

Lord Esher's Committee in respect to the auxiliary forces.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. That is not the report of the Esher Committee.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. It is. It is the report of the War Office reconstruction committee of 1904, of which Lord Esher was chairman.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. That is the one.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. It seems to me that the Minister of Militia has given his attention too much to the recommendations of that committee so far as they are concerned with the regular army of some 500,000 men, but according to this report the auxiliary force of Great Britain, numbering 30,000 men, is to be dealt with by a very small portion of the machinery provided for in the report of this committee.

In attempting to create this council in Canada, are we not simply taking the name and taking none of the substance? The council in Great Britain is an absolutely different thing from that which the minister proposes here. So far as the object of the minister is concerned, of having a consultation between those who represent the military part of the department and those who represent the civil part, I sympathize with him, but it seems to me that he may accomplish that without any statute, and so far as the constitution of his council is concerned, it is as different as night is from day from that which is proposed by Lord Esher's Committee. What have you there? You have the Secretary of State through whom the council speaks to parliament. The Secretary of State speaks to parliament upon the recommendation of the other members of the council. There is first a military member who is charged with military policy in all its branches; there is another military member, who deals with recruiting, pay and discipline; the third deals with clothing, remounts and transport; the fourth deals with armaments and fortifications; there is a civil member who deals with civil business other than finance: and, lastly, there is a civil member, the financial secretary, who deals entirely with the question of finance. These members are all co-ordinate in the council, but they can only speak to parliament through the Secretary of State; and in speaking to parliament he is guided solely by the recommendation of the member who has charge of the particular department which is referred to. The council proposed by the minister is not along that line at all. While the object is all right, it does not seem to me that we should establish a council in Canada simply because they have established one in Great Britain, which is absolutely different in its constitution, which has to deal not only with the auxiliary forces in Great Britain, but

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also with a standing army of some 500,000 men.

I do not know that there is anything further that I need say, except this. My hon. friend who has just taken his seat suggests that if the council in the united kingdom is to some extent an experiment, it might at least be well for us to pause a little and see what the result of that experiment will be, rather than to rush in and appoint a council; that it is unadvisable to follow the recommendations of this committee of Lord Esher's in some respects, and not to follow them in other respects, and insist on starting an experiment ourselves because an experiment has been begun in the United Kingdom. It may be that the report of this committee if acted upon, will result in great good. That remains to be seen. But it does not necessarily follow, even if that should be granted, that the experiment which the Minister of Militia now proposes to make is one that will result in any very great good.

With regard to friction between the head of the department and the General Officer Commanding, I do not propose to deal with that at present, except to say that it will not do for any one of us to imagine that because friction exists the other party is always absolutely and entirely at fault. There may be a little fault on both sides. I suppose that where differences occur in this world there is very often fault on both sides; and perhaps the difficulties that have occurred have not been so much the result of the system as the result of lack of tact on one side or the other, or on both sides, in trying to carry that system out. At all events, it does not seem to me that any crisis has occurred in this country to make it necessary to depart from that which has worked fairly well in the past, and which might do fairly good work in the future. I do not propose to detain the House further than to say that it does seem to me, in view of what I have heard both from my hon. friend from South Norfolk and from the Minister of Militia, that we are not wise in departing hastily from that which has served us well up to the present time.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. Mr. Speaker, we have listened with a good deal of interest to the minister's explanation, and also to the addresses on this side of the House. I think the address delivered by the hon. leader of the opposition has convinced the minister that after all it would be advisable for him to hold over the clause in the Bill relating to the council, until he can adapt it more closely to the British law, or at all events until he sees how that law will be worked out. The chief advantage claimed for the council is that it will afford an opportunity for these gentlemen to meet together and discuss various questions that arise from