

with every possible expedition until it is completed.

I do not know that there is anything further in the observations of my right hon. friend that demand comment at the moment, except this: The Minister of Militia and Defence had had no previous opportunity of making reply in respect of certain matters with which certain hon. gentlemen on the other side sought to connect him. Many allegations were introduced with regard to enormous profits supposed to have been made by Mr. Allison, which were not connected, so far as I am aware, with the Shell Committee, or with the Minister of Militia and Defence, or with the Government in any shape, form, or manner whatsoever. The allegations of the hon. member for Richmond were entirely new to me in respect of nearly all these matters, but they were introduced in such a way as to endeavour to connect the Minister of Militia and Defence with the supposed enormous profits. Therefore, notwithstanding the criticism of my right hon. friend, I think it was a perfectly proper thing for the Minister of Militia to make the observations which he did make in reference to the supposed contracts in order to dissipate the idea that he had any connection with them, or that any such contracts were, as a matter of fact, ever made, or any such profits ever realized. It seemed to be the object of hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House, at a most critical time in the history of this country and of the Empire, to swell up an enormous sum of supposed profits, and by veiled insinuation to connect the Minister of Militia and Defence with them. I am free to say that there never was a Royal Commission recommended and granted, for inquiry into the conduct of a minister of the Crown, that was based on such slender and slight foundation of charge or assertion as the Order in Council and the commission issued in pursuance of it in this case. In recommending that course to His Royal Highness the Governor General, I went beyond the pledge that I had given to the House. I went beyond that pledge because I realized the impression which hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House were endeavouring to create by suggestion and insinuation, and because I was determined that these insinuations should be probed to the bottom. Let me assure my right hon. friend and gentlemen on the other side of the House that they will be probed to the

[Sir Robert Borden.]

bottom by this commission, and that no effort on the part of this Government will be wanting to that end. In making that assertion to this House I am expressing the determination and conviction of every one of my colleagues, and especially of the Minister of Militia and Defence himself. To-morrow this matter will proceed before the tribunal which has been selected, and while that investigation is being carried out the Minister of Militia and Defence will give his whole time and his whole energies to the investigation of the facts and the determination of the truth. I am prepared, at his request, although it is a very great burden in addition to responsibilities already sufficiently onerous, to undertake to give my attention to the affairs of his department in order that the efforts of this country in doing its part in the great conflict which the Empire is carrying on may not be stayed and that our great common cause may not suffer from lack of attention or effort in that department. That is the whole situation, which we expose frankly and without any hesitation to the members of this House and to the people of this country.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD: (Pictou): At the request of my hon. friend the junior member for Halifax (Mr. A. K. Maclean), who was forced to leave the House and who was mentioned by the Minister of Militia in connection with a conversation the minister had with him previous to his going to England, I desire to state that the Minister of Militia had spoken to the hon. member for Halifax and asked him whether he thought the Opposition would agree to allow him to get his Estimates through quickly in order to enable him to leave for England. He replied to the hon. Minister of Militia that he could not tell him, and suggested that he should see the leader of the Opposition. He affirms that he made no undertaking with regard to any matter as a result of that conversation. I desire to say with regard to myself, for the hon. Minister of Militia mentioned my name, that the minister spoke to me with regard to his going to England.

He discussed with me certain matters which I need not mention here, and he asked me whether I would see the right hon. leader of the Opposition in regard to the question whether any matters would come up affecting him. I told him I would not see the right hon. leader of the Opposition; that, if he desired to hold any com-