

opposite side of the House? It is not for me to say, nor is it for me to make a policy for them. I could not do it, if I tried, although I do think it would be much better than the one they have, though it might not be acceptable to them. It is their duty, however, to see if some *modus vivendi* could not be found whereby both parties could agree upon a question of such vast magnitude. Now let them come down with their proposal. I cannot indicate what would be acceptable, for that would be traversing far beyond my position, even as leader of the Opposition; but let us have some proposal, which I think we have a right to expect, and which might very properly be called for. Not only have we the judgment of the members of the Opposition and the majority of this House, that the Bill was not a wise Bill, but we can quote the opinion of some great statesmen on the subject. I shall just quote the opinion of one gentleman who was Governor General of Canada, and a very acceptable one, Lord Lansdowne, which shows that the principle in this Bill is a faulty one. In a speech which he delivered in Ottawa just shortly before he left Canada, after the close of his career as Governor General, he spoke as follows, illustrating more particularly that whatever is done in defence of the Empire, should be unconditional, and with the full consent of the Parliament of Canada, and should not be in breach of our constitution or at variance with the principles of responsible government. He said:

Let me say frankly that in my opinion public sentiment in the great possessions of the Crown would be exposed to a great strain if the self-governing colonies were ever to be required to part with any material portion of the freedom which they now enjoy in the management of their own affairs.

It will be noticed that under the Naval Bill the terms and conditions, and arrangements were to be agreed upon between the Government of Canada, and His Majesty's Government of Great Britain, and under those terms and conditions we would necessarily part with some of our freedom. Lord Lansdowne did not think that could be done. He further says:

I have the honour of a very close acquaintance with a considerable number of your legislators here, and I will venture to say that there is no feeling stronger in their minds, and in those of their constituents, than the feeling that in purely constitutional affairs the Canadian recognizes the absolute supremacy of the Canadian Parliament.

No division of authority between the Parliament of Canada, and any other Par-

Hon. Sir GEORGE ROSS.

liament in our own affairs; that is sound doctrine. In the case of the Naval Bill, there was to be a division in regard to the naval policy of the Government:

Now, I do not believe that public sentiment here would tolerate any change depriving it of that authority, or transferring any portion—let us say, to an Imperial chamber sitting at Westminster.

If Lord Lansdowne had been speaking from my place on the naval policy of the Government, he could not put our objections more strongly and clearly than he did, and yet he spoke about twenty years before that policy was brought down:

Take for example a great question which is now engaging the attention of the public and Her Majesty's Government at home—I mean the question of Imperial defence. There is, I think, room for a great improvement in the existing conditions of things. There is no reason why the Governments of the great colonies and the United Kingdom should not agree beforehand as to what measures are to be taken with the military and naval forces at their disposal for the protection of large portions of our Imperial possessions. The part to be taken by the British and colonial forces respectively in manning the different positions might with great advantage be determined, and there are many other steps of the same sort which will readily suggest themselves to you, but if we are to go further than this, and have a covenant binding this country to place a certain proportion of men at the absolute disposal of the Imperial Government—

—ships would be the same thing—

—whenever it is called upon, I say frankly that I do not believe that such an arrangement would work.

Now, there is the opinion of an hon. gentleman who was Secretary of Foreign Affairs under the Unionist Government of Great Britain, the government of Mr. Balfour, and who is leader of the Unionist party in the House of Lords at the present time. What the government proposed to do is what he said he did not believe would work. Are we to be blamed if we take the same view? I think the Government should at once, in the matter of the navy, proceed with the building of dockyards. I think they should extend three-fold, or four-fold, the system at present in force for the training of seamen. If you built your dockyards you might make them large enough for dreadnoughts to be built on this side, if you want to take that line—I am merely saying that in passing, because I do not say that that is the best way to go on—but if you built your dockyards you can go on; and build the smaller ships required for