

1900, that was after he had considered his attitude in regard to the participation of this country in the South African war. His words are as follows: "We believe it our duty as a British colony to take part in the war and permit 2,000 Canadian volunteers to enlist in the English army and to fight for the mother country. We did it because we believed it our duty to do it, and in response to the unanimous sentiments of the people of this country. We are a free country. Ours is a constitutional Government, and our duty is to put into execution the popular will, and the moment the popular will was known to us we had that duty to discharge and we discharged it of our free will. There was no power to constrain us to act as we did, but in the plenitude of our legislative independence we had the right to reply to the popular will." I would invite my right hon. friend to-day to respond again to the popular will; and the will of the country to-day is that these different proposals ought to be submitted to the people, and the people ought to be permitted to pass upon them before any permanent policy of this kind is engaged in. I think there is a great deal to be said in favour of that course. I am as strong as any man in this country in the belief that it is the duty of Canada to participate upon a permanent basis in the defence of this Empire, and to do our reasonable share in that regard, but I say that to attempt to force a policy of this kind upon the people of this country without giving them an opportunity to say "yea" or "nay" in regard to it would be one of the worst mistakes that could be made by any man who really favoured that policy.

The Prime Minister then took the view that it would be one of the worst mistakes to force upon the people a policy on which they had not had an opportunity to say yea or nay. There voted for that resolution moved by Sir Robert Borden, Messrs:

Armstrong, Arthurs, Parker, Barnard, Best, Blain, Borden (Halifax), Boyce, Bradbury, Bristol, Broder, Burrell, Campbell, Chisholm (Huron), Cowan, Crocket, Crothers, Curry (Simcoe), Daniel, Doherty, Donnelly, Edwards, Elson, Fraser, Goodeve, Gordon (Nipissing), Haggart (Lanark), Haggart (Winnipeg), Henderson, Harrow, Hughes, Jameson, Kidd, Lake, Lalor, Lancaster, Lennox, Lewis, Macdonnell, McCall, McCarthy, Madden, McGrath, Marshall, Meighen, Middlebro, Northrup, Owen, Perley, Porter, Price, Reid (Grenville), Rhodes, Roche, Russell, Schaffner, Sexsmith, Sharpe (Liskeard), Sharpé (Ontario), Smythe, Sproule, Stanfield, Staples, Stewart, Taylor (Leeds), Taylor (New Westminster), Thoburn, Thornton, Wallace, White (Renfrew), Wilcox (Essex), Wilson (Lennox & Addington), Worthington, Wright.

That was the opinion of that army of gentlemen who think we should now be insulting the people if we asked them for their opinion of this measure. The present Minister of Labour was among those who voted for the resolution. He took the view that the people should be consulted on the question of building ships, which only involved the purchase of some hem-

[Mr. McKenzie.]

lock and steel rivets and so on. Now he says it would be an insult to get the people's opinion on a measure the object of which is to drive our men to the cannon's mouth. It is remarkable how one's geographical position changes one's mind. I do not think I could find any better support for the argument for a referendum than the resolution I have just read. The present Minister of Trade and Commerce was practically the only hon. gentleman opposite who did not vote on that resolution. I remember the occasion well. The Minister of Trade and Commerce suddenly discovered that he had to go to Toronto, and although his train did not go until eleven he left the House at ten o'clock.

Sir GEORGE FOSTER: What a memory the hon. gentleman has.

Mr. MURPHY: We all remember that.

Mr. McKENZIE: He certainly left with a great deal of alacrity that night, and that accounts for his name not being on the list I have just read, but I suppose that if he had had the opportunity he would have declared as paired members do "Had I voted I should have voted for the resolution."

From the facts I have placed before the House it is perfectly clear that we are doing no new thing when we ask that the people be consulted on this question. It has already been brought to the attention of the House that a referendum was taken in Australia, where conditions are entirely different from here. In Australia there is only one language, and practically only one people, holding probably the same ideas regarding constitutional rights. Nevertheless, it was thought proper to consult the people of Australia before a law was enforced interfering with their freedom of action. The ex-Secretary of State for Canada, a gentleman of standing in the province of Quebec and in the Conservative party also, or he would not have been Secretary of State, takes the same view, that it would be disastrous to attempt to enforce any law in this country which might have the result of bringing about a condition of affairs that could not be remedied for perhaps centuries to come.

There is no doubt about our ability to stand behind the men at the front and to do all that is necessary to maintain the glorious position which the Canadian people and the Canadian armies have taken in this war. We should get together and consult the people on this question, and we