

tinuous consultation. Britain would be responsible for naval security in European waters, the dominions for the Pacific and the trade routes. It would involve no doubt the abandonment of free trade and the fullest development of Imperial preference, so that the external interests of all the partner-states might automatically converge without the compulsion of central government. But someone objects, 'Are the dominions to stand in or out at will?' I reply: 'Ask them to sign, and they will not do it. Do not ask them, and they will take for granted the pledge. This is not cussedness, but the most intelligent liberty that the world has yet seen.'

That is the language of one of the foremost Imperialists in Great Britain to-day.

But, Sir, I wish to conclude. What the Government propose to-day is, in my humble judgment, unconstitutional. The defence of our territory, the defence of our shores, has been confided to Canada, and we have no right to send the money of Canada across the water even to implement the needs of the British Admiralty, if there are needs. Therefore you should begin by amending the constitution. But would you amend the constitution without getting a mandate from the people? Is this not the sound British tradition? I appeal to my hon. friend the Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Mr. Hazen), who is a descendant of good old United Empire Loyalist stock: is it not the true British tradition that when a new issue arises which affects vitally the country at large a fresh mandate is sought from the people by the Government of the day? This is the policy of British statesmen anyway. What would you think of a Government in Great Britain, for instance, reforming the House of Lords, passing a Home Rule Bill, or even altering vitally the trade policy of Great Britain, without consulting the people? Why, Mr. Chairman, knowing the history of Great Britain as I claim to know it, I have no hesitation in saying that if statesmen sought to reform the House of Lords or to alter the trade policy, or to pass a Home Rule Bill, without getting a mandate from the people, there would be a revolution. The right hon. gentleman can retrace his steps, or if he persists in his present policy he can seek a mandate from the Canadian electorate. He is the leader of the great Conservative party, and to his talents I pay homage.

An hon. MEMBER: That is a dangerous word.

Mr. LEMIEUX: It is a dangerous word for a Liberal, but to the party of aristocrats the word 'homage' always applies. I pay homage to the right hon. gentleman's ability; he has a large majority in this House; and, judging

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from the applause with which he has been received—during the first part of the session anyway—one would be inclined to believe that he has the enthusiastic support of his followers.

Hon. gentlemen can oppose claim that their policy is supported by a majority of the electors of Canada. If so, what do they fear? The right hon. gentleman is a successor of Cartier, of Macdonald, of Tupper; and let him ask himself if Cartier, Macdonald or Tupper would have pressed an issue of this consequence through Parliament without appealing to the people, I wonder what answer his conscience will give him. The greatest of the modern leaders of Conservative thought, Disraeli, had for his motto, 'Forti nihil difficile'—to the strong nothing is difficult. The right hon. gentleman would not be the leader of a great party if he were not a strong man, and I counsel him to live up to the motto of Disraeli: 'forti nihil difficile.' If he does, I have no doubt that the people of Canada will tell the right hon. gentleman that if he wishes to lead the country and not merely a party he must revert to the Canadian policy he accepted in 1909. But, no, I am confident that if consulted the people would say: Let us bring back the old leader, the veteran statesman, who promulgated the policy adopted in 1909, and which, had it not been for the ignoble alliance, would have triumphed at the last general election.

Mr. HAZEN: I am only going to occupy the attention of the committee for a very few moments, and I shall confine my remarks entirely to the criticism that has been made by my hon. friend from Rouville, by the hon. member for Pictou, and others, with regard to the memorandum of Commander Roper, extracts from which I read to this House on the 12th December, 1912. This memorandum was dated September 20, 1911, and the extracts I read from it on that occasion were as follows:

As is well known a naval service is composed of a large number of items which all dovetail and all of which go to make up the whole. If, therefore, all these items are not simultaneously proceeded with, the structure must become unstable and ultimately collapse.

This, at present, is what is occurring with regard to the naval service of Canada.

A programme having been drawn up, it was adopted by the Canadian Government and embarked upon in the early part of 1910. From that time up to the present it has only been proceeded with piecemeal and items have, from one cause and another, been postponed and again postponed, until at last a point approaching stagnation is being reached, and all the most undesirable features such as uncertainty, delay and unnecessary expense are being produced.

The only vessels belonging to the naval service of Canada up to the present, are the