

will build 'Dreadnoughts' or whatever the newest type of ship may be as long as we have a shilling to spend on them or a man to put into them. All that we can and will do, but I am not sure that even that will be enough, and I think it may be your duty to take back to your young dominions across the seas this message and this impression: that some personal duty and responsibility for national defence rests on every man and citizen of the empire.

Is this the doctrine that our friends are trying to impress upon the people of this country? I think not. I say, and without the slightest desire to give offence, that the gentlemen on the other side, from the Prime Minister down, are trying to misrepresent the facts to the people of this country; and I believe that before I get through with my address I can prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that the Liberal press or at least some part of it, as well as many members of this House, are trying to misrepresent the facts in this matter.

Yes, gentlemen, take that message back with you. Tell your peoples—if they can believe it—the deplorable way in which Europe is relapsing into militarism and the pressure that is put upon this little England, to defend itself, its liberties—and yours! But take this message also back with you—that the old country is right at heart; that there is no failing or weakness in her; and that she rejoices in renewing her youth in her giant dominions beyond the seas. For her own salvation, she must look to herself, and that failing her she must look to you.

And Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary, speaking after Lord Rosebery at this conference, said:

I endorse every word he said. We are in comparatively calm weather, not in stormy weather, in foreign politics at the present moment, but the excessive expenditure on armaments makes the weather sultry. And the seriousness of that expenditure cannot be over-rated; but you should know to-day how conscious we are at home that we have far too much at stake to allow our naval expenditure to fall behind, however great the burden, and you from beyond the seas have made it clear to us how great the resources of the empire are. In upholding the empire surely we are going more and more towards the ideal to which Mr. Kirwan referred in his speech yesterday—of a union of allies—of self-governing dominions.

The right hon. Mr. McKenna said:

We look to the future and we see growing difficulties surrounding our empire. We foresee possibilities in which we should be called upon to unite our whole strength in a common defence.

I believe in a common defence. Yet, in the face of this utterance of Mr. McKenna, hon. gentlemen opposite try to convince the country that there is no danger, no

Mr. SCHAFFNER.

emergency. Hence, they ask what is the use of giving Dreadnoughts? Why not be content with a tin pot navy? 'It is true,' they say, 'the Conservative party have forced us to do something, but we will do as little as we can. Then we shall be able to go to Quebec and other parts of this country and tell the people that we were forced to do something, but that we did as little as possible, and we can assure you that when it comes to real war our little tin pot navy will not be in sight.'

The right hon. Alfred Lyttelton said:

Well, my belief is, the actual position the actual situation of affairs at this moment is different from that which it has been since the battle of Trafalgar. We are in the presence for the first time of powers equal to ourselves in wealth, . . . and I was delighted to hear Sir Edward Grey on this occasion endorse what he said—that this country may always be relied upon to spend her last shilling if it is necessary for her own defence and for the defence of the empire, but that a time might come when it would be necessary for her own safety and for their own safety that the dominions over the seas should assist her in a tremendous struggle. I firmly believe myself that the ultimate destiny and fate of this empire will depend—must depend—upon the achievement of a really closer and more consolidated unity and a more perfect organization of defence.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, as a fair-minded man which of the two policies before this House leads to closer consolidation—the little home navy without one of the warships of any great importance, or the policy of this side of the House, declaring that there is an emergency, and that in that emergency we should send two Dreadnoughts at least, the only ships that will be able to line up at the front in time of war? Certainly the latter, without any doubt. What does Mr. Balfour say:

The fate of Australia, the fate of New Zealand, of Canada, South Africa, India—that is not going to be decided in the Pacific; it is not going to be decided in the Indian ocean; it is going to be decided here, and everybody who attempts to read the signs of the times will, I think, agree with the weighty words which fell from Lord Rosebery.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt about it, the great battle that is going to decide the fate of the British empire will be fought in the North sea. Germany to-day, from her geographical position, needs and possesses the strongest army in the world; she is able, if necessary, to put 4,000,000 armed men in the field. Great Britain, from her geographical position, must have the strongest navy in the world, and that navy alone will be the only thing to protect us whenever that crucial moment arrives.

At six o'clock, House took recess.