

go and build these three battleships, let us have them at once,' they would have been half, or a quarter built by this time. So that on both grounds their rejection of the Naval Bill is indefensible. First, it is indefensible, on the ground that they did not proceed under legislation they now have, and meet on the ground that they might have proceeded by reference to the people.

It is not too late to mend. It is never too late to mend. We objected to the Naval Bill last year on various grounds. If the House will excuse me, I will just repeat some of the objections we made. These objections can be easily removed without any injury to the feeling or to the amour propre of the government, and without any detriment to the country. These objections are stated *seriatim* in the address I had the honour to give at that time, and I will refresh the memory of hon. gentlemen by recapitulating them, if the House will permit me. My objection to the Bill was because it was unnecessary. Everybody admits that. That has never been contraverted by hon. gentlemen opposite. My second objection was that it established a line of cleavage in defence, between the two parties. That is a terrible and humiliating condition of things—two great parties at variance with each other on a matter of life and death, it never so happened in England, even in the dissensions that arose over the Crimean or the Boer wars. While the war was on, both parties locked arms and marched side by side, in parliament and out of it, for the defence of the honour of England. That is what we ought to do. The defence of Canada and the honour of Canada is not in the custody of one party more than the other. It is not a question of loyalty. It is a question of respect for the tremendous interests involved. I say there was no ground for the course taken last year. There should be no cleavage in defence. And if, in 1909, both parties were united—and the resolution which formed that union—that resolution which recognized the bonds that were established by parliament for the union of both parties on the line of defence—the resolution which bound the two parties was largely drafted or amended by the leader of the opposition to suit his purposes.

Hon. Mr. WATSON—The present Premier.

Hon. Sir GEORGE ROSS—The present Premier. And he wanted the thing speedily done. The word speedily is an expressive word, and was put into the resolution at his special request. In 1909 it was to be speedily done, and now it is 1914. Was there ever a ship that sailed so slowly as the three great dreadnoughts which the hon. gentlemen were to build? How long have they been in office? Since September 21, 1911. Over two years and not a keel laid, not a spike driven—nothing done. Is the ship rolling in the harbour? No, there is no ship to roll, and no harbour in which it is asked to roll. Let us unite without fear of what the consequences may be, upon some policies. This Senate is prepared to go so far as it can, constitutionally, and meet the views of gentlemen opposite if they will only give us the opportunity. I have said that the government has not provided for the defence of Canada, directly. Is it not very simple to frame a Bill that would provide for the defence of Canada directly—not a Bill in which we hire men to defend us, or in which we hire foreign labour to build ships, but a Bill to defend Canada directly? We have no evidence that the Bill meets with public approval, because it introduces a new practice in legislation not sanctioned by parliament: that is taking a vote in advance for three years' expenditure. Can a vote be taken for more than one year's expenditure? And again my objection was because it removed from the control of Canada, one of its elements of national defence, namely the three battleships proposed.

Now, can we get back to first principles, and in all these things find some ground of common defence? Last year I said we stood for the defence of Britain, from Australia to the pole. That was the position laid down by me in the Senate, and against which I have heard no protest from one side of the House or the other. Then I said, 'we stand for as many battleships of the most modern type as are required, at any rate to the limit of our resources.' That has never been objected to. I said: 'we stand, thirdly, for a permanent Canadian navy, to guard the coasts and trade routes of commerce, when Great Britain and all other nations are at peace.' Fourthly, I said: 'we stand for the construction of the navy and dockyards, using for that purpose the product of Canadian resources;' and so on, and so on.

That was our position last year. What is the position to-day of gentlemen on the