

chasing supplies for South Africa, they paid five per cent commission on those supplies. I would like to know who is the gentleman that made the inquiries.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I will tell my hon. friend. Here is the report of Admiral Kingsmill on which the whole order in council was based. My hon. friend has no confidence in this government, but at all events we should hope that he would have confidence in the British government. Does he suggest that they are going to be subjected to a procedure of this kind? Does he expect that they would lend themselves to a proceeding of this kind?

Mr. J. D. REID. I do not think there is anything wrong as far as the admiralty are concerned. They wanted to get rid of an old war vessel. I cannot see why the Prime Minister should suggest that I am censuring the admiralty. If they wanted to get rid of an old vessel they certainly have a right to pay a commission if they wish. If Admiral Kingsmill went to negotiate the transaction it is all right, but the Prime Minister has not told the committee whether it was some other person outside of the admiralty, or the minister himself, that went to the admiralty and made that deal. I would like to know whether that is the fact.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I am prepared to state that there has been no intermediary of any kind in the transaction.

Mr. J. A. CURRIE. I may say in justification of my hon. friend from Grenville (Mr. Reid), that it is the invariable custom of the admiralty to pay a commission of five per cent as a matter of course. Whether they have done so in this case or not I do not know. If anybody sells some junk for them he gets a commission. The question that my hon. friend asked was pertinent if anybody negotiated the sale of this ship to the Canadian government, is the government aware whether he got a commission from the British navy or not, or if there was any commission taken from the cheque payable by the Canadian government? The hon. gentleman knows that in the case of the South African stores a commission was paid by the war department.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. It is not correct to say that a commission was paid by the war office. There was no commission paid by the war office. The expenses incurred in doing any work that was done for the war office in connection with the South African war were paid, but nothing more. But, as regards this particular matter, I think my hon. friends ought to give us their authority. It is rather a serious charge to make that there is a commission somewhere, hidden, covered up, in connection with this transaction, of five per cent. I am prepared to say, from what I know

of the transaction—I had nothing directly to do with it—that all the negotiations in regard to this vessel have taken place between the Department of Marine and Fisheries for the government of Canada, and the government of Great Britain, or the first lord of the admiralty, and that when the vessel is paid for, if parliament votes the money, the cheque will be sent for the full amount, whatever it may be, direct to the treasury of the British government.

Mr. J. D. REID. The Prime Minister found fault with me because I found fault with the Department of Marine and Fisheries. The record of the Department of Marine and Fisheries, I think, in the past is evidence—

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order, order.

Mr. J. D. REID. The evidence that has been produced with respect to the Department of Marine and Fisheries justifies any person in having a little suspicion of this transaction.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. With reference to the call of 'order,' I will say that the hon. gentleman is at liberty to refer to the Department of Marine and Fisheries by way of illustration, but not for prolonged discussion.

Mr. J. D. REID. You are right, Mr. Chairman, and I shall not attempt to discuss it, but what I want to say is that it has always been a mystery to me why the Prime Minister took this naval service out of the regular Militia Department and put it into the Department of Marine and Fisheries. I cannot understand what the Department of Marine and Fisheries has to do with the naval service. Why should it not be under the Minister of Militia? Does the Prime Minister want to tell the people that the Minister of Militia is not qualified to run that part of his department? Does he not know anything about the naval service? If he is not fit to administer that service he is not fit for the position that he occupies in the Militia Department. Why are you dividing the whole thing up? Why should not the two be put together under one head? What does the Minister of Marine and Fisheries know about the running of a man of war? I should think that the administration of this fleet should be under the Department of Militia. It seems to me that this was done for some purpose, and I would like to know what it is. The Minister of Marine and Fisheries has more work now than one minister can attend to. He has to attend to the fisheries protective service. That is all right enough. He has quite a lot of vessels with which to do that. You are going to make the Minister of Marine and Fisheries responsible for a naval service that he cannot look after. It will