

so serious. Does he imagine the people of this country are going to put up with this sort of experimental legislation?

On the money question alone, it is very serious. What are the facts? I notice that a number of newspapers have been commenting on the largeness of our expenditure upon militia, and they put it at \$2,000,000 a year. These gentlemen are much mistaken, it is almost double that. The hon. member for Haldimand (Mr. A. T. Thompson) boasted the other day that the minister had spent \$10,000,000 in the last three years on the militia, and jeered at the Tories because they had spent so little when they were in power. And what did the Minister of Militia say last year when he was asking us for \$3,750,000, which we ungrudgingly gave him after he outlined the magnificent scheme of defence, which we now know was prepared by the late General Officer, he said he could not expect to ask for less for five years. When I questioned him, he finally admitted that he was doubtful whether he could ever lessen it. This year he is asking for \$4,105,447.10; and it is whispered in the air that there are \$3,000,000 yet to come down in the way of supplementaries. Now, I agree with him that if this scheme is carried out in proper shape and by competent hands, it is a great scheme; and there will be a great responsibility on him if it is a failure. We never had a General Officer Commanding here equal to the late one—my hon. friend knows that. No one has ever attempted to master the whole system of defence and lay out a scheme such as he did. We know he was competent, we know he was submissive, and if I had time I would refer to the report. He allowed his report to be pigeon-holed, he allowed his report to be cut and carved by the Minister of Militia, and then sent it, modified at the minister's request, back to the minister, and the minister, without his knowledge or consent, cut out pages and paragraphs of it and then published it. Is not that a patient sort of gentleman to have to deal with? There is one thing plain. Whether the minister adheres to his own plan or tries the plan of the General Officer Commanding, he has taken mighty good care, to use his own language of last year in the House, to say that he will be 'boss' of the situation. The Bill provides that the General Officer Commanding, if one is appointed, as well as the chief of the general staff, must act under the direction of the minister, no question of limit. What is the use of having a competent man in charge of the Militia Department? My hon. friend knows that there is no necessity of a Minister of Militia having any military rank or knowledge of military matters. I am forced to the conclusion from recent events that the best qualification he can have is to be ignorant of military matters. Get a competent military man, give him fair-play, give

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him a fair supply to meet the schemes he evolved, and there will be less trouble. Shut out the politicians, and there will not be any trouble.

Is it not intolerable we should have forced through the House a double-barrelled alternative scheme to be experimented upon to the tune of \$4,000,000? He declares that it is similar to the great English scheme. Surely the authors of the English scheme will be proud of such a child. No wonder he did not dare submit it to the home authorities before bringing it before parliament. The 'boss' of the militia council, the 'boss' of the chief of staff, the 'boss' of the General Officer Commanding, if he tries to run both functions at the same time—anything is possible with the minister holding these powers, except our present 'impossible' scheme, as he calls it, which has worked so well in England and here for 111 years, and which, according to my contention, is still working in England, and has worked well ever since they put a strong hand on the King and compelled him to make his appointments by merit and keep the politicians from unduly influencing the military, so that the army of England might become what it is and has been for ages past. They asked it in the early days. Well, he is to be our military expert whether we like it or not. I am trying to fancy the manoeuvring of troops under the General Officer Commanding, under the direction of the Minister of Militia. It will be a refreshing exhibition of military movements. Let him catch the General Officer Commanding or chief of staff even speaking of a report, annual or 'special,' until they have the minister's sanction, and then after he has received and mutilated it to his heart's content he will probably suppress or declare it private. I say it is monstrous to give such authority to a man with no military qualification, compelling the General Officer Commanding, or any self-respecting chief of the military staff, in command of the organization and training of our militia, to come under the direction of the minister. He has not the qualification of a first lieutenant, I mean the military qualification, I am speaking in no other sense. I venture to say he could not pass the examination to-day for that appointment, and yet the Minister of Militia is to be the military expert. Imagine the hon. gentleman in this House applying this violent expression to the late General Officer Commanding.

A more highly concentrated exhibition of egotism and self-assertion cannot, I believe, be found in the English language.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN. Hear, hear.

Mr. TISDALE. Sir, the colossal magnitude of the hon. gentleman's belief in his own capacity and opinion is beyond my comprehension. But will not the boys behind him be glad? He is the master.