

to him. I was speaking of the hon. member from Victoria, British Columbia, (Mr. Cowan).

Mr. HUGHES. I was going to remark that in case the hon. gentleman was making reference to me, I would listen, but not otherwise.

Mr. RALPH SMITH. That is just about as unfair as I consider my hon. friend to be. I was speaking of my hon. friend from the city of Victoria (Mr. Cowan). He made a speech last night, in which he deplored the fact that the imperial navy had been withdrawn from Esquimalt and the rest of Canada. But what did he say in that connection? He said it would be a fortunate thing if, out of a regrettable incident of that kind, there should arise a better result and that it should lead to the establishment of a Canadian navy. That is what he said, and what I contend is that the tenor of his speech was in favour of a Canadian navy, although I suspect that he will cast his vote for a subscription to Great Britain and against a Canadian navy. The thumb screw has evidently been operating on the other side as well as this. That is a kind of thing which works both Liberal government have a patent on ways. The hon. member thinks that the thumb screws, but the hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) and his followers, could not twist the hon. gentleman around as they do, unless there was a thumb screw on the other side.

An hon. MEMBER. You mean the colony here.

Mr. RALPH SMITH. I mean the prominent men on the opposition benches. I appeal to my hon. friend from East Grey (Mr. Sproule) as one of the old members of this House, one of its most respected, intelligent and experienced members, what can the people of this country expect from a party which could initiate a policy in this House on one of the most important questions that ever came before the country and support that policy, and then within ten months set themselves on record as positively hostile to that same policy. Why, hon. gentlemen opposite have not begun to reflect on the weight of their opinion in the national life of this country. It is an easy thing to turn around, it is easy to say one thing to-day and the opposite to-morrow, but the intelligent electorate of this country want at their head a combination of men to do the business of this country, especially in questions of national defence, on stable foundations—men, who know their own minds to-day and to-morrow—and hon. gentlemen opposite can make up their minds that so long as they exhibit their present weathercock tendencies, they will continue for very many

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years in the happy seats they now occupy. I must apologize to the House for detaining it so long.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Go on.

Mr. RALPH SMITH. But I should like to discuss for a moment what is the disposition of Great Britain herself regarding the question as to whether or not her self-governing Dominions should subscribe in times of emergency to the establishment of naval forces of their own. Is it not important to know just how the British government itself, just how the British admiralty, looks on the question as to the responsibility of each self-governing country in the empire in this matter. Is it in favour of each portion of the empire handing in a servile subscription and waiting for a crisis to arise before doing it? Sir, for fifty years the policy of Britain has been to encourage her self-governing Dominions to establish their own self defence. That the mother country has always regarded as the greatest guarantee of the integrity of the empire. And I appeal to sensible men, what would be the position taken by ordinary business men in their own domestic affairs. My hon. friend from Yale-Cariboo (Mr. Burrell) and my hon. friend from Vancouver (Mr. Cowan) referred to the statements of the Prime Minister that the colonies would drop from the mother country as ripe fruit from the parent tree.

Can there be any objection to that principle? Let me remind the hon. gentleman that the analogy that is commonly used between the responsibilities of a family in domestic life and the relations and responsibilities of an empire, is a very striking one. The member for Yale-Cariboo says, I prefer the analogy of the family, the mother and her child. Sir, Canada is not in the position of a child towards its mother; Canada is in the position of a child that has set up housekeeping for himself, of a son who has taken on the obligations of an independent life. Will my hon. friend from Vancouver say that the son who leaves the old homestead and goes away 20 or 100 miles, and makes a home for himself, looks after his wife and family, maintains the integrity of that home, is he any less the guardian of the old homestead because he is maintaining himself and is no longer receiving pauper assistance from the old man? The analogy of hon. gentlemen only proves that they have never studied the question. The young man who stands up bravely, at a reasonable age, and says to his father, I am going to start life for myself—is there any objection to that? But in national affairs we are told that would mean disloyalty and separation. Is there any objection to the members of a family all leav-