

litary commander, who should have control of the military part if there is any intention of making our militia system a success. The clothing of the Minister of Militia with such powers can only result in the introduction of politics. The scheme of the Minister of Militia is alternating, experimental and uncertain. I am against investing any man or any political party with such powers in connection with our militia. No political party should ever be entrusted, nor should any political party ever ask to be entrusted with such powers over the militia of Canada. I protest against them as arbitrary, unreasonable, subversive and destructive of the best interests of the militia. I protest against the scheme as bearing on its face an unpleasant suggestion of separation from our brotherhood in the imperial army. I therefore, beg to move the motion of which I have given notice.

Hon. Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. (Minister of Militia). At this late stage of the session, and in view of the fact that I have discussed on several occasions precisely the subjects which the hon. gentleman (Mr. Tisdale) has brought to the attention of the House, I shall endeavour to make my statement on this amendment in the fewest possible words. I trust that my hon. friend will not, because of the brevity of my remarks, think that I wish to show him any disrespect, or that I do not fully appreciate his earnestness. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Tisdale) has been in the habit of appearing before us in a more or less pathetic mood, and we are accustomed to see him exhibit himself rather as a man of sorrows, but to-day he has come before us in an entirely new role. To-day he is humorous, delivering to us a little bit of wit—my hon. friend beside me says they should be labelled so that we might know they were witticisms—but at all events the hon. gentleman has given us little bits of wit which smell very strongly of the mid-night oil, and bear evidence of the expenditure of a very great deal of time upon them, which I think the House will agree with me in believing was time not very well occupied. My hon. friend objects to my proposals. He first complains that there is no evidence that I have submitted these proposals to the imperial authorities, and he intimates that there has been bad faith. He tells us that a certain Bill was introduced last year and re-introduced this year after having been discussed with the imperial authorities, but that later on it was changed without consultation with the war office. Well what happened? After the Bill was introduced this year, or about the time it was introduced, the Esher Committee appointed by the Prime Minister of England to report upon the organization of the war office, presented its report, and about the month of March last, the war

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office took this report up and the imperial government adopted it.

What opportunity had I to introduce these amendments in my original Bill? I had none. At the earliest possible moment, immediately after the first consideration of the Bill, I gave notice of them, and on three different occasions since then this Bill and these proposals have been under discussion. But, forsooth, I have not submitted the amendments to the imperial authorities. I have not submitted them formally, because I am perfectly aware that the imperial authorities will be delighted to know that we have adopted the new policy which they have adopted. We have been in the habit, in all matters of administration in the militia of this country, to follow closely the lead of the imperial war office—why? Because if a great war ever occurred, in which Canada was engaged or interested, we would be working side by side with the authorities in the war office. Therefore, as a matter of convenience, the policy has always been followed in this country, and we propose always to follow it, of adopting from time to time the schemes which are adopted by the war office. I may say that I have had correspondence of a private character with the Under Secretary of State for War, Sir Edward Ward, and I have authority to say—I am sure he would not object to my saying it—that he is in entire sympathy with us in the proposals we are making. Let that be the answer to the charge of disrespect to the imperial authorities. No greater compliment could be paid to the imperial authorities than the course we have pursued. No stronger indication of our sincere desire to remain in the closest possible touch with the war office could possibly be shown than the course which we have pursued.

The hon. gentleman has undertaken to move an amendment which, as he himself has stated, substantially means that we should continue in the condition of things which now exists, that we should not change, that we should not follow the war office in its change. I will not follow the hon. gentleman in his discussion of what he considers the great advantages of the present system.

The hon. gentleman has laid down the proposition that in this country at present the Militia Department is under dual control. The hon. gentleman by that statement has shown that he has failed absolutely to grasp the conditions. The Militia Department is not and cannot be under dual control. There can be only one head to the Militia Department under any system that can be adopted in this country which is under responsible government. The minister who receives the warrant from the people to occupy the position of Minister of Militia must be the head of the Militia Department, and he alone can be its head.