

trine he propounded is engraved in the British constitution.

We are told in the province of Quebec that this naval policy is a new idea, that it is being sprung on the electors of the Dominion. My hon. friend made that statement in the county of Jacques Cartier. Sir, I read the other day, on my return to Canada, with the greatest pleasure the very able speech—worthy of being called an essay—in which my hon. friend from North Toronto (Mr. Foster) gave a synopsis of the various imperial conferences held in London since 1887. I read that speech carefully and would like to have it read by every youth in this country. I commend it not only to the young men of the English speaking provinces but to the young men in the province of Quebec. They will there learn that the idea of a Canadian navy is not a new one, that it is not a new fancy of the Prime Minister. They will see that as far back as 1887 the question was mooted at the imperial conference. It was not discussed at Ottawa in 1893, because, as stated by my hon. friend, that conference had been summoned, not by the British government, but by the colonies. But it came up very prominently at the conference of 1902, and in the light of that conference, those who say that this policy of a Canadian navy is a new one and that the people ought to be consulted regarding it, are singularly ignorant of the facts. Why, the policy embodied in the Bill we are now discussing, the very ideas expressed in that Bill, are to be found in the declaration made in the name of Canada during the imperial conference of 1902. I hope I am not detaining you too long—

Some hon. MEMBERS. Go on.

Mr. LEMIEUX. But as I intend this speech of mine to be circulated among the French Canadians of the province of Quebec, I wish to make this quotation which is to be found in the appendix page 73 of the return for 1902:

The Canadian ministers regret that they have been unable to assent to the suggestions made by Lord Selborne respecting a navy, and by Mr. St. John Brodrick respecting the army. The ministers desire to point out that their objections arise, not so much from the expense involved, as from a belief that the acceptance of the proposals would entail an important departure from the principle of colonial government. Canada values highly the measure of local independence which has been granted her from time to time by the imperial authorities, and which has been so productive of beneficial results, both as respects the material progress of the country and the strengthening of the ties that bind it to the motherland. But while, for these reasons, the Canadian ministers are obliged to withhold their assent to the propositions of the admiralty and the War Office, they fully ap-

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preciate the duty of the Dominion, as it advances in population and wealth, to make more liberal outlay for these necessary preparations of self-defence which every country has to assume and bear.

At present Canadian expenditures for defence services are confined to the military side. The Canadian government are prepared to consider the naval system of defence as well. On the sea coast of Canada there is a large number of men admirably qualified to form a naval reserve, and it is hoped that at an early date a system may be devised which will lead to the training of these men and to the making of their services available for defence in time of need.

In conclusion, the ministers repeat that while the Canadian government are obliged to dissent from the measures proposed, they fully appreciate the obligation of the Dominion to make expenditures for the purposes of defence in proportion to the increasing population and wealth of the country. They are willing that these expenditures should be so directed as to relieve the taxpayer of the mother country from some of the burdens which she now bears; and have the strongest desire to carry out their defence schemes in co-operation with the imperial authorities, and under the advice of the experienced imperial officers, so far as this is consistent with the principle of local self-government, which has proved so great a factor in the promotion of imperial unity.

Reading that state paper, left in the hands of the secretary of the imperial conference of 1902, one can find the very principle, the very theory of the Bill we are now discussing.

I say that my hon. friend from Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) when he declared to his electors, a few days before the session that the country had been taken by surprise, either had not read the statement made by the right hon. the Prime Minister in 1902 or laid himself open to that other reproach of having assented during the session following the imperial conference of 1902 to the policy then advocated by the Prime Minister.

Mr. MONK. I have read very carefully not only that, but the different views expressed by the Prime Minister during the conference of 1907.

Mr. LEMIEUX. In this document, the right hon. the Prime Minister anticipated, so to speak, the legislation being presented to the House to-day. In 1907, he refused to be led by the Hon. Dr. Smart and by Mr. Jameson who were then propounding a militarist policy. The right hon. gentleman differed from them, but he adhered firmly to his declaration of 1902, and when the affairs of this country became more prosperous, when he found that the financial crisis and its effect had passed away, he came out boldly with the policy advocated in 1902. I say further that the resolution unanimously adopted on the 29th March, 1909, is based on that state