

Colonies when we can readily get Reserve men in this country to accept the conditions. I cannot pledge myself to anything definite with regard to the matter, except that the Commanders-in-Chief will put themselves in communication with the various Governments to see how far they are willing to go. We are not in such need of Reserve men, and the supply is not so limited but what we could largely increase it; and I could not promise that we could supply to the various Colonies the apparatus for training at the expense of this country—that is, to build batteries and to supply the instructors and the houses where the instructors might live, which are all matters of very considerable expense. Our organisation is now such that we should be able to train a very much larger number of Reserve men than we have at the present moment. We have 27,000 men, but there are numerous applications from men, and we shall increase the number of our Reserves at home. Therefore it is not the paucity of our numbers that would induce us to go to any great expense. But I acknowledge the value of the Colonies if they would contribute men efficiently trained as an Imperial consideration from many points of view; and, therefore, so far as the organisation is concerned, we will do our best to see whether the development of the Reserve under the conditions I have mentioned is possible. I do not disguise from you that there are considerable difficulties in the matter which have hitherto arrested any progress at all, but I think I have made a fair offer and an offer which will test the real sincerity, not of the Governments of the Colonies, because I believe them to be sincere, but the reality of the possibility that we should be able to increase to any extent our Reserve. (Cheers.)

General LAURIE, M.P.: Perhaps, Sir, you will allow me to say one word in reference to the difficulties that have been placed before you, as being almost prohibitory, of organising a Naval Reserve force in the Colonies. One difficulty which has been stated outside is that you will