

But if Great Britain is going to consult the dominions of the empire, and if the dominions require to be consulted before there is going to be war, what fault can my hon. friend find with this clause in the Navy Act which simply anticipates consultation and conference?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Hear, hear.

Mr. MACDONALD. My hon. friend went on to say—I want to emphasize that point:

And, Sir, I venture to believe that in the future the self-governing nations of the empire will have something to say about the wars of the empire.

But how is Canada to have a word to say about the wars of the empire unless she reserves the right to say it as she does in this Navy Bill? Then my hon. friend proceeds:

It is not wise to prophesy what the future may bring forth, but I would venture to hope that a defence committee or an imperial conference having special jurisdiction over defence matters, composed of men from both parties in Great Britain itself as well as in the self-governing nations of the empire, would have some control over the organization of imperial defence, and as an outcome of such a committee or such a conference I would expect that in future Great Britain would engage in no great war without knowing beforehand that she would have the support and the sympathy of every one of the great self-governing nations of the empire. This would give to these dominions a voice in the control of war, because I thoroughly agree that if we are to take part in the permanent defence of this great empire we must have some control and some voice in such matters.

How in the name of common sense can my hon. friend seriously complain about these sections in the Naval Act when he declared and reiterated that there would be no quarrels of the empire in the future unless Canada was consulted, and how would Canada be consulted, except by some such provision as is contained in this Act? I think we can very fairly leave my hon. friend in the fond hope that when he examines the precedents in England, when he looks over the conditions of affairs in Australia and reviews his own utterances, he can feel confident that no harm can come through Canada reserving to herself the very right which he says she ought to reserve. He criticised the Naval Bill on the ground that men would only be trained three years. The Minister of Militia (Sir Frederick Borden) punctured that by pointing out that he had misread the provision of the Act, that the Act laid down methods by which men would be trained for six years. Then my hon. friend with these misgivings rushed impetuously, and with utter disregard of everything he had said before on this question, to the extreme limit of the objectionable position which he had be-

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD.

fore said should not be taken. Give them \$25,000,000—nothing for the defence of Canada, do not hamper these people with any conditions, do not say that the Dreadnoughts when built or the money when expended, is to come to Canada to be used in defence. As the Minister of Militia points out it need not be Dreadnoughts at all. The leader of the opposition simply says: Here is \$25,000,000, do what you like with it, do not care anything about Canada, do not provide for local defence, do anything you like but take it, take it, without any condition, without any restriction, Canada's interests being utterly disregarded in every way and without a single step forward being taken in the direction of Canadian defence or in any way in which Canada's interests would be advanced. If that is the way in which Canada is to maintain herself in the empire, it is a very miserable way. What would our friends have thought if in 1900, instead of sending the boys to South Africa, we had said: Here, take \$10,000,000, we do not care anything about the empire, we do not want to fight for it, we do not want to share in its future or its defence or its glories, or anything of that kind; here is the money, take it. A splendid answer to my hon. friend was afforded in the letter from Captain Stairs, of Halifax, which I read the other day, in which he spoke of the importance of giving to the empire that real service which could only be rendered by the sympathy and influence of men all over the country who, whether on sea or land, will have that interest in the welfare of the empire, which would lead to its preservation and its extension.

I need not detain the House to place on record the statements of the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden) about contributions. I shall read only one of them. On January 12, of this very year, hardly a month ago, the hon. gentleman made this statement:

It has been suggested that instead of the organization of a Canadian naval force, there should be a system of annual contributions from this country to the mother country; and I am free to admit that, from the strategical point of view, that I would be inclined to agree with the view of the admiralty that that would be the best way for the great self-governing dominions of the empire to make their contributions.

And mark this:

But, sir, from a constitutional and political standpoint, I am opposed to it, for many reasons. In the first place, I do not believe that it would endure. In the second place, it would be a source of friction. It would become a bone of partisan contention. It would be subject to criticism.

Of course it would be: