

ing and discipline, and who know how to handle and take care of guns. That to my mind should be the prime effort, and every dollar that we spend on useless furbelows, on too expensive staff management, with too high salaries, and every dollar that we spend on expensive armouries, is so much taken away from the strength of the force. Armouries will never fight for us. They are good in their way; they provide a home and an incentive to the men; but, after all, if you are to choose between armouries and men for the purposes of defence, until you get the proper line of defence, you had better dispense with some of the armouries, and put so much more money on the men. When you get 100,000 good men in Canada on an active service footing, then, if you have the money, you can spend a little more on armouries, on making the men more comfortable, on increasing the recruiting interest. I know that it is a good argument to say that if you have these things, you encourage men to become militiamen. So you do; but I want to keep the proper proportion between the two. I wish to state—and the statement coming from me will not cause much dismay, because I am not an authority, I am not a Lord Roberts—that my belief is that Canada to-day, if the crisis came, would be found to be mightily poorly prepared to face it. How much ammunition have you behind your force of 30,000 odd to engage in a year's conflict with an enemy? How many rounds per day have you behind the 30,000 or 40,000 men, and what have you back of that to replenish your stores? What great guns have you to protect and cover our militia force? It is there where we ought to put our money and not in other things. That is not a very well considered criticism, but it is my criticism, and it is all included in this one single sentence: make sure of the essentials first, until every Canadian can feel that he has at least a militia force of 100,000 men behind him who are ready and able and efficient to undertake the defence of Canada; that he has behind that force a covering power of guns which will enable it to do its work without being slaughtered at long range by an enemy superior to us in long range guns and in the methods of handling them. Let us be sure of that first, and after that we can go on with the other parts of our service in a more expensive way. Now, I would have taken, and eagerly taken, the offers of the British government to take hold of Esquimalt and Halifax, and keep those two ports in an efficient condition, as the British government and naval authorities know how to do, and are able to do, without one thought of the expense or the expert power and ability that are necessary, replacing the worn-out or the superseded article with the new invention which in power and range and accuracy overpowers it and renders it useless in a

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conflict. That they could have done and would have done, and we would have been at less cost and expense than we shall be put to under the present arrangement. These ports are naval bases, if they are anything. They are no good to us in the way of defence unless they can be defended against an incoming enemy, and the only defence against an incoming enemy from any sea line would be an efficient fleet. They are the bases for the fleet, and if danger on the Pacific or the Atlantic threatened those who read the signs in Great Britain could place in either of these seaports a fleet of vessels which would find their active and sympathetic bases ready and open for them; and thus we would be protected in our two great frontier ports. \$1,000,000 would have done that for us. \$2,000,000 will not in the near future do it for us under our own management; and we will not do it so efficiently. More than that, I confess to the sentimental objection that it is with sorrow that I see the last British tar and the last British soldier go away from the shores of Canada.

I do not want them in the interior parts of our country where our police and our militia will do the work as well and better and more sympathetically, but I do not want to think that we have any spirit in Canada, be it of bravado, foolish bravado or a mock independence, which would lead us to a policy which would say: Let Great Britain go; let her flag cease to float over this country; tell it to the nations everywhere that we have not left in Canada from this time forward a single link of defence co-operation with the old British empire to which we belong. Tell it and your prestige sinks at once; tell it and the menace heightens and grows from that time forward for the nations will think: Ah, then, Canada and Great Britain are not as they used to be; we have an unprotected country to deal with now. It was a tower of defence for us that those outside knew that if one single Canadian interest were touched the heart of the British empire would throb to its centre sympathetically to defend that interest. That was something for us, and it was something for us to feel that we had the hand and power right here by us to class our hand in the defence of the country and in the general strengthening of the country against insult and menace from abroad.

On those two counts I criticise the policy of the government. I think they were wrong in believing that they would be becoming less independent if they agreed to a co-operative agreement with Great Britain. That would have been done under their own proffer, no proposition was made to the Canadian government by which a British war minister could take out of Canada one soldier unless the Canadian government proffered assistance or the man volunteered for himself. That is not a slaughter of independence; that is no argument that we would