

Mr. MACDONALD. Let us clear that up. Does the hon. gentleman (Mr. R. L. Borden) mean to say that there is any way by which money can be got from this parliament, or from any British parliament, without the executive coming to parliament and asking for a vote?

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Of course, they must come to parliament; that is just what I have said. But the hon. member said they got money by executive act.

Mr. MACDONALD. No.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. The hon. gentleman has reduced the question of participation in a war in which Great Britain is concerned to a question of dollars.

Mr. MACDONALD. And does the hon. member (Mr. R. L. Borden) forget that altogether?

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. If a war should be a pretty expensive one, Canada will not join with the rest of the empire, but, if it is to be a cheap war, one that would not cost more than ten or fifteen millions, Canada will hoist the flag and pitch in at once. Of course, that is not a very high standard of action, but it is the one which the hon. member would establish. I would like to know what Canadian merchant vessels on the high seas would do in the meantime. They would require to be protected by some naval force. That is another question I would like to ask the Prime Minister. Canada has some ships on the high seas. If the empire is engaged in war, these ships will be liable to capture. If the war does not commend itself to the judgment of the Prime Minister, he will not have an order in council passed. Of course, our ships will be protected by the British navy, whether the order in council is passed or not, but they will not be defended by the Canadian navy unless there is an order in council. That is another extraordinary situation which would grow out of this section 18. I do not know what the Prime Minister's action would be.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The conundrums of my hon. friend (Mr. R. L. Borden) do not puzzle anybody but himself. What would be the position of the British navy in such a situation? True, we have ships on the high seas. Great Britain has far more than we have. 'War' under this measure means war or insurrection real or apprehended. It is quite possible that our ships might be attacked before there was a declaration of war. The hon. member has said that a declaration of war is not necessary. In modern practice, it is not necessary, I admit. But, in the case of war between civilized nations, they do not usually give up natural relations of amity and peace until they have sent away the ambassadors and put themselves in a state of war. Well,

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then, our position is exactly the same as the position of the imperial navy. The hon. member supposes that our ships are attacked—of course that would force us into war.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I mean our merchant ships.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Yes,—that would force us into war. In our day nations are forced into war most unwillingly. They are anxious not to fight and fight only under great provocation. The hon. gentleman says that I intended to be the judge of the justice of a war. I believe that to-day England would not go into an unjust war, that in the condition of civilization we have reached she would not go to war unless she had been provoked to a degree which would rouse her blood. In such a case as the hon. member has supposed, there would be no reasoning—we should have to act. That is, if our ships are attacked, we should have to go into the war.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. A very large part of our merchant shipping is registered not in Canadian registers but in British. My right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) would find himself involved in some very fine distinctions. A ship is captured on the high seas; if she is a ship with a Canadian register, we are forced into war and the order in council goes through; but if she is a ship with a British register, then, according to the Prime Minister, we will not go to war, and there will be no order in council. But suppose a ship built with Canadian capital and registered on the other side as a British ship. I do not know what fine distinction he would make about that—

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Nor do I.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Would that force us into war or not? The Prime Minister candidly admits that he does not know what he would do.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. My hon. friend makes very nice distinctions and raises many objections in order that he may destroy them. He tries to make the reductio ad absurdum. He put a question and I answered it. We may be drawn into war by the attack of an enemy. I should rule the day, but it would have to be met.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. But the right hon. gentleman says he will preserve a discretion. In some wars he will permit the naval force to engage, but in others he will not permit them to engage. I am trying to find out what principle will guide him in the matter, and I have not been very successful up to the present time. I say there is only one principle on which we can safely act, and it is this; when the empire is at war we are at war, when the naval forces of the empire are engaged the Canadian