

It must not be lost sight of that navies are only built for war and not for peace purposes. They are only useful in time of war and if we want to ascertain the value or the necessity of a navy, we must suppose for the moment that war is declared. Supposing that war should be declared between England and the United States in five years from now, could Canada go ahead and assure England's plan of naval supremacy or send her navy to England? If England were to go to war with the United States our position would be absolutely helpless both on land and on sea.

Some Hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. DENIS: My hon. friends may laugh but it is true. I will go farther and appeal to any man who wants to look at this question sincerely and honestly. Our population is about one-twelfth that of the United States. The United States has about twenty times our wealth. How could we stand the pressure if war should ever be declared between the United States and Canada? Our navy would be absolutely ineffective.

Mr. MEIGHEN: What does the hon. gentleman think we should do under such conditions as that?

Mr. DENIS: If such an emergency should ever arise our position would be about the same as the position of Serbia when war was declared by Austria-Hungary against her. Our position would not be much better.

Mr. MEIGHEN: What should we do?

Mr. DENIS: I suppose we would do our best to defend ourselves, but I say what ex-President Roosevelt once said; I do not think our chances will be much better than the chances of a fat calf tied up in a tiger-infested jungle. That is what he said when comparing the strength of the United States with that of a small nation and that would be about the position of our navy. We would have no chance at all. There is no use of saying that we are patriots and that we are going to rise up and defend our country. Let us assume that we will try to defend our country, how could we defend it? Under no circumstances could we defend the soil of Canada against the United States.

Mr. BALLANTYNE: Then I understand what the hon. gentleman means is that if such an unfortunate catastrophe should occur as that war should break out between Canada and the United States the British Empire would have no more

[Mr. Denis.]

chance than the fatted calf in the tiger jungle?

Mr. DENIS: I will explain myself again and I hope I may be able to make myself understood. I am simply speaking of Canada. Canada is close to the United States, she has a border line of 3,000 miles long and the United States aims in five years to have a navy equal to that of England,—they claim that it will be better but let us admit that it will be equal. It will be equal—there is no use of denying it.

Mr. MEIGHEN: If we are in the position of the fatted calf, does the hon. gentleman think we ought to try and defend ourselves? Or should we not try at all?

Mr. DENIS: We should take the same course as heroic Serbia took. She defended herself and we could try to defend ourselves, but in the meantime we are well aware that we would not have any more chance than the fatted calf I spoke of.

Mr. KEEFER: What happened in the war of 1812 when the United States came over to take Canada?

Mr. DENIS: My hon. friend is too much a reader of history to confront present conditions with the conditions of 1812.

Mr. KEEFER: There was the same ratio of people.

Mr. DENIS: There is no comparison at all.

Mr. KEEFER: The same ratio of people—ten to one.

Mr. DENIS: The conditions are not the same at all.

Mr. CAHILL: They were nearly all French-Canadians at that time; it is different now.

Mr. KEEFER: What about Queenston Heights, Lundy's Lane and the rest?

Mr. DENIS: Conditions are altogether different. Any student of conditions today must admit that Canada would not be in a position to defend herself against the United States.

Mr. MORPHY: Will the hon. member allow me a question? Has he forgotten that there is such a thing as a French navy?

Mr. DENIS: I did not catch the question.