

tional. That was another case of the hon. gentleman's opportunism, nothing but the expressed opinion of the people of this country forced the hon. gentleman to take the move which he did. In my opinion an attempt has been made to misrepresent to the people the position that we on this side of the House take on this matter. Hon. gentlemen have tried to impress the people that in giving two Dreadnoughts or any number of Dreadnoughts in this time of emergency to assist Great Britain in the protection of the empire, we would be paying tribute. I wonder if they would say we were paying tribute when we gave \$50,000 the other day to assist France. I wonder if they would say we were paying tribute when we gave \$100,000 to Chicago at the time of the fire, and later \$100,000 to San Francisco in the time of their emergency? I think not.

One misrepresentation is that this government, in bringing this Bill to the House, are doing what the admiralty of Great Britain asked them to do. That statement has been made over and over again, and I give it a flat denial from my place in this House to-night. They are absolutely not carrying out what the admiralty asked them to do. That little play was carried on considerably during the last by-election in this city. The hon. member for Ottawa said that in regard to a Canadian navy he prefers to take the opinion of British experts, and so do all sensible Canadians. That is what the Dominion government has not done. I say they did not do what the experts asked them to do. A newspaper in referring to this episode, said:

Evidently the word has been passed around to the Liberal speakers in the present by-election to claim that in proposing to build a tin-pot navy the Dominion government is giving Great Britain what she asked. This is absolutely untrue. Great Britain asked for a fleet unit consisting of one Dreadnought and its auxiliaries, or if this could not be done, to build the Dreadnought.

Then, too, the press of this country seems to be full of that idea which to my mind is an exceedingly important one. I have met that myself. I have had letters from my constituents saying: Well, but the government is doing what these experts asked it to do. Is it doing that? I claim that if it was I and other members of this side of the House would be deprived of a good deal of the argument which we put up against the Bill in favour of the Dreadnoughts. I have here something which has been circulated by the Winnipeg 'Free Press.' I and other members are careful what we say about this fourth estate. There are two kinds of people who can sass us whom we have no opportunity to sass back, that is, the man behind the pulpit and the man behind the

pen, the editor of a newspaper. I shall read three short quotations from the Winnipeg 'Free Press.' The first is:

It will be seen that the composition of the Australian fleet unit is to be on the lines laid down by the British admiralty and does not include a Dreadnought.

I do not think any hon. member opposite would pretend to say that that statement was right or true.

As all the world knows the Dreadnought tendered by Australia to the admiralty was declined in favour of the policy of the creation of an Australian navy on the same lines as those laid down in the Canadian naval policy.

That does not call for any remark. Again:

There remains this fact that the vessels which Australia is to provide herself with are to be the same as those with which Canada is to provide herself.

I do not think anybody would claim that these statements are true. Now, what did the admiralty ask, in a few words? The memorandum is signed by Mr. McKenna, as First Lord of the Admiralty:

In the opinion of the admiralty, a Dominion government desirous of creating a navy should aim at forming a distinct fleet unit; and the smallest unit is one which, while manageable in time of peace, is capable of being used in its component parts in time of war.

The fleet to be aimed at should, therefore, in the opinion of the admiralty, consist at least of the following:—

- 1 armoured cruiser (new Indomitable class), which is of the Dreadnought type,
- 3 unarmoured cruisers (Bristol class),
- 6 destroyers,
- 3 submarines.

The admiralty and the English government had a great deal of difficulty in getting any representatives of this government over to the last conference at all, a very different state of affairs from what existed in New Zealand and Australia. New Zealand was anxious, subject to the best interests of the empire, that there should be a great imperial conference. Australia took the same view; but Canada did not see any particular reason why a conference should be held. However, after considerable correspondence and a number of cablegrams, the Canadian government agreed to send over two representatives. Their conference with the admiralty amounted about to this. Canada said: We are not willing to do what you want us to do. The admiralty said: Well, if you won't do that, what will you do? Canada said: You are the experts, and we would like to be advised by you what to do. The First Lord of the Admiralty said: It is impossible to advise you unless you will tell us how much money you wish to expend. Then our representatives mentioned two separate