

urgently needed our help for in case of war our navy could have been used to some purpose against the German navy; and the same considerations would apply should the rising sea power to-day be Japan, China or any other nation but the United States.

On the whole I submit that there is no reason why we should for the present commit ourselves to any naval expenditure. We are not wiser than the British naval authorities, and they are waiting for this Imperial Conference before adopting a permanent policy; therefore this naval programme is, to say the least, premature. When the Conference next year shall have pronounced itself—and Canada will be represented there—we shall be in a position to adopt a naval policy suited to the needs of this country in relation to the needs of the Empire.

As I said at the beginning of my remarks, I am not posing as an expert, I am speaking simply as a layman, and I wish my words to be accepted as such. If the Imperial Conference should come to the conclusion that the point of view I have presented is wrong, well I will be ready probably to change my opinion, because I would not presume to think that I new better than the technical men whose opinion no doubt will guide the Conference in reaching a conclusion as to a permanent naval policy for the Empire. At the present time we are going by ourselves alone without any direction. Because we think it is a good thing to do so, we are going into a naval policy which cannot and will not be any policy until a permanent policy has been adopted. Therefore, this should be suspended; these expenditures are premature.

Mr. ARMSTRONG (Lambton): We have just had the privilege of listening to one of the most remarkable speeches, I believe, that has ever been delivered in the Parliament of Canada, a speech placing the people of Canada in the most humiliating position that they could possibly be placed in, distinctly and definitely stating that we are in the position that Serbia was in previous to the war; that we are in the position Mexico is in to-day; that while we are looked upon as the right arm of the British Empire, we are to-day in the most humiliating position of any nation on the face of the globe. That is, according to the argument brought forward by my hon. friend. He says that as Great Britain has an enormous navy, and as the United States have built up a great navy we should not take any part in any war in the future, we

[Mr. Denis.]

should not support Great Britain in any way that would interfere with any action taken by the United States. I am sure that when the people of Canada read the words the hon. gentleman has just made use of they will recognize the fact that he certainly does not voice their sentiments. The Canadian people have given, in connection with this great war, a definite demonstration of what they are capable of doing, not only on land, but on the sea. Take into consideration the fact that previously to the war, every man, woman and child in the Motherland was compelled to take six dollars out of his and her pocket and give it towards the development of the British navy in order that we, as part of the British Empire, might be protected, in order that our commerce on the high seas might be protected, and that to-day Great Britain is taking from the people of the British Isles \$10.75 per head for the same purpose, while the request that has been made by the Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Mr. Ballantyne) is simply for a paltry 25 cents per head from the people of Canada to help to carry on this proposal. The hon. member for Joliette (Mr. Denis) says that this is not the semblance of a navy. That is very true. The Minister of Marine and Fisheries has definitely explained that part of the matter. We listened to another very interesting speech from the hon. member for Lunenburg (Mr. Duff) who said: Sell out the Niobe and the Rainbow; clean up the dirty mess.

Mr. DUFF: Hear, hear.

Mr. RINFRET: The hon. member stands by his statement.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Who made the mess?

Mr. ARMSTRONG (Lambton): That is just what I was going to ask. Who was responsible for it?

Mr. DUFF: What has that got to do with the matter?

Mr. ARMSTRONG (Lambton): Who was responsible for enacting in 1910 a Naval Service Act?

Mr. DUFF: What has that got to do with the matter?

Mr. ARMSTRONG (Lambton): The hon. gentleman says: "What has that got to do with the matter?" The hon. gentleman says that we should clean up the dirty mess, but who were the men who organized the dirty mess?