

two countries become strained, each one must be prepared for an overt act of war, and Japan was sustained by the opinion of the whole civilized world in the course which she took in attacking the Russian fleet before there was any declaration of war.

My right hon. friend says we will be in exactly the same position as the royal navy. I take issue with my right hon. friend. Let us take the two cases, first the case of an overt act of war before a declaration of war, some wanton act committed by a foreign fleet. Some such thing did bring about very strained relations between Great Britain and another naval power about eight or ten years ago in the North Sea. Every one remembers the occasion when some British fishing vessels were fired upon, and I think some of them sunk by the fleet of another power. Take an occasion of that kind. You have a Canadian cruiser attached for the purpose of manoeuvring or training to a British squadron. You have that British squadron engaged at once in battle with a hostile fleet, and the admiral flies the signal to engage the enemy. What is the Canadian ship to do? She is to turn about and run away, and the ships of the empire are to engage the enemy. This is the result of the right hon. gentleman's proposal. That is the case where there is no actual declaration of war. I take the other case to which the Prime Minister has alluded, where there has been an actual declaration of war, and hostilities between the two fleets immediately follow. Again, I say the Canadian naval force is not in the same position as the royal navy. After the declaration of war has been made and hostilities have been entered into by the opposing fleets, every ship of the royal navy is bound to obey the command of the commanding officer and enter into engagement with the enemy. The Canadian fleet is not bound to do anything of the kind; it is bound not to do it until an order in council has been passed at Ottawa. Therefore, it is of no use to say that under such circumstances the Canadian fleet is in the same position as the royal navy, and no argument can possibly alter that fact. I think I have taken up all the points that seem to be of importance brought out by the Prime Minister, and I still adhere strongly to the view that this is not only an absolutely unworkable proposition, but an absolutely dangerous proposition as well.

Mr. FIELDING. May I ask my hon. friend, would a British ship engage in any hostilities with a ship of another nation without receiving instructions from some competent authority, whether there was a declaration of war or not?

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I think such cases have arisen and may arise.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN.

Mr. FIELDING. I do not think ships of the British navy usually engage in hostilities without receiving instructions from the proper authority. The proper authority would be the commanding officer; the proper authority to him would be the Lords of the Admiralty; and if the British Admiralty can give directions, surely the Canadian authorities can give directions too. The telegraphic facilities are as open to the government of Canada as to any body else, and with the modern facilities which science has given to us for communicating with vessels wherever they may be, I would not think there were any such difficulties as my hon. friend suggests of our not being able to get into communication.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I was basing my remarks on something which the Minister of Finance seems absolutely to have overlooked. The Prime Minister has laid it down definitely and explicitly that there may be great naval wars in which the Royal navy will take part and in which the Canadian navy will take no part, because the necessary order in council will not be made.

Mr. FIELDING. I did not hear the first part of my hon. friend's remarks, but I understood that he himself admitted that there might be wars in which it would be desirable that Canada should engage, and there might be other wars in which it would not be so desirable.

Some hon. MEMBERS. No, never.

Mr. J. A. CURRIE. Would the hon. gentleman apply his rule to the case of the British-Chinese war? There a part of the British fleet acted and brought on a war without any instructions from home.

Mr. FIELDING. There may be peculiar circumstances which are exceptional, but as a general rule no ship of the British navy engages in hostilities with a ship of a foreign power until instructions are received from a competent authority. There seems to be little room for difference on this clause. To my mind it is essential to the purpose of the Bill. It has been pointed out that 'emergency' referred to in this clause means not only actual war, but 'invasion or insurrection, real or apprehended'. Suppose there were an insurrection in Saskatchewan. I am using an argument which I heard an hon. friend use this afternoon, so that it is not mine. That would be an emergency in the meaning of this Act. Would it be desirable that automatically we should instantly send our ships away to join the British navy? That would not be reasonable. Suppose the British government gets into difficulty with one of the petty republics of America. We know what happens: it sends