

to construct these vessels would probably cost?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I am not able to give my hon. friend more information than I am giving to-day. I am discussing this matter from a general point of view. When we come to the committee stage, I will endeavour to satisfy his curiosity as to these details.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. May I ask the right hon. gentleman a question? The interpretation clause of the Bill says that 'emergency means war, invasion or insurrection, real or apprehended.' If it requires one year to construct the plant and four years to construct the navy, what would he do if such an emergency arose in the meantime?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I think, Mr. Speaker, we are getting pretty far from the question we have in hand just now.

Mr. J. A. CURRIE. Might I ask the right hon. gentleman a question? It is simply this: does that plant include machinery for the manufacture of guns and machinery?—because seventy per cent. of the cost of these ships consists of guns and machinery.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I think ships and guns are different things. But I am only at present giving a general outline of the policy; I do not think the details are a part of the present discussion on the second reading of the Bill; they can all be asked for in committee of the House. I may say that it is the intention of the government to establish a new department for this service—not under a different minister, but to have a deputy minister charged with the duty of looking after this naval expenditure and this naval construction. On this point I will give further explanations when we are in committee.

There is one other observation I should make. My hon. friend the leader of the opposition, in the course of his observations the other day, if I understood him aright, whilst approving of the principle of this measure, thought it did not go far enough, but that we should also make an emergency contribution on account of the apprehended danger to Great Britain from Germany. I do not know whether I have apprehended rightly the position taken by my hon. friend on this point. I think I did. At all events, if he did not take this position, it has been taken very generally by the press of the country speaking for the other side of the House. For my part, I do not see any cause of danger to Great Britain at the present time. Let me say further, that if Great Britain were engaged in such a con-

test, a wave of enthusiasm to assist her would sweep over this country and all other British countries. It is true, Germany is creating a navy, but I see no reason whatever for supposing that Germany is creating a navy for the purpose of attack or that England is increasing her navy for the purpose of attacking Germany. The fact is that all the nations of Europe at the present time are arming; England is arming, Germany is arming, France is arming, Austria is arming; but I do not believe any of these nations is arming with any intention of attacking his neighbour, but all are arming simply because they are afraid that they will be attacked by one of the neighbours. I was impressed by one statement of my hon. friend the leader of the opposition, though I did not share in the conclusions which he supplied from it. He said that if war came between England and Germany, it would come within the next three or four years. I have not been able to get any satisfactory answer to this query: what is the reason for supposing that war from Germany is to come within the next three or four years? Germany commenced to build a fleet in 1899; but, as my hon. friend rightly said, no European nation commencing with nothing, as Germany has done, can create a fleet inside of fifteen or twenty years. If that be so, it is not to be expected that Germany will be in a position to attack England within the next three or four years. What will be the position of things in 1912? The figures of comparison between the German and British navies will be as follows: The total tonnage of displacement of the British navy will be 20,000,000 tons, and that of the German navy 8,000,000 tons, a difference of 12,000,000 tons. Under such circumstances danger is not to be apprehended within three or four years. Moreover, I call attention to this fact. No one knows exactly what is in the minds of the German government, but everybody knows that between the people of England and the people of Germany there is no cause of war. They have always been fast friends so far back as contemporary history goes. In the Seven Years' war England and Prussia were allies; in the Napoleonic wars Germany and England were fast allies. And there is another feature; democracy is coming to the front in all the countries of the world, and all the democracy of the world is opposed to war, because it is well known that war falls upon the masses of the people. War may come, I do not say it will not come, but I was impressed by a statement made the other day by my hon. friend opposite. He stated that England had subsidized the nations of Europe time and again to enable them to defend their liberty or their independence, or their autonomy against foreign aggression. England subsidized Prussia under Frederick the Great,