

ments published in *Le Devoir* and repeated in this House by several hon. gentlemen; I refer to the statement that the Prime Minister got three memoranda from the Admiralty before he found one to suit his purpose. These conflicting statements between the Prime Minister and the late Minister of Public Works lend special point to what was said by the hon. member for Yamaska (Mr. Mondou) a couple of weeks ago in his speech in this House when he said: The Prime Minister was in favour of a contribution before he went to England; he went to England, he saw the Admiralty, and came back and was still in favour of a contribution. And from that the hon. member deduced the very natural conclusion that the Admiralty would give any representative of Canada just about what he wanted. But the important point is that the hon. member for Yamaska made the statement that the Prime Minister had decided to give the contribution before he left for England, and the Prime Minister was in his seat in the House and he heard the hon. gentleman make that statement, and the Prime Minister spoke in the House that same evening and he never challenged one word that had been uttered by the hon. member for Yamaska. Surely good faith requires that we shall receive explanations both from the Prime Minister and from his late colleague before we are asked to advance this Bill to another stage.

I desire to review some of the arguments tendered by our hon. friends opposite in support of a contribution and against a Canadian naval policy. In the first place, I wish to refer to some of the arguments advanced by my hon. friend the Minister of Marine who, I am sorry to see is not in his place. You will remember that in order to prove that the naval policy of the late Government was an ineffective one, and in order to show that the ships which were to compose that navy would be obsolete before they were half constructed, the Minister of Marine read a statement purporting to have been written by Commander Roper and dated September 20, 1911, the day before the general election. The Minister was careful to draw the attention of the House to the fact that it was dated the 20th of September, 1911, and he did so with a gleam of pleasure in his eye and a note of exultation in his voice. I say that it is a suspicious document and for two reasons. In the first place, the hon. member for Rouville (Mr. Lemieux) was then the Minister in charge of the department and he remained in charge of that department from September 20 to October 6, or more than two weeks after the date on which that statement purports to have been written, and I have his assurance that he never saw or heard of that

**Mr. MURPHY.**

document until the present Minister of Marine rose in his place in this House and read it.

**Mr. LEMIEUX:** It was all concocted afterwards.

**Mr. MURPHY:** It is inconceivable that an officer with a proper sense of his duty such as I must assume Commander Roper had, would have kept from his minister during these two weeks all knowledge of that document when he knew that his minister was engaged during these two weeks in daily consultation with his colleagues in regard to the tenders that had been submitted for the construction of ships for the navy and the awarding of the contracts for these ships. It is inconceivable, I repeat, that an officer with a proper sense of his duty, such as we must assume that Commander Roper had, would have concealed from his minister all knowledge of such a document. The document however, is suspicious for a much stronger reason than that. It is a suspicious document for the reason that, within twelve months prior to the date upon which it purports to have been written, Commander Roper in a public address gave utterance to opinions and sentiments diametrically opposed to those contained in the statement which the Minister of Marine and Fisheries read to this House.

**Mr. LEMIEUX:** He was defended on the floor of the House by his minister then.

**Mr. MURPHY:** As my hon. friend the Minister of Marine and Fisheries may not have heard about this speech, I propose to place some pertinent paragraphs from it upon 'Hansard.' In doing so, I will not transgress, for the present at least, the rule which the Minister of Marine and Fisheries laid down in his speech with regard to quotations. You will remember, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Marine and Fisheries deprecated any person going further back than the year 1910; he said that anything before that was ancient history. Apparently the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, knows that his colleagues in this Government, like some frail favourites of the stage, have a past on this question; but, unlike these theatrical people, he does not seem to think that it would be good business to advertise the fact; so he puts an embargo on going further back than the year 1910. For the present, at all events, I will meet his wishes on that point. This speech was delivered by Commander Roper at a directors' luncheon of the Canadian Central Exhibition Association, held on Tuesday, September 13, 1910. As reported in the *Ottawa Citizen* of Wednesday, September 14, 1910, it contained the following paragraphs: