

all laws and regulations to which the King's naval forces are subject.

Almost the same words as are in our Act. My hon. friend knows that in the province of Quebec, Mr. Bourassa is going up and down declaring that 'may' means 'shall,' and that the moment there is any war, automatically our forces are at the disposition of the mother country. And he quotes my hon. friend's opinion upon the construction of a statute in another case to show that 'may' means 'shall,' and in order to convince the people, whose passions he is endeavouring to inflame against this government's proposal, Mr. Bourassa quotes my hon. friend as a lawyer, to that effect.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. What is the case he quotes?

Mr. MACDONALD. I cannot give the exact case, but I would advise my hon. friend, least Mr. Bourassa may be using his name improperly, to find out what he is saying and contradict him.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. That is the reason I am asking for information now.

Mr. MACDONALD. My hon. friend can ask his friend from Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) and he will tell him all about it. Let us see where Australia stands on this question. Look at what Mr. Fisher, formerly premier of Australia, said in the Australian parliament last autumn. In discussing this navy question last October he said, regarding the position which Australia should occupy:

The late government while declining to have anything to do with the Dreadnought proposal, took occasion to communicate to the imperial authorities their view regarding Australia's connection with the empire, and stated what they were prepared to recommend the Commonwealth parliament to do. So far from refusing to take part in the protection of the best interests of the empire, we said that, whilst our policy was designed primarily and almost wholly for the protection of the shores of Australia, yet in time of war or national emergency, not only should we risk the promise of a Dreadnought, but would offer the mother country the whole of the resources of Australia to support her. That is the real position that we took up, and it is the view that I hold to-day.

That is practically the position of this government, and it is the view I hold:

In moving the second reading of this Bill, the Minister of Defence did not make quite clear his view as to the extent to which the imperial authorities by reason of their contribution of £250,000 per annum towards the upkeep of the Australian navy, will have any real control over it while it is in these waters or when it goes beyond them. That is a delicate question. There must be a link between the imperial and the commonwealth authority. The last government had a de-

finite idea upon the subject and we put it into writing. We held that the sole control of the fleet must be with the Commonwealth. I can speak more freely on this question because I have never favoured the view that the fleet should not fight outside Australian waters. But there should be a clear and definite understanding. I wish to know whether the contribution of £250,000 provides for Commonwealth control?

Mr. Joseph Cook.—I can make that clear later.

Mr. Fisher.—There may be emergencies and the telegram read by the minister to Admiral Kingsmill shows that Australia made her position clear and that it is exactly the same as Canada has taken which will require our ships to fight elsewhere but generally speaking they should not be taken to remote seas without the express authority of the commonwealth. The strength of the empire will depend upon the ability—

And this is a pregnant remark for my hon. friend to remember—

—of the five self-governing nations which compose it to provide for their own defence.

That is the kernel of the whole question. The Australian statesmen gave at once the crux of the whole problem. The strength of the British empire, he said, will depend in the future upon the ability of the five self-governing nations which compose it, to provide for their own defence. If they can do that, the empire would be better protected than by the assembling of a fleet at any one point. Then he says:

The opposition will not make this a party measure, our desire being to promote the defence of the country with a view to the protection of the best interests of the empire and the securing of the continued peace of the world.

A splendid example, which I commend to my hon. friend the leader of the opposition. It is in strong contrast to the attitude he has taken in leading up his dividing forces with one wing in the province of Quebec making a flank attack on the government, and he himself leading another line of attack entirely inconsistent with the position he took a year ago. My hon. friend should have revised his utterances. He should have been a little more careful before submitting his resolution. On January 12 he said we need not worry about wars in Canada, that the empire would never go to war again without consulting Canada first. He said:

It has been urged, and with some force, that we in Canada cannot properly take a permanent part in the naval defence of the whole empire unless we are to have some voice as to the wars in which Great Britain may engage. Let me say in the first place, that I do not believe Great Britain will in the future engage in any great war—except indeed it may be a war forced upon her without a moment's notice—before consulting the great dominions of the empire.