

that will be necessary. Take the expenditure for arms and equipment of that kind; we must commence right down at the bottom and if in five or ten years from now we have not spent a very large amount of money on that account I would be very much surprised. Whatever government is in power they must keep the defences up to the standard maintained by the British government. The new departure in the British navy has made it more important than ever that these posts shall be well maintained because the navy is in future going to be held largely in depots across the sea and it will only be in times of war that the ships of the navy will be found at outlying ports or rallying places. These two forts will be maintained for what purpose? Not for the defence of Canada alone, but as the two great strongholds on the Pacific and Atlantic ocean for the defence of the empire. I say we cannot defend these posts nor arm them even if we were prepared to spend the money as efficiently as Great Britain could, because to-day forts are used almost entirely to help one navy to defeat the ships of another. The day has passed when forts are used for anything else unless it may be in the case of a fort like Port Arthur where millions of pounds and hundreds of thousands of men were engaged in making it impregnable. It would be better for Canada and better for Great Britain that the defence of these forts should remain in the hands of the imperial authorities because Great Britain would know of her own knowledge what amount of money was spent for the changes in projectiles and in the great guns, and we know how rapidly they are advancing in these respects and the immense expense which it involves. Then Great Britain has the advantage of men trained in the larger school of knowledge and experience. I say it is little Canadianism on our part to be afraid that we are not asserting ourselves properly if we join hands with the mother country and contribute with the British government towards the maintenance of these defences, allowing them to take over these forts and defend them. In the second place an important consideration is the economy of it because of the fact that there would be \$1,000,000 saved for our militia and other purposes. Lastly, this new arrangement destroys the last link of the connection that has been so long maintained on this continent with the British army and the British navy. I have received a letter from an old militia officer who like myself has been long retired from the service, who, unlike myself, has been a very strong reformer and supporter of hon. gentlemen opposite and I will read a few words from it in regard to this very matter. I want to tell hon. gentlemen opposite that there is a very strong feeling throughout this country in opposition to this arrangement as far as I have been able to gather

Mr. TISDALE.

it. People have not been shouting about it but thinking men are not favourable to it. Last year there was a difference of opinion. The hon. Minister of Militia and Defence thought he was right in regard to the Militia Council but a great many people doubted it and they also differed from the view of the hon. minister in regard to taking over these defences because they look upon these stations as depots of the empire. The defence of Canada is more important to us than it is to Great Britain but the defence of Great Britain and the empire is more important to them and to Canada than anything else, and to say that to join hands with Great Britain in the defence of these important posts, the only ones on this continent, on the Atlantic and the Pacific, is derogatory to the independence of this great colony is something that I cannot understand. I do not believe in the policy of the hon. gentleman on this question, and I am satisfied that the people of the country will not agree with that policy. Now, this gentleman writes:

It is a long time since you and I had either interview or correspondence re militia—

I may say that he dates back forty or fifty years ago, the same as I do in the militia service of this country. He is a retired officer.

—so I hope a few lines on the new policy will not be out of place. As far as I can understand both the new Bill and the proposition in regard to Halifax and Esquimalt, I hope every loyal British Canadian in the House will oppose both for two reasons; first, Canada has no force fit to replace the present garrisons, and the country has not been told or given an idea of the cost of maintaining the works at the two fortresses in their existing state of efficiency, nor the cost of the up-keep of the new garrisons if the exchange is effected, which I hope it will not be, for that brings up my second reason, viz.: That it will be a bad day for the feelings and loyalty of Canada when it is known that there is not a Union Jack on a flagstaff, nor a British soldier or sailor in the Dominion. Then comes another point—the increase of the permanent corps to fill their places. I am surprised that Dr. Borden was not more considerate for the feelings of the Rev editor of the 'Globe,' who, when Lord Dundonald proposed the enrolment of the very number advocated by the Militia Council had daily fits of frenzy and convulsions induced by Lord Dundonald's militarism.

There is an expression from an old reformer and an old officer. They are my sentiments also and I agree with him when he says that it would be a bad day for Canada when this charge takes place. I would not like to see the day when the Union Jack would no longer float from a flagstaff here. We have our Canadian flag, it is true, but we will no longer have the British soldier. I believe, as I have had occasion to say before, that there is no material for a fighting force to be found anywhere in the world better than the Canadians. I believe also that the