

proved by them. In looking over this handbook of the Conservative party—

Mr. LALOR: Will the hon. gentleman allow me to ask a question? Does he admit that the issue in the last election campaign was the navy?

Mr. TOBIN: In Quebec?

Mr. LALOR: Speaking generally.

Mr. TOBIN: I understand that the party of the hon. member for Haldimand (Mr. Lalor) had a different policy for each province—in no two provinces was their policy the same. In the province of Quebec, as elsewhere, the policy of the Liberal party was the Canadian navy. We defended that policy and we carried the majority of the members from Quebec in support of it. Many of those who sit on your right, Mr. Chairman, who come from the province of Quebec, were elected as opposed to any navy or any contribution. I have been in this House for a number of years, and I know personally from speaking with different members before the election of 1911 that they were against all contribution and all expenditure for the navy. I refer now to Conservatives from the province of Quebec. Their speeches in this House will bear me out. They were anti-British. The hon. member for L'Islet (Mr. Paquet), the hon. member for Dorchester (Mr. Sevigny), the present Minister of Inland Revenue (Mr. Nantel), and the present Deputy Speaker (Mr. Blondin) held meetings in many parts of the province of Quebec. They went into one county where a gentleman was running who was afterward elected, not as a Conservative, but as a Nationalist; he was against a Canadian navy, but not against doing something for England if it was necessary. Some of the gentlemen I have named went down to his county and held a meeting there, and that member, who sits on your right, Mr. Chairman, said that these speeches were so anti-British that he would not speak at that meeting in his own county because some of his electors would hold him responsible for the words uttered by these men. I call the attention of the hon. member for Haldimand to the fact that this is what the Liberal party had to contend with in the province of Quebec. Every Conservative in the French counties in the province of Quebec, when told that Mr. Borden was his leader felt insulted. And I may tell you, Mr. Chairman—and I speak in the presence of the leader of the Government—that I myself have defended him publicly. I have known the right hon. gentleman for a number of years, and I knew he was a respectable gentleman.

An hon. MEMBER: Somebody had to defend him.

Mr. TOBIN: Why, certainly, we had to. All you have to do is to go back to the speech of the hon. member for Yamaska delivered in this House on the 13th of February last:

Such was the position of both political parties, when, all of a sudden, the general election was announced for September 21, 1911. That election resulted in the downfall of the Government which had passed the Naval Service Act, the Conservative party winning by a very large majority. . . . However, I may say that the main issue in the province of Quebec was the 'Naval Service Act'—and that province withdrew the great confidence shown in the late Government for fifteen years, returning no less than twenty-seven members of the Opposition.

And what was this Naval Act? One section reads:

The Governor in Council may—

That word 'may' played a great part—

The CHAIRMAN: I would ask the hon. member if he does not think he is going a little far from clause 5. I shall not try to prevent him going, but I did call the matter to his attention.

Mr. GRAHAM: The hon. gentleman is showing why he is against clause 5 and why hon. gentlemen opposite ought to be against clause 5.

Mr. TOBIN (Reading):

—in case of an emergency the Governor in Council may place at the disposal of His Majesty, for general service in the Royal navy, the naval service or any part thereof, any ships or vessels in the naval service, and the officers and seamen serving in such ships and vessels, or any officers or seamen belonging to the naval service.

These gentlemen would take this up and they would say to the people of Quebec: That means that you are going to have conscription, that your children are to be taken away; that means blood and flesh. My hon. friends from Quebec will remember those words very well. In Ontario, if I understand aright, they said: Laurier wants nothing for Great Britain, he is anti-British. My hon. friend from Carleton, New Brunswick, says that they quoted the same sections and explained them differently. That was the policy. I have here a handbook which was used by the Conservatives in that campaign. I believe that the hon. member for St. Antoine division (Mr. Ames) was very careful, while acting as organizer of the Eastern Townships, that this handbook did not go into any section where there were French speaking people. This handbook was given to English speaking candidates, but they were told not to show it to their Conservative French friends, the Nationalists must not see it because they might see what it says on page 14 re-