

# HON. J. D. HAZEN'S MASTERLY REPLY TO REMARKS OF MR. PUGSLEY ON QUESTION OF NAVAL AD

## Fictions of ex-Minister of Public Works Exposed Under Well Directed Volley of Hard Facts---Liberals Promised Warships to St. John, Montreal, Halifax, Sydney, and Quebec---Minister of Marine Conclusively Shows that if Warships were Built in Canada, They Would be Obsolete Before Completion.

In a recent speech in the House of Commons Hon. J. D. Hazen made an exceedingly able and effective reply to Hon. Mr. Pugsley's charges against the government in regard to the cost of building ships in Great Britain and the United States by quoting from a memorandum prepared by Admiral Kingsmill of the Laurier navy, in which the question of the cost of shipbuilding is gone into very thoroughly, and the conclusions of which can hardly be questioned, since the admiral has a great deal more technical knowledge of the subject than a politician.

Mr. Hazen's reply to the charge that he had injured the port of St. John by not accepting the "Cannell Laird" tender, a fiction of Mr. Pugsley's that involves Sir Wilfrid Laurier's statement that the ships were to be built in Montreal, was particularly interesting and forcible and has a ring of sincerity that carries conviction. It is in marked contrast to the cheap tricks and disavowal of facts which have characterized the course of Mr. Pugsley in the matter of the navy, as in most other things.

As illustrating how little Mr. Pugsley's liberal friends were on the question of building a navy in St. John, Mr. Hazen called attention to the well known fact that during the sessions of 1911 liberal leaders were holding out to Halifax, Sydney, Quebec and Montreal the same hopes Mr. Pugsley dangled before the people of St. John.

In concluding his address, Mr. Hazen lifted this question to a higher plane than that of parochial politics, and showed the absurdity of Mr. Pugsley's idea that the interest of any port should be placed above that of the Empire. After pointing out that "Commander Hope had declared that the Laurier navy would have been obsolete before it was completed, Mr. Hazen said:

"Under those circumstances I would ask anyone, I do not care of what political party he is, as a minister of the Crown, having taken the solemn oath which the Minister of the Crown has to take, would have been justified if I had the persuasive power to do it in inducing my colleagues to sign a contract for the construction of ten vessels which the highest authority we had in Canada said would be obsolete before the time the contract was completed and thereby spend the amount of over \$15,000,000 of the money of the people of Canada for accomplishing no good results whatever."

The following is the Hansard report of the speech of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries. Mr. Hazen—My hon. friend from the city of St. John (Mr. Pugsley) has found fault with me for not making more speeches in the House. I am sure that fault can be found with my hon. friend. My hon. friend seems to be afflicted with a disease which might be described as "the disease of the subject under discussion." On almost every occasion my hon. friend feels that a subject could not be properly discussed unless he had spoken on it at great length. In addition to this, he can scarcely permit any other hon. member to make any remarks without asking questions which in most cases have no bearing whatever on the subject under discussion. As a result the honorable gentleman's friends are beginning to entertain serious doubts for, as he grows older, the disease seems to become more acute.

I entirely fail to understand why he should say that I have sat silent during the naval debate. On the first reading of the bill, I, as Minister of the Naval Service, followed my right hon. friend the Prime Minister, and as best as I could met the arguments advanced to the House by the right hon. leader of the opposition, and also placed before the House and the country the motives that influenced the government to take the course it did in introducing the Naval Bill. I have seen no reason for speaking again up to the present stage, because practically no new matter had been introduced into this discussion by opposition members with the exception of the speech of my hon. friend from Sunbury and Queens (Mr. McLean), who the member for St. John city sought to read out of the Liberal party although his services to the Liberal party have been far more consistent and greater than his own.

### Cost of Shipbuilding.

My hon. friend has been visiting some shipyards in the United States, and has come back with some statements which have been made to him as to the cost of building ships in that country. On the strength of those statements he wants us to believe that war vessels can be built in the United States at prices that are almost if not quite as low as the prices in the United Kingdom. Had he looked a little more deeply into the question, I am sure he would not have come here with information which, to say the least, is extremely inaccurate. My information is that, when twenty years ago or thereabouts the United States commenced building warships for its navy, the cost was about \$200 a ton more there than in Great Britain. When also informed an absolutely reliable authority, that the cost of building ships today in the United States is about \$125 a ton more than in Great Britain.

