

the land militia service; why they countenance the latter and absolutely reject the former? If we were like certain European countries, completely surrounded by other nations, if we had not a seaboard on two oceans, if we had not vast waterways in the interior and across our territory, if we had not commercial routes on both oceans, if we did not own immense and rich fisheries, I might understand the objections of those who would like to restrict our national defence to a mere land military service. Attacks may not be by land only; our shores, our fisheries, our harbours are equally exposed to attack, I would even say more exposed than the interior of the country. We must not forget either that the Imperial government has, by degrees, handed over and entrusted to our care the maintenance and protection of our naval stations on both oceans, and has withdrawn the garrisons which, until recent years, it maintained in this country. We are therefore bound in duty and honour, to protect, on land and on sea, the integrity, prosperity and future of our national domain.

Once more, I venture to ask those who resist so violently the creation and maintenance of a naval service, on what principles, on what grounds they base their objection and opposition? Moreover, it does not seem possible to me that objection can seriously be taken to the obligation for all portions of the British Empire to assist the Imperial government, if need be, to maintain and preserve the integrity of the flag which safeguards our liberties, our rights, our lives and our property. I do not believe there is a single Canadian who would dare to pretend should the British flag be in danger, should the British Empire be seriously threatened, that the duty of Canada would not be to join the other parts of the empire, in ensuring the maintenance of the flag and of the empire to which we belong. I cannot conceive that there can be any doubt expressed as to the necessity for us to defend our domain, and, in case of common danger, contribute, according to our means and resources, to the safeguarding of the common cause, the common interest. In saying this, I have merely mentioned the material interest; but for every self-respecting citizen there

is also the obligation which his sense of honour imposes. I hope, and moreover I believe that there does not exist in this country a single subject of the empire who ever forgets that, after all, we are members of the great imperial family; and that, if we claim and take advantage of the privileges offered to us by the imperial family, we also have the duty and the obligation imposed upon us by honour and by our title of members of that empire of contributing to the expenses and obligations of this national and imperial association; as in the case of every association which cannot be founded or exist except on the basis of mutual contribution, calculated on the means of its members, and proportioned on the benefits derived therefrom. I repeat it, if the obligation for Canada to create and maintain a naval national defence, is denied, the obligation to establish and maintain a land military service must also be denied; and this double negation would lead us to the logical conclusion that we have no more use for our militia, our ports, our naval stations, and that but one thing is left for us to do: demolish the latter and throw our ammunition and guns into the sea. I do not know if those who persist in the opinion that we are not under the obligation to establish and maintain a naval defence service, have ever looked into the question of what would happen if the British Empire were seriously in danger. If they have not looked into it, it seems to me that they have failed in the most important duty imposed upon them in examining, appreciating and discussing this grave matter. If, as I have just said a few moments ago, the existence of the British Empire were seriously menaced, if the supremacy of the empire should come to an end, has it ever been asked what the fate of the Dominion would be? Would there be a disposition to humbly beg from the American government, a place among the States of the American union? Would we be ready to accept the probably humiliating, if not disastrous, conditions and obligations, which would be imposed upon us in this role of mendicant? Moreover, in agreeing, under these circumstances, to form part of the Ameri-