

To that I received the following reply from his secretary:

Admiralty Whitehall, 17-3, 1917.

Dear Mr. Rogers,

Sir Edward Carson asks me to say that he will be very glad to see you if you can conveniently call on him at the Admiralty at 3.30 p.m. on Monday next (19 March).

Yours very truly,

(Sgd.) G. N. Steel.

I availed myself of this opportunity and called on Sir Edward. I spoke to him of the number of dry docks which the Government of Canada were building, or were helping to build by way of subsidy, and he asked me to give him a memorandum of the exact position in order that he might take the matter up with his colleagues. I accordingly wrote him on March 21, as follows:

Savoy Hotel, London, March 21st, 1917.

Dear Sir Edward Carson,—

In my judgment there is very pressing need for action on the part of the Admiralty in respect to two dry docks—one at Esquimalt, on the Pacific, and one at Halifax, on the Atlantic.

The Government of Canada have undertaken and are now at work on several dry docks at our general shipping ports in Canada. For example, we are building a magnificent dock at the Port of Quebec. We have provided a magnificent floating dock at the Port of Montreal; we have also provided a splendid dock at Fort William, another at Sault Ste. Marie, another at Kingston, and are now constructing a very large one at St. John, N.B. We are also preparing for the construction of a very large dock at Vancouver. These docks, however, are not at points convenient to naval requirements.

By consulting your records you will at once see that Esquimalt and Halifax are two points in Canada that are of direct interest to the Admiralty. Our people do not like to see our British ships being taken to the Port of Seattle or elsewhere on the American side when repairs are required, by reason of the fact that the Admiralty has no dock suitable to receive large ships at either Esquimalt or Halifax.

I do wish you would have this matter looked into, and I am satisfied if you do you will have no hesitation in recommending the immediate construction by the Admiralty of a dock at Esquimalt and another at Halifax.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) R. Rogers.

The Right Honourable Sir Edward Carson,  
First Lord of the Admiralty,  
London, England.

Sir Edward Carson and the Admiralty staff, after looking into the matter, concluded that the request of the Canadian Government was a reasonable one, and on April 4, Sir Edward wrote me the following letter:

[Mr. Rogers.]

Admiralty Whitehall, 4th April, 1917.

Dear Mr. Rogers,—

Sir Edward Carson asks me to tell you that we are sending to the Treasury to-day a further letter urging the very great importance of providing a dock of sufficient capacity, both at Halifax and Esquimalt. The First Lord thinks that, knowing this, you might wish to write or speak to Mr. Bonar Law to the same effect in the near future.

Yours very truly,

(Sgd.) G. N. Steel.

In discussing the matter with Sir Edward Carson on a previous occasion, the question had arisen whether it would be possible to get Mr. Bonar Law to provide the necessary money for the construction of these two docks.

The Admiralty, after going into the matter very fully, decided that they were prepared to go on with a dock at Esquimalt and a dock at Halifax. But the question was to secure the money from the Treasury Department. That letter was written to me and a few days afterwards I availed myself of the opportunity of seeing Mr. Bonar Law and discussing the matter with him. He was very favourable but he required to get some further information from the office of the Admiralty. I wrote Sir Edward Carson the following letter on the 17th April:

Savoy Hotel, London,

April 17th, 1917.

My dear Sir Edward Carson:—

I had a favourable talk with Mr. Bonar Law on the question of dry docks at Halifax and Esquimalt, and I am sure if you would have your department take up the question again there is every chance that it will be approved by Mr. Bonar Law's department.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) R. Rogers.

Minister of Public Works for Canada.

Sir Edward Carson,

First Lord of the Admiralty,  
London, England.

In view of the fact that the Treasury Department appeared to ask for further information, the following letter was addressed to me by Sir Edward Carson on the 18th April:

Admiralty, Whitehall,

18th April, 1917.

Dear Mr. Rogers:—

In reply to your letter of yesterday, I write to tell you that the Admiralty have just received a further letter from the Treasury asking us for some additional information about the question of the proposed dry docks at Halifax and Esquimalt. We shall be replying to this letter as soon as possible—and I hope, in view of what you say about the favourable talk which you had with Mr. Bonar Law, that we shall succeed in getting the Treasury to give their sanction to the scheme.