

must face the situation in the light of the experience which these men have gained and which is embodied in the conclusions they have arrived at.

Mr. MEIGHEN: If I caught correctly what the hon. member said, I take no exception at all to the terms of the extract he read from the report. I would presume it was quite right that the Empire delegation at the Disarmament Conference was in no way entrusted with the power of decision in anything that related to co-operation among the dominions of the Empire in the matter of naval defence, and therefore I am in thorough accord with him. I think perhaps I have as good a right as any member of this House to express the fullest sympathy, indeed, enthusiasm, with all the purposes of the Disarmament Conference. That that conference did make it possible for the heavily burdened nations of the world to reduce their naval armaments is a matter for the sincere congratulation of all humanity. It is no doubt that it did take a very long and a very practical step to that end. As to what may be the residuum of necessary defence for this Empire, after all that is done, and as to what, the residuum fixed, may be our share therein, is another question. I venture to suggest that he would be a remarkable Canadian who would find our share taken care of in an honourable way by the estimates presented now, and by the proposals of the minister.

Mr. MACDONALD (Pictou): The right hon. gentleman may be enthusiastic with regard to the result of the conference at Washington, but he knows very well that the conclusions of the Imperial Conference were that this whole subject should be postponed until after the conference on disarmament at Washington had taken place, and that the question as to what participation there should be on a permanent basis should form the subject of another imperial conference. In the meanwhile, why should we not have a naval holiday, the same as every other country?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Until another imperial conference?

Mr. MACDONALD (Pictou): Yes.

Mr. MEIGHEN: But I did not understand the minister to say he was deferring the final pronouncement of his policy until there was another imperial conference.

Mr. MACDONALD (Pictou): Nor did I say so, either.

[Mr. Macdonald.]

Mr. MEIGHEN: I thought we were getting the policy now. The naval holiday that the hon. member wants for Canada is only to last until the next imperial conference; is that what I understand him to say?

Mr. MACDONALD (Pictou): No; my right hon. friend is at his old trick of quibbling and hair-splitting. The point I am making is this: the effect of the resolution adopted by the conference which my right hon. friend attended last summer, and agreed to by all the delegates, was that the question of the participation of the overseas dominions in the naval defence of the Empire should be postponed for consideration until after the holding of the conference in Washington. That was expressly set forth in the resolution which my right hon. friend has read. Now, the conference at Washington has taken place; conclusions of a general character have been arrived at, and the absolute inference, having regard to the manner in which the question was dealt with by the Imperial Conference last year, is that its consideration is to be postponed until another imperial conference is held.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Well, if I was hair-splitting and quibbling I was only repeating the position which the hon. member himself had taken and which he has now repeated. That is what I understood him to say before. The resolution that was passed did not postpone the determination of the part to be taken in imperial defence by any dominion until the next imperial conference. It says:

That, while recognizing the necessity of co-operation among the various portions of the Empire to provide such naval defence as may prove to be essential for security, and while holding that equality with the naval strength of any other power is a minimum standard for that purpose, this conference is of opinion that the method and expense of such co-operation are matters for the final determination of the several parliaments concerned, and that any recommendations thereon should be deferred until after the coming conference on disarmament.

Mr. MACDONALD (Pictou): Who are going to make the recommendations?

Mr. MEIGHEN: The recommendations referred to there would doubtless be recommendations by another imperial conference if it chose to make any, but it does not say by any means that nothing should be done pending another imperial conference. If this Government is saying that it is waiting for recommendations from an-