

other imperial conference, then perhaps my hon. friend's words would have some application. Does the hon. member say that they are waiting, before making a declaration of policy, for the findings or recommendations of the next imperial conference? The hon. member, when I suggested that, resented it with some heat.

Mr. MACDONALD (Pictou): That is what the Imperial Conference wanted the overseas dominions to do—to wait until another conference was held.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Not at all; this resolution means just what it says. But, I say, if the Government were to state—which it does not—that it is waiting before coming to its conclusion for another conference, possibly the comments of the hon. member would have some relevance. But the Government does not say so; the hon. member himself affirms that the Government does not say so and that he does not say so. The Government has come down with its policy, as it had a right to do; it was not in any way bound to wait by the terms of the resolution of last summer. It has come down with its policy, and that policy is now before us for our consideration.

Mr. IRVINE: May I ask the right hon. gentleman what these recommendations which he has read refer to?

Mr. MEIGHEN: To the method of co-operation with the other dominions and with Great Britain as to naval defence.

Mr. IRVINE: Do they not also imply the expense on the part of each nation?

Mr. MEIGHEN: What imply the expense?

Mr. IRVINE: The recommendations. The right hon. gentleman has, in his resolution, mentioned the expenditure and the method.

Mr. MEIGHEN: The recommendations can cover anything that another conference decides to recommend upon.

Mr. GOOD: I would like to ask the right hon. gentleman whether in his opinion this Government is under any obligation to advise a policy prior to any recommendations which may come from a subsequent imperial conference? It seems to me a rather strange thing that the Government should attempt to lay down a policy prior to the holding of another conference. Does the right hon. gentleman think the Government would be wise or justified in taking such a step at the present time?

Mr. MEIGHEN: I do not think the question arises, because the Government has taken the step. The minister has made no reference whatever to waiting for another conference; he has announced his policy, such as it is.

Mr. SHAW: I am very glad to hear the leader of the Opposition say that the resolution to which he has referred does not involve this country in any obligation, and I accept his statement in that connection so far as contribution is concerned. But I am frank to say that while I have been able to read only the summary of the speeches of the premiers of New Zealand and Australia, they seem to bear a somewhat different construction. I think, Mr. Chairman, that we should have an opportunity to discuss this matter very fully in order that we may determine exactly our position and exactly what our obligation may be in the future.

Mr. GRAHAM: My suggestion is that the item for the naval service proper be allowed to stand until next week, so that hon. gentlemen may have an opportunity to get ready for a discussion.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Could we fix Thursday?

Mr. GRAHAM: I suggest that my right hon. friend consult the Prime Minister as to that. But the proposal is one of some magnitude; it reaches further, possibly, than our own shores and we ought to fix a day for its discussion.

Item stands.

Civil Government—naval service—salaries and contingencies, \$255,220.

Mr. MEIGHEN: This is more than last year.

Mr. GRAHAM: There is an increase of \$5,000, but we had to provide for statutory increases amounting to \$8,000, so it is really a little less than last year.

Mr. MEIGHEN: With a "five-trawler" policy, one would think it would be a good deal less.

Mr. GRAHAM: A five-trawler policy would not be very effective for the purposes of the nation. This item includes radio-telegraph, hydrographic services, and so on.

Item agreed to.