

to the graze fuse, the No. 100 detonating fuse, I have nothing to say; I never heard of it definitely until after the contract was made. When the original order came from the British Government, an agreement had been made, as already referred to in this House, for these fuses. They had no detailed, specific plans for the No. 100 fuse. They knew that the price in Great Britain was nearly \$4—something like \$3.60 or \$3.72. I do not know anything of the details, but am merely giving an explanation to the House as I have it; and it was found that this detonator or No. 100 fuse could be made somewhat more cheaply, and it is being made somewhat more cheaply to-day.

When in England I read an extract from a German paper relating to present conditions. The Germans claim that since the outbreak of the war they have added a population of 55,000,000 to their domain. They claim that they have annexed Belgium almost entirely, the northern portion of France, nearly all of Russian Poland, nearly all of Galicia, and all of Serbia; that Bulgaria is with them and also Montenegro, Roumania, the Adriatic provinces, and Albania, and that they have formed an alliance with Turkey. I had the honour years ago in this House of Commons of pointing out that that was the ambition of Germany, namely, to rule from the North sea and the Baltic to the Adriatic, the Aegean, and the Euxine. They have seized and they control to-day all the vast resources, agricultural, mineral, and manufacturing, of those countries that I have named. They control the rich industries and mines of Belgium and of France, at Lille, Armentières, and all those great industrial centres which our boys can see every day from the trenches. In Russian Poland they have possession of vast mines and manufacturing establishments. In Galicia they control very rich oil fields and the other industries there. In Serbia they have abundance of copper from the mines there. Bulgaria, with her vast resources, is with them, and I see from recent statements in the press that Roumania has come to an agreement to furnish Germany with millions of tons of farm produce. Every day, they claim, the grandest railway train in the world runs from Berlin to Constantinople, and the vast resources of the Turkish Empire, in men, materials, and produce, are at their disposal. Every morning shows that the German submarines are not idle, and the commerce of the Allies is dis-

[Sir Sam Hughes.]

appearing from the face of the waters. Such is the situation, according to the Germans. Yet, after an absence of four or five weeks, I find, on my return to Canada, that two hundred of the ablest men in this country, members of the House of Commons, instead of being out helping on the cause, are sitting here listening to piffle of that description.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: Mr. Speaker, I have just one word to say in regard to the facts and materials which have been presented to the House by my hon. friend the Minister of Militia. When my hon. friend left for England the motion which I had made asking for an investigation into all the operations of the Shell Committee was still pending before the House. The Government had from the start taken the attitude that this investigation should not be granted and that they would not, for reasons with which the House is familiar, favour such an investigation; in fact, that they would oppose it. But, when my hon. friend from Richmond (Mr. Kyte), in the course of the debate, after my hon. friend had left for England, brought to the attention of the House contracts made by the Shell Committee with two American concerns, which the hon. member for Richmond characterized as mushroom companies, for the manufacture of some 5,000,000 fuses at a price of \$4.50 each, and stated that the approval of this contract had attached to it the signature of my hon. friend the Minister of Militia, the Government thought that they would, at all events in so far as that operation was concerned, change their attitude and grant a commission of investigation. The Prime Minister informed us two days afterwards that he had advised His Royal Highness the Governor General that a commission should be appointed, and that he had communicated with the Minister of Militia asking him to return at once. The situation in the eyes of the Government, therefore, was very grave, inasmuch as it necessitated the return of the Minister of Militia. When the hon. gentleman came here to-day, as the commission had been granted, as therefore his conduct in this matter was to be investigated in the terms laid down by the Order in Council, we expected that my hon. friend would explain his connection with it; that he would inform the House how it had happened, what were his intentions, what were his motives, and what he had in mind when he made those contracts. My hon. friend has