

time to time. One of the chief arguments advanced for getting rid of an imperial General Officer Commanding is that he controls the Militia Department. Well, Sir, if the facts were inquired into, I think it would be found that the General Officer Commanding, at all events the last one, has not been treated with the courtesy due to a gentleman occupying that position. From the various papers which the Minister of Militia has from time to time laid before the House this year in regard to the department, we find that the large number of letters and orders which have passed between the Minister of Militia and the General Officer Commanding have passed through the deputy minister. I am free to say that that is an entirely improper course. I have no hesitation in saying that communications passing between the minister and the General Officer Commanding should be direct, and not through the deputy minister. If the minister wanted to have this council, why should he not summon these gentlemen to his presence at any time—the General Officer Commanding, the quartermaster-general, the deputy minister, the adjutant-general and the director-general of ordnance? These are all capable men, they are all at his disposal at the present time, and there is nothing to prevent him summoning them to his presence at any time, and having an informal and unofficial chat with them. I understood from the minister that when the Bill passed the committee stage and came up for its third reading, the details of this council would be submitted to the House, and the duties, powers and restrictions of each member of it would be determined.

The minister says he is going to bring down the regulations at some subsequent time. I purposed at the time asking, in case the council were determined upon, that the minister should make the chief staff officer of that council an imperial officer with high imperial training, and I thought that in the statute the duties of these officers should be determined. That is very important, and had the minister done that it would have removed any opposition which might have developed against the proposition in certain quarters. However there is another argument which is used from time to time as a plea for getting rid of the necessity of having an imperial officer as General Officer Commanding. One may just as well look things squarely in the face. There is no man who has the monopoly of the right to express his own opinions, and I am satisfied that if in this and other countries certain matters in controversy had been temperately discussed before they came to a final issue, a great deal of mischief and evil would have been avoided. The policy of drift is a policy fatal to the interests of any people or individual. Had the British government faced the South African issue long years ago in a kind, firm and effective manner, we

would not have had the later troubles to deal with. If these Russian and Japan troubles had been faced years ago, there would have been no necessity for these two nations to have gone to war. If in the United States the difficulties between the north and south had been boldly faced at the proper time, that disastrous civil war would have been avoided. The same remark applies to troubles we have had within our own country. One of the links which joins this country with the empire is the appointment of an imperial officer to the command of our militia. There are only a few links left. We have the Governor General, we have the right of appeal to the Privy Council, and we had the General Officer Commanding, and that is about all. We are getting rid of the General Officer Commanding and in this measure there are certain changes, which while they may not affect the practical operation of the law, certainly jar upon our national sentiment as Britons. We have for instance the omission of the name of His Majesty almost entirely; though it may be argued that the omission does not really make any practical change, still it touches the sentiment of the people and we know that sentiment plays a strong role in national affairs. Then we have these hon. gentlemen claiming our right to make our own treaties, and we are promised a Bill for the establishment of a Canadian navy, and we have the provisions in this Bill restricting the sending of our militia outside of Canada; and taking all these things together, they lead to the conclusion that the policy of hon. gentlemen opposite is ultimate independence of Great Britain by evolution if not by revolution. The way to put a stop to that process of disintegration is to educate the people. I have faith in the people. I believe that if the advantages which accrue to Canada through its being part of the great British empire were fully made known in every part of the Dominion, there is not a man who values the best interests of this country who would not rally to the support of that principle. For that reason I shall be delighted if my hon. friends opposite will discuss this matter temperately here in the House so that both sides may be fairly presented to the people. If that line be pursued, I have sufficient faith in the people to believe that no appeal to race of fanaticism will prevent their standing firm by the old flag which has brought freedom, liberty and justice to all classes in the Dominion. We frequently hear the question of imperialism raised and are asked, are you going to keep a British officer in command who wants to build a line of forts along the border and build up imperialism and go in for all sorts of nonsensical extravagance? And these gentlemen will point us to the United States as an instance of what a country should do in relation to military matters. Sir, I cannot employ the time