

House of Commons Debates

SECOND SESSION—ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT

SPEECH

OF

MR. HONORE GERVAIS, M.P.

ON THE

NAVAL SERVICE OF CANADA

OTTAWA, TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 1910

Mr. HONORE GERVAIS (St. James, Montreal). Mr. Speaker, with regard to the many services which have been rendered to Canada by Great Britain, some of which have been mentioned by the hon. member for Grenville (Mr. J. D. Reid), I shall not say much, as I agree with that member on that point. I agree also that Canada owes a debt of gratitude to England for these services that have been rendered her in the last hundred years. With regard to the third question which has been raised by the hon. member, the question of the kind of contribution that Canada should give to England, I ask the hon. member for Grenville to agree with me in the position I take and which I shall explain as I proceed. Canada, as I shall show, is ready to grant to England the kind of aid that has been agreed upon between Canada and England. With these few remarks, I proceed to explain the vote that I intend to give on this Bill (No. 95).

Mr. Speaker. I took a great deal of interest, in the debate which took place in this House in March last, upon the resolution concerning the aid to be given

to Great Britain for the strengthening of the British navy. It is now proposed that Canada should take a step further in that direction, and the government asks parliament to crystallize that resolution, and give it effect by the passage of this legislation entitled 'an Act respecting the Naval Service of Canada'; and a subsequent resolution providing for the expenditure necessary for the establishment of that service. By the 53 clauses of this Bill, the government will be empowered to organize a permanent volunteer naval force, at its expense, the ships to be built in Canada, manned and commanded by Canadians, or commanded by officers appointed by Canada, to defend Canada, first, and assist England in its defence, in case of need, under the command in chief of the King, as is required by the political status of this Dominion.

Sir, let me explain some of the many reasons for which this Bill should be passed:

During the recess of parliament a rather lengthy conference between the representatives of the British government, and of the self-governing colonies was held in