Mr. Pugsley—I gave as my authority the president of the Fore River Shipbuilding Company. Will my hon. friend give his authority? Mr. Hazen—I am quite prepared to give authority for any statement which I may make. In 1902 the King Edward was built in Great Britain with a displacement of 16,550 tons, at a cost of \$7,533,000, or \$460 a ton. In 1906 was built the Dreadnought, the ship from which vessels of that class take their name, with a displacement of 17,900 tons, at a cost of \$9,720,000, or \$542 a ton. In 1910 the Orion was built, with a displacement of 22,000 tons, at a cost of \$10,692,000, or \$485 a ton. In 1911, the Lion was built with a displacement of 26,350 tons, at a cost of \$11,421,000, or \$433 a ton. Therefore, the cost per ton for a battle cruiser in Great Britain of 26,350 tons displacement is \$433.40 as compared with \$500 a ton for a 28,000 ton vessel in the United States.

This information is furnished to me by the officers of the Naval Department, who have made careful inquiries, and who are prepared to verify their statements. The memorandum from which I am reading, is signed by admiral of the navy, Mr. Kingsmill. I invite the hon. gentleman's criticism of that statement. My hon. friend from St. John simply accepted a statement made to him in the course of conversation with a gentleman who is engaged in the shipbuilding industry in the United States; and he did not look sufficiently into the question.

Mr. Pugsley—How does my hon. friend account for the fact that the Argentine Republic only about three years ago called for tenders for two large battleships of 28,000 tons, and in one competition with the world, one of the American shipbuilding companies got the contract?

### Reason for Cheap Work.

Mr. Hazen—My recollection is that at that time scarcely any shipbuilding was going on in the United States; and the American builders, for the purpose of keeping their workmen employed, took this contract at an exceptionally low figure. My hon. friend from Carleton (Mr. Carvell) has made some remarks in reference to the very large increase in the cost of shipbuilding. Judging by the figures presented by the Prime Minister, there is no doubt that the cost of shipbuilding is very much in excess of what it was a short time ago. Apart from the increased size of ships and guns, labor and materials have become much more expensive. The increased speed of these ships, even to the knots of a few knots an hour, adds materially to the cost of building and maintenance. The size of the largest guns has increased from 12 inches to 15.5 inches, thus adding to the cost; this necessitates heavier armor plate and also changes in construction. Modern battleships are equipped with secondary batteries protected by casemates, which the older ships did not have. All of these elements enter into the increased cost and that is why it appears from the statements of the Admiralty that the ships to be built at the present time being of modern design and adapted to the most modern requirements, will cost much larger sum of money than ships of the same class would have cost but a comparatively short time ago.

The hon. member for St. John has repeated in this House a speech he has made on many occasions. He made it once before in this House, and he has made it on several occasions in the House of Commons. He represents, in making the statement in that constituency, I fear that his words have not been very effective, and they do not seem to have very forcibly impressed the electors who vote for that hon. gentleman and for myself. The hon. gentleman asks how it is that when I was sworn into office as Minister of Marine and Fisheries they went out of office on October 10, 1911, I did not get my colleagues to sign a contract with Cannell Laird & Company for the construction of ships in the City of St. John. The ships referred to by my hon. friend were the cruisers and destroyers for which tenders had been asked by the government of which I was a member. Let me briefly call the attention of the committee to the facts in connection with the matter. The tenders were called for early in the year 1911, and were received in Ottawa on May 1 of that year. The general election was held on September 21, four months and three weeks after the tenders were received and opened by the government.

Mr. Pugsley—is the hon. gentleman not mistaken as to the time?

### Liberals Delayed It.

Mr. Hazen—No, I am not mistaken. As I have said, the tenders were received on May 1, the general election was held on Sept. 21, and the government resigned on Oct. 10 following—the tenders being in Ottawa nearly five months before the resignation of the government. Realizing his position in making this attack on me, my hon. friend attempted to excuse himself for not having that contract entered into before September 21, 1911, or before the government went out of office. The hon. gentleman went out of office, my hon. friend, who now pretends to be so solicitous for the interests of the city of St. John, allowed these tenders to be placed in Ottawa, and took not a single step to have that contract entered into.

### Mr. Pugsley's Poor Excuse.

And what is the excuse put forward by my hon. friend for his conduct? He says this was a very important matter; that the Admiralty had to be consulted with reference to it; that the prime minister and the minister of marine and fisheries of the then government had to go to England to attend the Coronation; that they did not have time to do so; and that during the period between July and the date of the general election there was not time to consider it. Let me analyze the pretty excuse given by my hon. friend in the course of the attack he has attempted to make upon me. I would ask him what better opportunity could have been possibly afforded for consultation with the Admiralty than that which was afforded to the minister of marine and fisheries and my right hon. friend the leader of the opposition, when they were in England for several weeks in the year 1911? They were subject to the delay involved in long correspondence between one country and the other; they were at a hotel in London which was within a stone's throw of the offices of the Admiralty; and yet they came back to Canada without having made up their minds with respect to this matter, and allowed it to drag on and on until the election of September 21, and from that time until October 10 they took no action with regard to the matter.

