

friends are taking the power under this Bill as it now stands to expend \$35,000,000 or \$40,000,000, entirely by private arrangement between the right hon. the Prime Minister or some other member of his Government and private firms not in Canada, but in England. Even if these private firms were in Canada, it would be bad enough, but not nearly so bad because Parliament could bring these people before it and get some information from them. The first principles of responsible government would demand that this money must be expended upon public tender. When these tenders come into the hands of this Government, this Parliament would have the right to look at them and we would know exactly what the different firms in the British Empire agreed to do the work for. Perhaps it might not give us very much relief, because the money will be gone; but at least we shall have the satisfaction of knowing that hon. gentlemen opposite tried to get the best tenders they could, and that the firm which was willing to do the work for the least amount of money, was given the contract. If it was given to any other firm, then Parliament would have the right to deal with the matter, and the public would have the right to have the information. Suppose this clause goes through as it is, and suppose my right hon. friend goes over to the Old Country and makes a contract with John Brown and Company, Cammell, Laird and Company, Vickers, Sons and Maxim or any other big concern. We do not know whether they have gone to deal with the firms or only to one of them, we do not know what efforts they have made, what specifications they have submitted to this company or that company, we do not know anything about it at all. All we know is that the Government has spent \$40,000,000 and we do not know whether they have made a good trade or not. It is not necessary to elaborate this matter, I think it is a clause so reasonable that my right hon. friend will be the first person to accept it.

Mr. BORDEN: My hon. friend seems to overlook the fact that these ships might be built in one of His Majesty's dockyards. As far as the construction of ships is concerned, we would be guided by the advice of the Admiralty and build the ships in accordance with the practice over there. I do not know whether it is their practice in all cases to call for public tenders. I know that they build some ships in their own dockyards. My hon. friend may have no apprehension about the practice to be followed because we shall be guided by the advice of the Admiralty as to the best method to adopt.

Mr. CARVELL: I do not like these pious professions of my right hon. friend. There has been nothing but pious professions ever

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since this Naval Bill was introduced. If my right hon. friend were dealing with this himself I will do him the credit to say that I would have considerable faith in what he might do but I have not that faith in all the gentlemen by whom he is surrounded and my right hon. friend might not be here when these contracts are let. My friend says we might go to His Majesty's dockyards. Even if they should go to the Government dockyards they ought to have tenders in order to know if they could get the ships cheaper somewhere else. I am not an advocate of public ownership and if the public dockyards in Great Britain are no greater success than public ownership in Canada, I think we ought to have tenders. That is one of the strongest reasons why we should have public tenders so that we would know what we were doing. My hon. friend says there might be some difficulty because the ships may be built under the direction of the Admiralty. The former Government had not any difficulty in calling for tenders for the vessels they proposed to construct under the Naval Service Act and they were working in co-operation with the Admiralty. They got the specifications and all details of the ships from the Admiralty, they called for tenders, they took those tenders to England and the Admiralty figured it out and told them which were the lowest tenders. They did not have any difficulty in working under the Admiralty and calling for tenders. Therefore my right hon. friend will have no difficulty. I do not think he has given a reason which will satisfy his followers and I have grave doubts whether it satisfies himself.

Mr. BORDEN: I have not at all intended to express the idea that we shall not call for tenders but I would point out that when a very considerable sum was voted some three years ago, if I remember correctly, for the Canadian Naval Service there was no provision attached to the grant that the ships should be built by tender. The Government of the day took that course.

Mr. CARVELL: That money was not voted, it was put in the estimates like any other expenditure.

Mr. BORDEN: What is the difference?

Mr. GRAHAM: The difference is this that as I recollect it, and I think I am correct, no contract for over \$5,000 can be awarded by any minister except by public tender and then the amount goes in the estimates in the usual way. That is the practice that has been followed, and I think it is followed by the present Government. In this case the amounts are not