

Mr. MACDONALD: Under whom?

Sir EDWARD KEMP: Under the Minister of Militia.

Mr. MACDONALD: Before the war General Mackenzie was the General Officer Commanding until General Gwatkin was subsequently appointed. General Mackenzie retired and went to England. Up to that time General Gwatkin was employed in a certain position in the Militia Department—I think in regard to artillery or something of that kind.

Sir SAM HUGHES: General Gwatkin came out here some years ago as an officer under General Lake. When General Mackenzie retired, I was Minister of Militia, and the British Government objected to recommending General Gwatkin as being fit for the position as Chief of the General Staff, to which position I purposed appointing him. They stated that he was not competent for the position.

Mr. MACDONALD: They objected to it?

Sir SAM HUGHES: They objected to it. They stated he was not competent for the position. I informed them that was the reason I wanted him, and that I did not want any fellow there with their ideas; I wanted some man who did what he was told, and who did not profess to have those fancy notions of his own. I found I made a mistake. I was right in the fact that he did not know much, but I was wrong in thinking that he would not interfere.

Mr. MACDONALD: I am very much obliged to my hon. friend for the information. The result is, we have now in charge of the military forces in Canada a man who, the British Government intimated, was not competent for the war office, and we find that the hon. the ex-Minister of Militia who, notwithstanding the position taken by the British Government thought he was competent, now admits his mistake. I do not think my hon. friend the present Minister of Militia will claim he is possessed of any special military knowledge. Under the statute his duties relate to the civil side of the department. Why is it, if for over three years every other dominion has had men who knew their business, men of military training, actually directing their military affairs, this has not been the case in Canada? Our boys are directed and controlled by a man to whom the British Government objected as not being competent. They go overseas, and who is the general command-

ing them there? Who is the man in control of the military institutions of Canada on the other side?

Mr. R. B. BENNETT: General Turner.

Mr. MACDONALD: No, not General Turner. The man in charge of everything military there is Sir George Perley. I understand that General Turner is under Sir George Perley. By this measure, it is proposed to create a Minister of Militia Overseas, who shall have directions of all matters with reference to our troops, and our boys there shall be under his dictum and direction.

Mr. R. B. BENNETT: Is not the hon. gentleman aware that under a former Minister of Militia and Defence, General Donaldson was removed from his position because he undertook to deal with matters which it was said should be dealt with only by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Militia and Defence, and is not the hon. member aware that that policy has been followed since?

Mr. MACDONALD: My hon. friend is speaking of the piping times of peace. We should have the direction and assistance of the best military aides we could get anywhere.

Mr. R. B. BENNETT: And we have it in General Turner, overseas.

Mr. MACDONALD: But, I am speaking of Canada, and my hon. friend was speaking of Canada. We have heard the admission of the ex-Minister of Militia that the man in charge is a man who, the British Government said, was incompetent. My hon. friend (Mr. R. B. Bennett) interrupts and says that General Turner was in charge overseas. The man whom it is proposed to put in charge under this Bill is Sir George Perley, who has, as a matter of fact, been in charge ever since General Carson retired. Under this Bill it is proposed to provide that so far as overseas affairs are concerned we are to have a separate department of the Government over there, and Sir George Perley is to be in control. I venture to say that with the admitted conditions we have in Canada, the military aid we can give to the Allies in this cause is not aid which will be enhanced by the direction of Sir George Perley and the coterie he has around him. I noticed in Hansard the other day a statement made by the ex-Minister of Militia in regard to the tremendous number of people gathered in and around London in connection with the administration of the office.