

ada had been an independent nation on the 4th of August, 1914, would it have declared war upon Germany because it had invaded Belgium? With very many friends of the Anglo Saxon race with whom I have discussed the question, I have come to the conclusion that Canada as an independent nation would not have declared war upon Germany in August, 1914, for that reason.

Hon. Mr. LYNCH-STANTON: If she had sunk our ships, would we not have gone to war?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Certainly. We would have waited, like the United States and some of the South American republics, until a *casus belli* special to Canada, affecting its material interests or its honour, had occurred. Of course, the people of Canada, like the rest of humanity, had an interest in defending justice and liberty in the world, but that interest was insufficient to impel the United States and all the South American republics to enter the war. It was insufficient, and all the more honour to Canada that she did go to war, not for self-interest, but from sentiment alone. The Anglo-Canadian did join in, because of his imperial connection.

I will not discuss the various items of the bill of fare which is laid before us. There are things with which I am in hearty accord. I am glad to see that we have made a convert of my honourable friend from the Gulf (Hon. Mr. L'Esperance), who hails with delight the beginning of the ship-building industry. He is recanting from a position which he took in the other House when he came in fresh from the fight of 1911 and gave a notice of motion, or presented a Bill, if I am not mistaken, calling for a repeal of the Laurier Naval Act.

Hon. Mr. L'ESPERANCE: Will my honourable friend allow me a remark? I was speaking of a merchant marine, not of a navy.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Then, will my honourable friend allow me to put to him this question? Is he still of the opinion that the Naval Act should be taken off the statute-book?

Hon. Mr. L'ESPERANCE: In April, 1914, I introduced a Bill to repeal it.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Not in 1914.

Hon. Mr. L'ESPERANCE: I did that before the war.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND.: Oh, yes, but it was in 1912.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND.

Hon. Mr. L'ESPERANCE: Before the war.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Yes, in 1912 or 1911—in the first or second session.

Hon. Mr. L'ESPERANCE: It was in 1914.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: But it was quietly allowed to remain on the Order Paper until my honourable friend resigned his seat to take a position on the Quebec Harbour Board. Whatever may be the present opinion of my honourable friend, let me tell him that if the Naval Act had been carried out, and if the ships for which tenders are now to be received had been accepted in 1911, when the new Government came in, we should have been much sooner in a position to build ships on the Atlantic and the Pacific than we are to-day. It was said at the time that we could not build ships—that it was impossible to build ships. Now we have been doing so, but how much farther advanced should we not have been if we had started in 1911 instead of a few months ago.

I notice that the Speech from the Throne does not mention the railway situation. This is a most important subject, one which, I am quite sure, engrosses the mind of the Government as well as that of the members of both Houses. On this problem the Government will doubtless have some statement to make and some legislation to submit if it can agree upon a policy.

Having spoken of the past, it is my intention not to refer again to it, but to join in the work which will be submitted to this House, as announced in this Speech from the Throne. We are all of one mind in that respect. We felt at the end of last session that we disagreed on the question of conscription.

My honourable friend expressed his surprise and regret that Sir Wilfrid Laurier had not accepted the recent offer of Sir Robert Borden. Well, I have had occasion to say, and I repeat, that when Sir Robert Borden came back from Europe, before announcing a new policy, he should have gone to the leader of the Opposition, late as it was, to discuss with him the possibility or advisability of forming a National Government, and discussed afterwards the conditions under which this National Government should be formed, and the programme that should be laid down. This statement I have heard made by a hundred prominent citizens of Montreal belonging to both parties, and my honourable friends on the other side of the House should not be surprised that I repeat it now. Sir Wilfrid Laurier did not