

Recent wars have shown that it is absolutely necessary in order to have an efficient force or an effective army that all the departments and all the branches of the army should exist in peace which would be required in war, that they should not only exist but that they should be actually utilized and used, that in other words in everything except numbers the peace establishment of the army or of the militia should contain within it all the elements necessary to take its place as an effective force in time of war, that it should be, in fact, a nucleus in every respect of all the departments which go to make up the whole and to make an effective force. If I may say so, that is the course which we are endeavouring to pursue in Canada and that is the direction more than any other in which advancement has been made during the last five or six years. I referred a moment ago to the fact that in the earlier part of last century or up to 1870 or thereabouts the militia of this country was dependent upon the imperial force stationed in North America for all the departments, for all the staff for everything except men more or less trained which go to make up the army. We have in recent years, as I pointed out, taken the important step of assuming responsibility ourselves. One after one of the garrisons which were stationed in North America in 1867 at the time of confederation has disappeared until now the only garrisons remaining are those at Halifax and Esquimalt.

We have now taken the last step in completing the assumption of the responsibility on the part of Canada for the defence of this country by offering to relieve the imperial government from the responsibility and maintenance of those two garrisons by substituting Canadian garrisons and paying the bill for their maintenance. Perhaps this would be a convenient time—as this is really the most important departure involved in the estimates we are now discussing—perhaps this would be a convenient time to discuss what has happened. Those who have read the papers laid on the table of the House—which I regret are incomplete but which are sufficiently complete to justify the government in asking a vote for the maintenance of these garrisons—those who have read these papers will observe that in the Order in Council of the 20th of January, 1905, reference is made to the Colonial Conference (1902) in these words:

It will be within the recollection of Your Excellency that at the Colonial Conference held in London, 1902, the suggestion was made by the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for War that the various colonial governments should contribute some portion of the cost of the maintenance of the imperial army and navy. The Canadian ministers present, for reasons set forth in the memorandum printed in the report of the conference, expressed their inability to concur in that suggestion. They at the same time acknowledged the propriety of the Dominion, as it advances

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in population and wealth, making more liberal provision for the purpose of self defence, and they stated verbally the willingness of the government of Canada to assume the responsibility of garrisoning Halifax and Esquimalt, and to this extent relieving the imperial government of the cost of protecting the Dominion. They now deem it expedient to renew this offer in a more formal and precise manner.

It would be convenient to make a brief reference to the events of 1902 at the conference in London referred to in this minute of council. The exact proposal which was made by the Secretary of State for War was not that a sum of money should be directly contributed, but that Canadian troops should be trained especially for service abroad. I will read from the official publication a portion of the remarks of Mr. Brodrick at the conference:

Now your time is of value, and I do not want to enlarge on the many other features which are put before me by my military advisers on this subject, but what I would ask is this: that out of this very large number of men who are only trained in some degree in the colonies we must look, even if it were for only one in four, to be specially trained and to be held in readiness for such an emergency

The emergency referred to was of course war.

I propose that these men should be trained with a liability to over sea service, that they should realize they are a part of the army reserve of the imperial force, that their services are absolutely pledged in the event of the government to which they belong proffering assistance to the imperial forces in the emergency. I would ask that they should receive such training as might be agreed upon between our military authorities and the government concerned, and that they should be fully organized and fully equipped with a view to acting together and drilling together in the battalions or regiments with which they would take the field.

I shall also read from a memorandum by the Canadian ministers concerning defence, which was practically a reply to the statement made by Mr. Broderick and also the statement made by Lord Selborne, who I should state asked for a contribution in money, so that in that respect his proposal was different from that made by Mr. Brodrick. This is a part of the memorandum:

The Canadian ministers regret that they have been unable to assent to the suggestions made by Lord Selborne respecting the navy and by Mr. St. John Brodrick respecting the army. The ministers desire to point out that their objections arise, not so much from the expense involved as from a belief that the acceptance of the proposals would entail an important departure from the principle of colonial self-government. Canada values highly the measure of local independence which has been granted it from time to time by the imperial authorities and which has been so productive of beneficial results both as respects the material progress of the country and the strengthening of the ties that bind it to the mother land. But while, for these reasons the Canadian ministers are obliged to withhold their assent to the proposi-