

(Mr. Nantel). So the whole Quebec outfit that is gathered into this cabinet are men holding exactly the same opinion as the Minister of Public Works himself. Now how could the Prime Minister expect to serve the loyal people of this country by taking such men into his cabinet? The people of this country are strongly in favour of the empire, they are in favour of doing everything that ought to be done in putting us in a position, from a naval standpoint, of defending ourselves, of defending the homes of those who are dear to us. The people of this country are unwilling to occupy the position of beggars and poltroons, such as were described by the Prime Minister himself in the speech I have just read. Is that the position he wants us to adopt when he gathers around him a cabinet composed of men who have clearly and distinctly declared themselves as opposed to contributing to the naval strength of the empire? Is the Prime Minister going to ask the people of Canada, by a plebiscite, to say whether or not they wish to bring themselves into the category of the men whom he described in this speech? He says that if this country is composed of men of that kind, the sooner the empire is clear of Canada the better, the sooner the cord is cut and the sooner she cuts adrift from the empire, the better will it be for her own reputation. Is the Prime Minister going to ask the people of this country, by a plebiscite, to say whether they are willing to put themselves into that category? So it would seem, if he is going to ask the people of Canada to say whether they are in favour of doing their duty or not. It would be just as reasonable for me to ask you if you are a murderer, or if you have been guilty of any other of the criminalities on the statute books of this country, knowing well what kind of an answer I should receive from you. It would be just as respectful for me to ask such a question as that, as it would be for the government of this country to ask the Canadian people if they are willing to sit down in idleness, in abjectness, if they are willing to continue to receive the protection of the British navy while refusing to contribute one dollar to its support. If that is a fit question to put to the people of this country, and if the people are so hide-bound by partisanship as to answer it, then I am very much mistaken in the temper of the Canadian people.

Now, Sir, we had some explanation last evening from the Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Mr. Hazen) as to why he would not proceed with the navy scheme commenced by the late government. He said that if he went on with it now, the ships would become obsolete in six years.

Mr. McKENZIE.

Well, the Minister of Marine and Fisheries may be gifted with doublesight, he may be a prophet with powers beyond the ken of an humble individual like myself; but I do not see how otherwise he can say that the programme of the late government would turn out to be so utterly useless. The programme of the late government let him remember, was laid down by the British Admiralty. The plans and specifications were prepared only a few months ago by the best experts at the command of the British Admiralty. They knew the conditions in Canada, they knew we intended to build these ships in Canada, that was the policy on both sides of this House; and surely it is not to be supposed that they would have presented us with plans and specifications which which would be useless, for the construction of ships which would become obsolete in so short a time. They knew that Canada had no shipyards, and that the men taking the contract would have to get ready the necessary machinery and plant to build these ships, and does the Minister of Marine and Fisheries understand that the Admiralty placed in the hands of the late government plans that could not possibly be carried out with any advantage to the country? What evidence has he that these ships would not be useful and serve a good purpose when completed? Is it not necessary that we should make a start? According to the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Foster) we should make a start, going along gradually, and carrying out this undertaking like every other great undertaking that the Canadian people have assumed. The Minister of Marine and Fisheries had no right to say that we should not go on with this undertaking, if we are ready in other respects, unless he meant to put forward a subterfuge, unless he desired to throw dust in the eyes of the people, to put the thing off. If that be so, perhaps the answer of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries is as good a one as he could give. But there is this satisfaction to be got out of it, that the Minister of Public Works and his associates in the cabinet must understand from the speech of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries that they are not going to have it all their own way, there is going to be a navy, there is going to be a naval programme acceptable to the people of Canada, a policy that will be worthy of this great country. But there was a statement made by the minister to the effect that the outgoing government should have done something that they did not do, that they should have let the contracts. Now, let me point out to him that there was no opportunity for the late government to deal with this question. According to the Minister of Marine and Fisheries this is a question that requires