position against the United States navy in case of a difficulty between the United States and England.

Mr. MORPHY: Does the hon. member incline to the idea that the navies of the United States, of Great Britain and of Canada would be working in the one way to preserve the peace of the world? I would like his opinion upon that idea.

Mr. DENIS: If my hon. friend had followed the point I am developing he would have understood that I am now contemplating the possibility of a conflict between England and the United States, not otherwise. What I am now saying would not apply in case of a conflict between other nations, but it would apply in the event of a war between Great Britain and the United States. Therefore, I say that the only thing that we have to fear at the present time is the conditions between these two countries who are entering into an excessive and intensive development of their naval policies. In five years from now the navies of France, Italy, and Japan will be nothing as compared with either the British navy or the United States navy. There will be two great sea powers in the world—Great Britain and the United States. If no conflict ever arises between these two countries my argument does not apply. But I assert this: England will never need a Canadian navy to help her in case she should be in difficulties with the United States and even if that situation does arise we cannot help her on account of our geographical position. Consequently whether we look at the question from one side or the other I would say that our navy would be useless to help England.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Is it the hon. gentleman's contention that we should just exist on the sufferance of the United States?

Mr. DENIS: No.