

virtually, that, after all, Sir Wilfrid's programme for the defence of Canada was the right one.

As I was saying, honourable senators, the election was over, and from that time until 1914 nothing was done to extend the naval defence of this country. We had the Niobe in the dockyard at Halifax and the Rainbow at Esquimalt, and when the War broke out in 1914 those ships were tied up at their docks, with the result that there sailed from Montreal a ship called the "Kronprinzessin Cecilie"—

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE: I know the honourable gentleman always wants to be fair, and so I may be permitted to point out that the Rainbow, on the Pacific coast, certainly was in commission and was cruising around looking for German cruisers which were in that district at the time. It was not until some years later that the Rainbow was turned into a depot ship.

Hon. Mr. DUFF: I am afraid my honourable friend is not referring to the same date that I am. I was dealing with the situation when the War broke out.

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE: That is the period to which I am referring.

Hon. Mr. DUFF: The Rainbow was not in commission, nor was the Niobe. One German ship sailed from Vancouver with \$3,000,000 of gold in her strong box and a cargo for Germany, and the Rainbow was not in position to go out from Victoria.

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE: I feel sure my honourable friend will be willing to take my word for it that the Rainbow was in commission at the time, and if he will communicate with the Department of National Defence he will be able to confirm that she remained in commission for a long time after war broke out.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: May I draw to the attention of my honourable friend this statement, made in the House of Commons by Sir Wilfrid Laurier on the 19th of August, 1914, fifteen days after the outbreak of war:

We know that one of our battleships on the Pacific has been seeking the enemy, and if she has not yet engaged him it is because the enemy has eluded her pursuit.

Hon. Mr. DUFF: Of course, I am very glad to defer to those who know about this matter. But it is a well-known fact that up to 1914, when the War broke out, Canada had done practically nothing with regard to the naval defence of this country. One of the two ships which we had received from the British Admiralty in 1910 was perhaps in commission

Hon. Mr. DUFF

at Esquimalt, as my honourable friend from Alma (Hon. Mr. Ballantyne) says, but everybody in Nova Scotia knows that the Niobe was not in commission. She was put into commission about a month or six weeks after war broke out, and then had to be brought back to dock again because she was found to be unfit to be kept at sea. I am not endeavouring to be critical in this matter, because I think that perhaps both parties have fallen down as regards the naval defence of this country. If my honourable friend from Alma will wait a moment or two I shall pay him perhaps one of the greatest compliments ever paid to a public man in this country. It is my belief that if he had been taken into the Government in 1911, instead of in 1917, our naval defence would not have been in the condition it was in when war broke out. When my honourable friend took charge, in 1917, he was faced with an extremely difficult situation. While I criticized him in another place, because he happened to be at the time the Minister of Naval Affairs, I want to say to him now that he was not responsible for the condition of our naval defence. That condition was apparently due to the fact that for some reason or other no attempt was made from 1914 to 1917 to provide for our own naval defence, and we had to depend upon the United States and Japan to protect our shores.

Now, honourable senators, we come to the time when the War was over, and when my honourable friend from Alma was still Minister of Naval Affairs. Because of his responsibilities he thought that he should consult the British Government or that it should consult him with regard to the defence of Canada. And in 1920 he read to the House of Commons a memorandum in which he said:

The Government has had under consideration for some time the question of the naval defence of Canada, and the suggestion of Admiral Viscount Jellicoe in reference thereto.

In view of Canada's heavy financial commitments and of the fact that Great Britain has not, as yet, decided on her permanent naval policy, and of the approaching Imperial Conference at which the question of naval defence of the Empire will come up for discussion between the Home Government and the Overseas Dominions, it has been decided to defer in the meantime action in regard to the adoption of a permanent naval policy for Canada.

The Government has decided to carry on the Canadian naval service along pre-war lines—

I presume that meant along Sir Wilfrid's lines.—and has accepted the offer of Great Britain of one light cruiser and two torpedo boat destroyers to take the place of the present obsolete and useless training ships, the Niobe and the Rainbow.

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE: Hear, hear.