### What Mr. Pugsley Failed To Do.

They went out of office on October 10, without having entered into any contract, just as my hon. friend went out of office without having entered into a contract for the work to be done in that portion of the harbor of St. John, known as Courtenay Bay. It is well known that my hon. friend was intensely anxious for his own political benefit, to have the contract for that work in Courtenay Bay entered into before the general election took place, so that he might announce to his constituents with a great flourish of trumpets, that the contract was let, and that the work would proceed. And why was his contract not entered into? The only inference to be

### Liberals Prodigal in Promises.

With regard to this contract for the construction of ships in St. John, my hon. friend says that "it should have been signed after the present ministry came into office." In coming to a conclusion as to why this contract was not signed by the late government, and why my hon. friend is now obliged to resort to the flimsy excuse he has made in this matter, may we not reasonably suppose, in view of what occurred in this house this afternoon, that it was because of the fact that hon. gentlemen, opposite would have been able to go to Sydney, Halifax, St. John and Montreal, and dangle this contract before the eyes of those different ports.

Anyone who remembers the election of September 21, 1911, will remember that throughout the city and county represented by the Prime Minister, Liberal orators made the statement: "All you have to do is send the present government back to power, and a contract will be entered into for the building of the ships in the city of Halifax." Throughout the length and breadth of the constituency of Cape Breton the same statement was made by the supporters of the Opposition, and in Montreal, St. John and Quebec, the argument was made that a contract would be entered into for the construction of the four cruisers and six destroyers at each and every one of these ports.

Having neglected his duty as a representative of his constituency in not having urged the signing of the contract before September 21, it is an easy matter for my hon. friend to suggest to this House that we should have had the contract signed after we came into power, but why did not the hon. gentleman have that contract signed before September 21? Was he playing the game of deceiving the people of Sydney, Halifax, St. John, Quebec and Montreal, all of whom had dangled before their eyes the vision of the ships being constructed in those ports if the Government of my right hon. friend was sustained on September 21?

### Pugsley or Laurier.

There is a very great difference between the statements of my hon. friend the leader of the Opposition, and those of the hon. member for St. John. The effect of my hon. friend's statement about these ships being built in St. John was very greatly impaired by the statement made in debate in this House by the right hon. leader of the Opposition to the effect that if that contract had been entered into those ships would now be under construction in the city of Montreal.

My hon. friend the Prime Minister knows more about this subject than my hon. friend the ex-Minister of Public Works? Which statement is the right one? Which hon. gentleman's word are we to believe, are we to say, as my hon. friend will have to say in the city of St. John: You must ignore the statement of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who was Prime Minister of Canada, and accept my statement instead of his.

### Sir Wilfrid's Statement.

We have the positive statement of my right hon. friend, made in this House deliberately, in the course of a debate—and I have usually found that the right hon. gentleman weighs his words when he makes statements of fact—that those ships mentioned in the Cannell-Laird tender would now be in course of construction in the city of Montreal if the Government had gone on and awarded the contract. How can my hon. friend reconcile that with the statement that

they would have been constructed at St. John?

It is true that my right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition comes today to the relief of the hon. member for St. John, if it can be called relief, and says they might have ships under construction at both places. I never knew before that it would be possible to construct the same ships at two ports at the same time. That is a feat that would test the skill of the most careful mathematician or man of science.

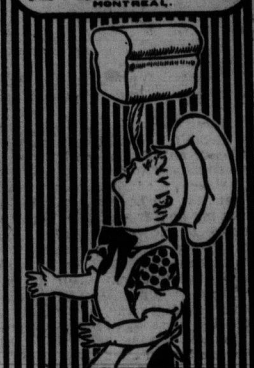
My right hon. friend says they might have been constructed in both ports at the same time. The hon. member for St. John tries to get out by suggesting that there would have been other ships constructed at the other day. He made it with reference to the same ships that the hon. member for St. John said would be constructed at St. John if this tender had been carried out.

### The Promise to Vickers-Maxim.

I would ask my hon. friends if it is not true that a shipbuilding firm in Great Britain, which is not the firm of Cannell-Laird, had absolute and positive assurances from the Government of the day that if a contract was awarded for the construction of these ships, for which tenders were received on May 1st, 1911, seventy per cent. at least of the cost of the ships would be paid by the Government?

Continued on page 13.

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## HON.

Continued from cent. at least of the p ask that question Mr. Pugsley: I never heard anything I have already str Mr. Hazen—The statement for my But was my hon. confidence of the his colleagues in regard to this making about a stat hon. friend, I al statement made by Canada and I ask that assurances w Maxim Limited, t with the plant at portion, seventy that contract wo must be constru Montreal?

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