

ture to say even before that, there have been Canadians going into the English army and many of them I have no doubt are now fitted to take the position of the general officer commanding, so there is nothing in that argument that I can see. I regret very much that this position of general officer commanding is to be done away with. It is not so stated in the Bill, but there is no doubt from the expressions which have fallen from the minister that this is the intention of the Bill. It seems to me that in doing away with the requirement that the general officer commanding shall be one of His Majesty's generals or colonels the minister is weakening the ties—and there are very few of them left—the open ties that bind us to the mother country. I am sure that we all regret it on that and on other accounts as well. The minister has stated that in establishing the council to assist him he has been following the lead of the imperial House of Commons. It seems to me that we are advancing too rapidly in establishing a council here. We might well have waited until we saw the effect of the council in the mother country. It is only an experiment there, and it seems to me that we might very well have put off establishing a council here until we saw how it worked in the mother country. The minister has also stated that it was found to be utterly unworkable in England to have the commander in chief working with the civil portion of the war office. It seems to me that England had gone on for a great many years before it was found out that this system was unworkable. Commanders in Chief have existed there for a great many years, as have also general officers commanding in Canada, and I think that on that account alone the minister's statement in this respect has not very much foundation in fact. I regret the establishment of this council because although the minister states that he had actual and free control of his department under the old order of things it seems to me that this new order of things is simply emphasizing that control and placing the control of the militia forces entirely in the hands of the minister. I think it cannot but have that effect, and no matter what administration is in power for the time being that is a dangerous power to give to any minister of the Crown. The general officer commanding as we all know had certain branches in the Militia Department to manage, of course under the direction of the minister, and those portions of the department which he managed, he managed I venture to say until this administration came into power, absolutely without political control. I would like to see that order of things still continue, and I am sorry that it does not exist at the present time. If I were not paired, I would vote for the amendment of my hon. friend (Mr. Tisdale) with great pleasure.

Mr. WARD.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. The Minister of Militia has spoken of following the lead of the war office of Great Britain. It might be a very desirable thing to follow the lead of the war office in Great Britain so far as conditions are the same, but you cannot always follow the lead of the war office in Great Britain because they have a standing army there and we do not want a standing army in this country. We can hardly call our small permanent force a standing army and therefore when you come to compare our system with the English system, you must look not at the standing army of Great Britain, but at the disposition of the auxiliary forces. If you take the empire as a whole, you have a standing army which is largely recruited in Great Britain and you have auxiliary forces in Great Britain and in different outlying portions of the empire, which in the event of difficulty in any part of the empire can be used in connection with the standing army. I would not like to say that I would follow the lead of the war office in every respect. Suppose, for example the war office should adopt the recommendations of the recent committee of which the Duke of Norfolk is chairman; the concluding paragraph recommends that for effective defence of the United Kingdom, universal conscription in Great Britain is desirable, if not necessary. I do not think that in this country we should be prepared to follow that lead of the war office in a matter of that kind. I would not go quite so far as the Minister of Militia in saying we must follow the lead of the war office in every respect.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. I meant as to the organization of the War Office itself; we have always followed that as closely as we could, *mutatis mutandis*.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Everybody will admit that we can get very valuable suggestions from Great Britain, but we must adapt them to the conditions which prevail in this country, and we must consider them in view of the fact that we have only an auxiliary force, a militia force, a force designed for the defence of the country, but a force which can work in harmony and in co-operation with the regular army in event of danger.

I cannot quite understand why the Minister of Militia desires to eliminate from the statute-book the words that now declare that the General Officer Commanding—if there is to be a General Officer Commanding—shall be charged with the military command and discipline of the militia. There has been a very important change made in that respect, and I venture to think that when we compare our auxiliary force with the auxiliary force of the mother country, we will find that no such change as is here proposed has been brought about in Great Britain. I say that after having read the