

I quote these words in order to show that the leader of the opposition at that time knew what was desired by the admiralty. He knew the conditions that bound Australia to the admiralty, and the fact that Australia had decided to retrace its steps and to build an Australian-Antonomist navy. Not only was the Hon. Mr. Borden straight against the admiralty in 1909, but he was not repentant in 1910. On the 12th of January, 1910, he said:

It has been suggested that instead of an organisation of a Canadian naval force there should be a system of annual contributions from this country to the mother country, and I am free to admit that from the strategical point of view, I would be inclined to agree with the view of the admiralty that this would be the best way for the great self-governing dominions of the empire to make their contributions, but Sir, from a constitutional and political standpoint, I am opposed to it for many reasons.

I beg my hon. colleague's pardon, for the leader of the opposition in this chamber cited these very words, but I repeat them for the purpose of the continuity of my argument.

In the first place, I do not believe that it would endure. In the second place it would be a source of friction. It would become a bone of partisan contention. It would be subject to criticism as to the character and the amount of the contributions in both parliaments. It would not be permanent or continuous. It would conduce, if anything could conduce, to severing the present connection between Canada and the empire.

This was the statement of the present Prime Minister in 1910. Straight against the admiralty he remained till he started for Europe in July last. The admiralty met its Waterloo on the 29th of March, 1909, and when at the special conference of July, 1909, the First Lord of the admiralty, Mr. McKenna, faced the representatives of Canada and of Australia this is what fell from his lips:

If the problem of imperial naval defence were considered merely as a problem of naval strategy, it would be found that the greatest output of strength for a given expenditure is obtained by the maintenance of a single navy with the constitutional unity of training and unity of command. In furtherance then of the simple strategical ideal, the maximum of power would be gained if all parts of the empire contributed according to their needs and resources, to the maintenance of the British navy.

It has, however, long been recognized that, in defining the conditions under which the naval forces of the empire should be developed other considerations than those of strategy alone must be taken into account.

Looking to the difficulties involved it is not to be expected that the discussion with the several defence ministers will result in a complete and final scheme of naval defence, but it is hoped that it will be found possible to formulate the broad principles upon which the growth of colonial naval forces should be fostered.

While laying the foundation of future dominion navies to be maintained in different parts of the empire, these forces would contribute immediately and materially to the requirements of imperial defence.

Now, it was the resigned expression of the First Lord of the Admiralty in July, 1909, and the 'Times' speaking for a considerable constituency, said on the 29th November, 1909, while discussing the merits of the whole navy problem and specially of the 'one navy' policy:

It has long been evident that the maximum of power was not going to be gained in this way, because as the several parts of the empire advanced in the progress towards nationhood, the idea of a mere money contribution towards the naval defence of the empire, became, naturally enough, more and more repugnant to them.

It was evident and perhaps it ought to have been foreseen by the admiralty long before it was, that the further the several dominions advanced towards nationhood, the more certain they were sooner or later to insist in having navies of their own, or in Mr. McKenna's words again, 'While ready to provide local forces and to place them at the disposal of the crown in time of war, they would wish to lay the foundations upon which a future navy of their own could be raised. In point of fact, that wish is already taking shape in Australia and Canada, and we will congratulate those great dominions on their achievements in having at last educated the admiralty up to their own point of view.

A voice arose about that time, either in London or on the Pacific, or in Halifax, that of an old statesman honoured by all and cherished by many, Sir Charles Tupper. He wrote a letter to Hon. Mr. Borden, congratulating him upon having stood for the principle of a Canadian navy. Can anyone think that that hon. gentleman spoke without knowing what were the desires of the admiralty? I draw the attention of the Montreal 'Star' to the fact that Sir Charles Tupper, Mr. Borden, and Mr. Laurier all stood straight against the admiralty. The same question arose in 1902 in connection with the army. The army in London wanted an imperial unit service. There was considerable of a campaign carried on for that purpose, but it failed and I will cite the words of Mr. Balfour stating why it failed: