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Imperial Defence: The Canadian Response during Joseph  
Chamberlain's Tenure of Office as Colonial Secretary,  
1895 - 1903

by  
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Imperial Defence: The Canadian Response during Joseph  
Chamberlain's Tenure of Office as Colonial Secretary,  
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### Key to Abbreviations

- C.D.Q., Canadian Defence Quarterly
- C.H.A., Canadian Historical Association Reports
- C.H.R., Canadian Historical Review
- L.P., Laurier Papers
- M.P., Minto Papers
- P.A.C., Public Archives of Canada

## Chapter 1

### THE EVOLUTION OF CANADIAN AND IMPERIAL DEFENCE TO 1895

The grant of responsible government to Canada, signifying as it did a reduction in imperial control over the affairs of the colony, implied at the same time a reduction in the expenditure of the Imperial government for the defence of British North America. The enormous cost of defending the Empire<sup>1</sup> provided what was perhaps the strongest argument for the severance of the ties which bound the colonies to the mother country and it was hoped that self-government would be accompanied by self-defence.

Economic arguments favouring the abolition of the imperial garrison system were implemented by an increasing fear for the safety of Great Britain itself: the establishment of the Second Empire in France had induced visions of another European war and henceforth developments in continental Europe were to remind Britain constantly of the military burdens of empire and the corresponding weakness of her own defences.

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1. A parliamentary return of imperial expenditure in the colonies shows a total for 1846-47 of £3,500,472. C.P. Stacey, Canada and the British Army, 1846-1871, (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1936), p. 42.

It is not surprising therefore that in 1851 the Governor-General, Lord Elgin,<sup>2</sup> received the following despatch from the Colonial Secretary, Lord Grey,<sup>3</sup> announcing a change in imperial military policy:

Canada (in common with the other British provinces in North America) now possesses in the most ample and complete manner in which it is possible that she should enjoy it, the advantage of self-government in all that relates to her internal affairs. It appears to Her Majesty's Government that this advantage ought to carry with it corresponding responsibilities, and that the time is now come when the people of Canada must be called upon to take upon themselves a larger share than they have hitherto done, of expenses which are incurred on this account, and for their advantage. Of these expenses, by far the heaviest charge which falls upon this country is that incurred for the military protection of the province.<sup>4</sup>

Developments in North America were, however, to delay considerably the implementation of this policy. Nevertheless, the outbreak of the Crimean War saw a reduction in the number of imperial troops stationed in British North America and in 1855 a Militia Bill was passed in Canada authorising the establishment of a volunteer militia. However, "the strength of the garrison of Canada registers like a barometer the condition of

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2. James Bruce, Eighth Earl of Elgin, (1811-63), Governor of Jamaica, 1842; Governor-General of British North America, 1847-54.
  3. Henry George, Earl Grey, (1802-94), Under-secretary of State for the Colonies, 1830-34; Colonial Secretary 1846-52.
  4. Grey to Elgin, March 14, 1851, quoted in C.P. Stacey, Canada and the British Army, 1846-1871, pp. 79-80

Anglo-American relations"<sup>5</sup> and the emergency created by the British attempt to recruit in the United States saw the transfer to Canada of five infantry regiments and a reinforcement of artillery.

With the passing of danger and the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny in 1857 reductions were once again effected and in 1859 two developments contributed to the growing demand in England that overseas defence commitments be reduced: the protective Canadian tariff of 1859, introduced by A.T. Galt,<sup>6</sup> the new Inspector-General of Finances, brought vigorous protests from English manufacturers. In England, the Orsini plot to assassinate the Emperor Napoleon III threw Britain once more into a war panic. The Imperial government, under pressure from parliament, then acquiesced in the establishment of a select committee of the House of Commons to

enquire and report whether any, and what, alterations may be advantageously adopted in regard to the defence of the British Dependencies, and the proportions of cost of such Defence as now defrayed from Imperial and Colonial funds respectively.<sup>7</sup>

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5. Ibid., p. 11.

6. Sir Alexander Tilloch Galt, (1817-93), Canadian Minister of Finance 1858-62 and 1864-68; Canadian High Commissioner in London 1880-83.

7. C.P. Stacey, Canada and the British Army, 1846-1871, pp. 113-14.

While the Committee was at work however the United States Civil War threatened to strain Anglo-American relations to the breaking point. The Trent and Alabama affairs were to provide the high points of the dispute but throughout the war the outbreak of hostilities was to remain a distinct possibility. As a result the imperial garrisons in British North America were considerably enlarged, 18,000 British regulars being on active service by the spring of 1862. Lord Palmerston, the British Prime Minister, explained that the object of the reinforcements was to "keep the United States Government in check and to give confidence to our own people in the provinces and to take the best chance for the continuance of peace."<sup>8</sup> Improvements were also made in Canada's own defences although the opposition to military expenditure, even at such a time of crisis, is well illustrated by the fall of the Conservative government in 1862 over the Militia Bill. The new administration of J.S. Macdonald and L. Sicotte successfully introduced a much modified bill and emphasised that any defence commitments should recognise "the rights and interests of the Canadian people."<sup>9</sup>

In 1861 the report of the select committee on defence, to be known as the Mills report, was presented to the House of

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8. G.F.G. Stanley, Canada's Soldiers, 1604-1954, (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1954), p. 118.
  9. J.S. Ewart, Canada and British Wars, (Ottawa: published privately, 1923), p. 6.



Commons. The general tone of the findings of the Committee was hostile to the retention of the garrison system. The report declared that imperial troops should be concentrated on home defence while the navy would form the basis of colonial defence. It also stated that "it appears to your Committee that the responsibility and cost of the military defence of such dependencies ought mainly to devolve upon themselves."<sup>10</sup> In the House of Commons a fortnight later A. Mills,<sup>11</sup> the chairman of the Committee, brought in the following resolution:

That this House, while it fully recognises the claim of all portions of the British Empire on Imperial aid against perils arising from the consequences of Imperial policy, is of opinion that Colonies exercising the rights of self-government ought to undertake the main responsibility of providing for their own internal order and security<sup>12</sup>

and the resolution was amended by the addition of the words "and ought to assist in their own defence."<sup>13</sup>

The amended resolution was adopted without a division and the supporters of the abolition of the garrison system had their case strengthened by the reluctance of the Canadian government to undertake greater military responsibilities. Other

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10. C.P. Stacey, Canada and the British Army, 1846-1871, p.127.

11. Arthur Mills, b.1816, M.P. for Taunton.

12. C.P. Stacey, Canada and the British Army, 1846-1871, p.129.

13. Ibid., p.129.

influencing factors were the fear that Canada could not be successfully defended against a full-scale attack from the United States, and the outbreak in 1866 of the Austro-Prussian War.

These developments help to explain why the suggestion that the British North American colonies should be federated, at first so coldly received in London, was soon to be welcomed.

As The Times said:

We look to Confederation as the means of relieving this country from much expense and much embarrassment ...We appreciate the goodwill of the Canadians and their desire to maintain their relations with the British Crown. But a people of four million ought to be able to keep up their own defences.<sup>14</sup>

The advent of Gladstone's Liberal administration to power in 1868 made it likely that a reduction of imperial forces abroad would be carried out. The government had committed itself to a policy of all-round retrenchment and it was even wondered whether the colonial connection itself was in danger. The situation regarding imperial defence was soon clarified by Cardwell,<sup>15</sup> the Secretary of State for War, who was undertaking his extensive reforms of the British Army: "The withdrawal of Troops from distant stations is at the bottom of the whole question of army Reform."<sup>16</sup> The

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14. C.P. Stacey, "Britain's Withdrawal from North America, 1864-1871," C.H.R., XXXVI (Sept. 1955), 190.

15. Edward Cardwell, (1813-86), President, Board of Trade, 1852-55; Colonial Secretary, 1864-66; Secretary of State for War, 1868-74.

16. C.P. Stacey, "Britain's Withdrawal from North America, 1864-1871", 129.

execution of this policy was extremely swift and, despite Canadian protests, the final withdrawal of British troops took place in 1871, with the exceptions of the military garrison at Halifax and the naval garrison at Esquimalt.

Fortunately for Canada the withdrawal of British troops coincided with the signing of the Treaty of Washington. This treaty marked an important stage in the growth of the triangular relationship between Britain, Canada and the United States. It saw the acceptance of the United States as a great power by Great Britain and the acceptance by the United States of the barrier to "Manifest Destiny" which Canada represented. Even so, the Imperial government was by no means deserting Canada, for the same despatch which warned of the impending withdrawal of troops stated that the arrangements "are contingent upon a time of peace, and are in no way intended to alter or diminish the obligations which exist on both sides in case of foreign war."<sup>17</sup> Ultimate responsibility for the external defence of Canada still lay with the Imperial government.

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17. Ibid., 197-98.

Despite the initial belief that the end of the garrison system was a stage in the disintegration of the Empire the development was to be ultimately beneficial. Not only did it destroy at one stroke a key argument against the maintenance of the Empire, but it was a major factor in inducing the colonial governments to strengthen their own defences. The Canadian government nevertheless remained reluctant to commit itself to an increased defence expenditure although the Imperial government constantly stressed the need for improvement of the Dominion's defences. The Imperial government was also anxious to revise the whole question of imperial defence in general and several committees were set up to enquire into this question. One of these, The Royal Commission on the Defence of British Possessions and Commerce Abroad, was appointed in 1879 under the chairmanship of Lord Carnarvon, and has been called the beginning of a scheme for systematic imperial defence.<sup>18</sup> The creation of the commission was stimulated, in part, by the Russian war scare of that year, and its task was to enquire into the cost of imperial defence and into the proportion of that cost, if any, which should be defrayed by the colonies themselves.

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18. A.R. Stewart, "Sir John A. Macdonald and the Imperial Defence Commission of 1879", C.H.R., XXXV (1954), 119.

The Canadian Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, was in London at the time and he was asked to report to the Commission, on the understanding that his views were to remain confidential. When asked by Lord Carnarvon about the division of colonial and imperial responsibilities on the subject of defence he gave a reply which, while casting no doubts on Dominion loyalty to the mother country, illustrated at the same time a growing sense of Canadian nationalism and an incipient Canadian isolationism:

Speaking of a war taking place between England and a European nation...the first feeling of our people would be "Well, here is a war the Mother Country has gone into in which we are not interested, and about which we have not been consulted." 19

Macdonald was, in fact, quite willing to maintain the status quo as it affected the military situation, having no desire to define more clearly the division of responsibilities between Great Britain and Canada.

Of far more importance than this Commission was the Colonial Defence Committee which was established in 1885,<sup>20</sup> and which was eventually to be inaugurated into the better

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19. Ibid., 129.

20. This Committee was a revival of the original Colonial Defence Committee which had been established by the Disraeli Government in 1878. This body only lasted for one year however, being replaced by the Carnarvon Commission.

known Committee of Imperial Defence. The task of the Committee was "to prepare information on certain aspects of defence for the individual departments of state and for the Cabinet."<sup>21</sup> At first glance the achievements of the Committee do not seem to be particularly impressive, but there were serious disabilities under which it had to operate.

Added to the ever-present factiousness of the army and the navy were the inevitable clashes over military as opposed to civilian control and interference. This factor is well illustrated by the insinuation on the part of the navy that, a joint Military and Naval Committee already being in existence, there was really little point in establishing yet another body. Also, the colonies themselves were not represented on the Committee, and it is not until Joseph Chamberlain came to power as Colonial Secretary in 1895 that questions of colonial defence played a really important part in the considerations of the Committee. Finally, and more important, is the fact that apart from the isolated war scares which helped to impel Great Britain away from her policy of "splendid isolation", political conditions in neither Britain nor the Empire were conducive to the establishment of a permanent

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21. Z. Shakow, "The Defence Committee: A forerunner of the Committee of Imperial Defence," C.H.R., XXXVI (March 1955), 41.

centralised organisation responsible for the planning of Empire defence: the Cabinet, ultimately responsible as it was for defence, found itself increasingly burdened with other business, and Treasury control, reflecting the Victorian ideal of peace and prosperity, helped to maintain a tight check on military expenditure.

Despite these drawbacks the Colonial Defence Committee was to prove a valuable experiment. A start had been made on the organisation of imperial defence, and by the time of the establishment of the Committee of Imperial Defence many problems inherent in such a project had been ironed out by its predecessor. One aspect of the Committee's work was its request to the various colonial governments to prepare for the Colonial Conference of 1887 detailed reports of their potential military capability along with any plans for self-defence. For the most part the colonies acquiesced in this request.

The Colonial Conference of 1887, the first of its kind, was held in London from 4th April - 9th May. It coincided with the golden jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign, and the awakening of imperial interest which this event inaugurated seemed to many to herald a new and closer concept of empire. It is important to note however, in view of the contemporary development of the imperial

federation movement, that the Conference met subject to the exclusion demanded by New South Wales of any consideration of the question of imperial federation<sup>22</sup>.

On November 25th. E. Stanhope,<sup>23</sup> the Secretary of State for the Colonies, issued the invitations to the Governors of the Colonies, stressing the importance of the defence question:

In the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, the question which is at once urgent and capable of useful consideration at the present time is that of organisation for military defence. The patriotic action of the Colonies in offering contingents of troops to take part in the Egyptian campaign made a deep and lasting impression on the public mind, and was the first practical result of much careful work in recent years... the cordial co-operation offered to Her Majesty's Government in carrying out this policy [the development of defensive works in the Empire] indicates their desire to arrive...at a common basis of action<sup>24</sup>

In his own address to the delegates the British Prime Minister, the Marquis of Salisbury, took a similar stand. He emphasised that the changing world situation<sup>25</sup> might endanger not only Great Britain but also the colonies,

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22. A.B. Keith, Responsible Government in the Dominions, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912) lll, 1458.

23. Edward Stanhope, (1840-93), Colonial Secretary 1886; Secretary of State for War, 1887-92. On July 23, 1887, Sir H. Holland succeeded E. Stanhope as Secretary of State for the Colonies.

24. Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1887, (London: King's Printers, 1887), I, VII.

25. This will be dealt with at greater length in Chapter 2.



and he stressed the need for closer co-operation and communication within the Empire. Nevertheless, Sir Henry Holland<sup>26</sup> made it quite clear that it was not the Imperial government's intention

to commit either the Imperial Government or any Colony to new projects entailing heavy expenditure, but rather to secure that the sums which may be devoted to this purpose may be utilised to the fullest extent, with complete knowledge of all the conditions of the problem<sup>27</sup>.

Although Sir H. Holland was later to express satisfaction at the results of the Conference, saying that the exchange of defence information had been invaluable and augured well for "a consolidation of the great military resources of the Empire for purposes of mutual defence",<sup>28</sup> no really dramatic developments had resulted. Indeed, although more than half the proceedings had been devoted to the subject of naval defence the only really important outcome had been the agreement to increase the Australian naval squadron - an agreement whereby the Australian colonies committed themselves to an increased

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26. Sir Henry Thurston Holland, first Viscount Knutsford, (1825-1914), Assistant Under-Secretary for the Colonies, 1870-74; Colonial Secretary, 1887-92.

27. Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1887, I, 13.

28. Ibid., IX.

expenditure on naval defence<sup>29</sup>. It was also agreed that certain bases and coaling stations should be fortified, and the governments of Hong Kong, Mauritius, Singapore and Ceylon agreed to contribute towards these defences.<sup>30</sup>

The Canadian representative, Sir A. Campbell,<sup>31</sup> while expressing the hope that the Conference might endeavour "to unite all in one grand union for the defence of the Empire"<sup>32</sup> was more anxious to stress the contributions to defence that Canada had already made rather than to suggest any future participation in schemes of closer co-operation. In a long speech to the assembled representatives he elaborated upon a circular on Canadian defence which he had presented to the Conference earlier.<sup>33</sup> Campbell went into

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29. Five fast cruisers and two torpedo gunboats were to be added to the Australasian squadron. The Colonies agreed to pay for maintenance a sum not exceeding £91,000 per annum, and for depreciation a percentage of 5 per cent on the initial cost, which, with other incidental charges, is estimated to amount to a further sum not exceeding £35,000 per annum.

30. Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1887, I, 11.

31. Sir Alexander Campbell, (1822-92), close associate of John A. Macdonald; held cabinet office, 1878-1887, Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, 1887-92.

32. Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1887, I, 20.

33. See Appendix I, p.172.

detail regarding Canada's military organisation and also explained Canada's failure to establish a naval school.<sup>34</sup> Sandford Fleming,<sup>35</sup> the other Canadian representative, stressed that the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway was a great contribution to the defence of Canada, and also to the defence of the Empire as a whole, for "this new line practically brings what was once the most remote naval station, in the most distant Colony of the Empire, within about two weeks of Portsmouth"<sup>36</sup>.

Thus, although Canada had not taken upon herself any new defence commitments the increasingly important question of imperial defence had at least been discussed openly for the first time between representatives of the imperial and colonial governments. An important precedent had also been established, and the next Colonial Conference took place in Ottawa in 1894 at the request of the Canadian government. The chief topics of discussion however were trade with foreign countries, the possibility of an imperial

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34. These aspects will be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter where reference will be made to the state of Canada's military and naval forces.

35. Sir Sandford Fleming, (1827-1915), civil engineer and ardent Imperialist; Canadian representative at Colonial Conferences of 1887 and 1894.

36. G.N. Tucker, The Naval Service of Canada, (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1952), p. 73.

preference and the laying of a cable between Canada and Australia. Indeed, apart from a telegram received by the delegates to the effect that "Edinburgh Imperial Federationists express satisfaction at meeting of conference. Hope great question naval defence, will also be considered and imperial unity consolidated"<sup>37</sup> and general agreement that the proposed cables would be of great strategic value to the Empire, the question of defence was not discussed. Not for another three years was this same question to be raised again at the Colonial Conference level, and by that time Joseph Chamberlain was to be Colonial Secretary.

Nevertheless, between the calling of the first Colonial Conference and the inauguration of the Chamberlain regime the Canadian defence establishment underwent important reform. This improvement in the organisation and efficiency of the militia resulted from the vigorous attentions of the General Officer Commanding, Major-General I. Herbert<sup>38</sup>. The position of General Officer Commanding was only established in 1874 and arguments as to the exact nature of

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37. Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1894, (Ottawa: S.E. Dawson, 1894), p. 39.

38. Sir Ivor John Caradoc Herbert, b. 1851, General Officer Commanding, 1890-95.

the position were to lead to several rather awkward political situations. The importance of this position from a military point of view can hardly be overestimated however. As will be seen from the following survey the development and organisation of the Canadian Militia before this time had been carried out in a haphazard and piecemeal fashion.

After the conquest of 1760 the defence of Canada was essentially one of defence against the United States. For this purpose the Canadian Militia, organised on the basis of universal compulsory service, was supplemented by the regular British garrisons, and for nearly half a century after the war of 1812 the situation remained little altered. However, as has been shown, the increasing resentment in Britain at the cost of Empire defence, coinciding as it did with spasmodic fears of American designs on Canada, led to fundamental changes in Canada's defence policy.

Thus a commission was established in 1855 by the Province of Canada to examine the state of its militia and as a result of these investigations provision was made for the creation of a new and separate force of volunteers - the active militia - a force which would shortly assume the major responsibility for the defence of the country.

However, as the withdrawal of British troops coincided with an improvement in Anglo-American relations, military expenditure in Canada was allowed to fall drastically. It is significant that the Imperial government, having obtained legislation enabling it to guarantee a loan of £1,300,000 for the purpose of Canadian fortifications, was persuaded to exchange this for a guaranteed loan of £1,000,000 for the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Nevertheless, a Royal Military College was established at Kingston in 1876, and in 1883 a new Militia Act declared that the Queen might

raise, station and maintain, in addition to the ordinary Active Militia Force, one troop of cavalry, three batteries of artillery (of which two shall be "A" and "B" Batteries of artillery now embodied) and not more than three companies of infantry, the whole strength of which several corps shall not exceed seven hundred and fifty men.<sup>39</sup>

Three years later the number of infantry companies was raised to five and the total strength permitted to one thousand men. A cavalry school corps and an infantry school corps were also established and these reforms raised considerably Canada's defence expenditure.<sup>40</sup>

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39. G.F.G. Stanley, Canada's Soldiers, 1604-1954, p. 248.

40. Defence expenditure for the fiscal year 1883-1884 was over \$1,200,000.

Improvements in Canadian defence during the next decade revolved around the strength and efficiency of the newly-formed Permanent Force. Reform was inaugurated at the top where the headquarters staff was strengthened and the whole Permanent Force was organised, for the first time, on a regimental basis. Canadian officers were also sent to England for training - an experiment which Major-General Herbert considered to be of prime importance.

In his Annual Report for 1894 the General Officer Commanding wrote as follows: "The Royal Regiments, forming the Permanent Force of the Dominion have maintained a steady progress towards increased efficiency."<sup>41</sup> He also praised the loyalty of the militia:

From the knowledge I have acquired, in the course of four years of intimate acquaintance with the Canadian Militia, I will venture to assert that no body exists, in which there is a stronger feeling of patriotism and loyalty.<sup>42</sup>

Nevertheless, although "the first stirrings of reform"<sup>43</sup> had been seen under Herbert, much still remained to be done, and his complaints about inefficiency, apathy, political interference and inadequate expenditure were to be constantly echoed by his successors. The cavalry and

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41. Dominion of Canada, Sessional Papers, 1895, No. 19: Annual Report of the Department of Militia and Defence, 1894, p.1.

42. Ibid., p.v.

43. G.R. Maclean, "The Canadian Offer of troops for Hong Kong, 1894", C.H.R., XXXVIII (Sept. 1947), 276.

infantry arms were especially weak, and although nearly \$1,300,000 was spent on military defence during the fiscal year ending 30th June, 1894,<sup>44</sup> many of the militiamen had had virtually no training. It would need the urgings of Joseph Chamberlain at the Colonial Office and the disasters of the South African War to impress upon Canada the defence reforms she so urgently needed.

Canada's contribution to naval defence was almost negligible. The Dominion relied almost exclusively, as she had done since the conquest, on British supremacy at sea. However, the post-1870 era saw the emergence of powerful new navies and an upsetting of the balance of power. The British Empire was becoming increasingly vulnerable and many in England demanded that the colonies should contribute more to the navy upon which their safety depended. The admiralty was apparently of the same opinion and in 1878 a memorandum of theirs to the Colonial Office was forwarded by Sir Michael Hicks Beach,<sup>45</sup> the Colonial Secretary, to Lord Dufferin<sup>46</sup>, the Governor General:

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44. Sessional Papers, 1895, No. 19, Annual Report of the Department of Militia and Defence, 1894, p. viii.
45. Sir Michael Hicks Beach, (1837-1916), Colonial Secretary 1878-80; Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1885-86 and 1895-1902 .
46. Frederick Temple Blackwood, Marquess of Dufferin, (1826-1902), occupied successively the offices of Under-Secretary of State for India and Under-Secretary of State for War, 1864-66; Governor-General of Canada 1872-78; later to be British Ambassador in Russia, Turkey and India.



Looking at the very large mercantile marine possessed by the Dominion, it is only reasonable to assume that the Canadian government will avail themselves of their own resources for the protection of Canadian ports and shipping.<sup>47</sup>

It was then resolved by the Canadian government that it would attempt to utilise into some marine defence organisation her large sea-faring population, and with this in mind the Imperial government gave the Dominion an old warship, Charybdis, to use as a training ship. Unfortunately the ship's condition was such that it was shortly returned to the Imperial government, and as Campbell explained to the Colonial Conference of 1887, this episode "discouraged our efforts completely"<sup>48</sup>.

Canada's contribution to the Imperial navy thus rested on her efforts at Halifax and Esquimalt - the two Imperial bases which guarded her coasts. The Canadian government had contributed to the building of dock facilities at both ports and the Royal Navy was given priority use of certain docks. Nevertheless, as G.N. Tucker says:

the official attitude of Canada in regard to naval defence remained wholly negative...To most Canadians the world of international power politics seemed too remote to call forth action...<sup>49</sup>

There were, in fact, three courses which Canada could pursue in defining a naval policy: she could

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47. G.N. Tucker, The Naval Service of Canada, p. 63.

48. Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1887, I, 275.

49. G.N. Tucker, The Naval Service of Canada, p. 84.

contribute either men, money or ships to the Royal Navy, as the Imperial government wanted her to; she could develop her own navy; she could do nothing. To adopt the first of these courses would in all probability be to stir up opposition, especially in Quebec, while the second presented her with an expenditure which she was not yet ready to undertake. Consequently she opted, in effect, to do nothing, and it was a position from which only extreme peril was to dislodge her.

Nevertheless, during this period Canada was to experience developments which both tested her own defence resources and saw joint action by Canadian and Imperial troops. During the Crimean War numerous individual offers of service were received from Canada by the Imperial government and the Indian Mutiny of 1857 saw a similar response. On the latter occasion permission was also given by the Canadian government for the raising of an infantry regiment, although the contingent was to be raised and equipped at British expense.<sup>50</sup>

A further milestone in the development of the Empire was reached during the Sudan expedition of 1884-85 and this incident gives a good illustration of Imperial and Canadian co-operation and the difficulties which had to be surmounted if a united military policy for the Empire was to develop.

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50. The regiment was to be known as the 100th Canadian Regiment of Foot.

In January, 1884, Major-General C. Gordon was sent with an expedition to evacuate the Egyptian garrisons in the Sudan which were threatened by the Mahdi's uprising. Gordon was soon asking for reinforcements but owing to the vacillations of Gladstone it was not until August that a decision was taken to send a relief force, under the command of General Lord Wolseley.<sup>51</sup>

On August 21st Lord Lansdowne,<sup>52</sup> the Governor-General, received a ciphered message from the Colonial Office asking for "300 good voyageurs" and requesting that Lord Melgund, Lansdowne's Military Secretary, should take charge of the contingent. Wolseley, relying on his experience of the Red River campaign of 1870 insisted that the expedition should make its way by boat up the Nile, and on the 21st August Lord Lansdowne consulted the Canadian Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, about the proposal.

He received a favourable response, and Macdonald's friendliness to the recruiting in this instance was dependent upon the fact that they would be raised as an

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51. Garnet Joseph, first Viscount Wolseley, (1833-1913), saw service in Crimea, India, China, Canada and Africa. Succeeded Duke of Cambridge as Commander-in-Chief of British army in 1895.

52. Henry Charles, Marquess of Lansdowne, (1845-1927), Governor-General of Canada, 1883-88; Governor-General of India 1888-93; Secretary of State for War 1895-1900; Foreign Secretary 1900-1905.

Imperial and not as a Canadian responsibility. He was arguing from the standpoint of a practical politician: his acquiescence in the proposals would satisfy imperial sentiment, while the anti-imperialists could be answered on the grounds that the Dominion government was itself not actively intervening. Furthermore, the whole thing would not cost Canada a cent.

Macdonald, in his letter on this subject to Melgund raised an interesting point regarding the use of Dominion troops - a point which was to assume greater significance during Melgund's tenure of office as Governor-General:

I think that if any volunteers are accepted from Canada they must be enlisted as part of the Regular Service and not as Militia. Our Militia cannot be called out as such except under the 61st clause of the Militia Act of 1883<sup>52</sup> and it would be straining the meaning of the clause to hold that the state of things in Egypt warranted such a call...<sup>54</sup>

Macdonald also gave some valuable suggestions as to the raising of the troops, although the project was

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53. "Her Majesty may call out the Militia, or any part thereof, for active service either within or without the Dominion, at any time, when it appears advisable so to do by reason of war, invasion or insurrection, or danger of any of them..." C.P. Stacey, "Canada and the Nile Expedition of 1884-85", C.H.R. XXXIII (Dec. 1952), 330.
54. C.P. Stacey, "John A. Macdonald on raising troops in Canada for Imperial Service, 1885", C.H.R. XXXVIII (March 1957), 39.

to be entirely in Imperial hands. Nevertheless, the Canadian government and the Department of Militia and Defence in particular co-operated willingly, although Lansdowne warned Melgund "to be as civil as you can to the Militia Department. They will perhaps be a little huffed at the whole thing not going through their hands."<sup>55</sup>

There were many problems to overcome, not the least of which was the time factor. It is to Melgund's credit that within three weeks of the first Colonial Office cable on the matter the Canadian contingent had set sail from Montreal. The voyageur of the old days was becoming extinct and the bulk of the recruiting was done amongst men engaged in the lumber trade. Consequently, the Ottawa district was of prime importance and a contract was made with an Ottawa lumber maker to help recruiting. The men were, in fact, recruited from a wide area of Canada, although Lansdowne had thought that:

it would be better not to draw our force from too many different districts. If we do we shall probably find that the custom of the country differs in different places and that there will be local jealousies and peculiarities to overcome.<sup>56</sup>

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55. P.A.C., M.P., Film A129, Lord Lansdowne to Lord Melgund, August 24, 1884.

56. Ibid., Lord Lansdowne to Lord Melgund, September 2, 1884.

Both Lansdowne and Melgund realised the importance of securing good officers, and much care was taken to secure adequate representation for the French-Canadian element<sup>57</sup>. Major F. Denison, a Toronto alderman who had served as Wolseley's orderly in the first Red River Rebellion was finally selected as commander of the Canadian contingent. His task was, in the words of the Colonial office cable of August, 1884, to "remain in charge of the party, pay and look after them, and when their engagement ceases take them home."<sup>58</sup>

Three hundred and eighty-six men finally sailed from Canada, and Melgund was convinced he could have enlisted more very shortly. In his report to the Adjutant General at the War Office he wrote as follows:

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57. The final list of officers was as follows: Lieutenant/Colonel F. Denison, (Commanding Officer), Captain T. Aumond, Captain A.C. Macrae, Captain E. Denison, (attached to the contingent in Egypt), Surgeon-Major J. Neilson, (Medical Officer), Lieutenant/Colonel W. Kennedy, (Paymaster), Abbe A. Bouchard, (Chaplain). C.P. Stacey, The Nile Voyageurs 1884-85, (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1959), p. 256.

58. Ibid., p. 19.

In another week we could have procured a large number of men, but our recruiting has been interfered with by efforts made in some newspapers to encourage the belief that the climate was a deadly one.<sup>59</sup>

Although the expedition did not receive universal approval in Canada, such objections as there were were directed, for the most part, to minor aspects of the campaign, and the actual raising of the troops was not seriously questioned.

Due mainly to the delays brought about by Gladstone the expedition failed in its prime purpose of relieving Khartoum. When the advance steamers of the relief expedition finally got through they found that Gordon and his force had been wiped out. The immediate result was a surge of imperial sentiment throughout the Empire and a spate of colonial offers for help, many of which came from Canada. Major-General W. Laurie,<sup>60</sup> when writing to Melgund, expressed the opinion that 25,000 men could be raised.<sup>61</sup> He warned Melgund however that many people were opposed to Canadian interference in Egypt, although they would probably have acquiesced in a war with Russia.<sup>62</sup>

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59. P.A.C., M.P., Film A 129, Lord Melgund's report to the Adjutant General at the War Office, September 9, 1884.

60. John Winburn Laurie, (1835-1912), Conservative M.P., 1887-91; retired as Lieutenant-General, 1887.

61. Ibid., Film A 130, Major-General W. Laurie to Lord Melgund, March 2, 1885.

62. Ibid., Major-General W. Laurie to Lord Melgund, March 19, 1885.

Lord Melgund corresponded extensively, both in Great Britain and Canada, upon the subject of raising a force of Canadians for imperial service outside Canada, and in the light of later developments it is interesting to note that he was already well aware of political interference in the militia. In a letter to Goldwin Smith<sup>63</sup> he wrote that "The whole militia system is saturated with political influence, which is the ruin of its efficiency,"<sup>64</sup> and other letters show that he was constantly concerned with this problem.

Melgund was quite adamant that any force to be enrolled should be enrolled for imperial service, and that as a result the selection of officers and men would rest entirely with the imperial authorities. Fortunately his views on this matter coincided with those of Sir John A. Macdonald whose opinions are quite clearly stated in the following exchange of correspondence with Sir Charles Tupper<sup>65</sup>, the Canadian High Commissioner in London.

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63. Goldwin Smith, (1823-1910), author, journalist and Oxford professor. Leading member of separatist school.

64. P.A.C., M.P., Film A 130, Lord Melgund to Goldwin Smith, February 28, 1885.

65. Sir Charles Tupper, (1821-1915), Canadian High Commissioner in London, 1883-96 (except for 16 months in 1887-88); Prime Minister, 1896.



It should be mentioned that the Governor-General had received several offers to raise contingents from Canada, and he cabled the Imperial authorities that "Govt. ready to sanction recruiting in Canada for service in Egypt or elsewhere."<sup>66</sup> The Colonial Secretary thanked the Dominion government for its offer but explained that there was no immediate need for assistance. No direct offer had, in fact, been made by the Canadian government, the only sanction they had given being for the raising of volunteer corps. In a confidential exchange with the Imperial government Lansdowne attempted to clarify the situation:

It is as well that I shd. observe in order to prevent misapprehension that no offer of a force for foreign service has been made by the Dom. Govt. A considerable no. of officers belonging to the Canadian militia have volunteered for such service and have offered to raise men for it and my Govt.<sup>67</sup>

In England, influenced by imperial sentiment, Tupper was somewhat disappointed by the Canadian government's lukewarm reaction, and in view of the Australian offers<sup>68</sup> he wrote to Macdonald as follows: "I would have been glad

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66. C.P. Stacey, "Canada and the Nile Expedition of 1884-85", 330.

67. Ibid., 322.

68. New South Wales, for example, had offered to send and pay for two batteries of field artillery and a battalion of infantry. (Ibid., 327.) This typifies, in some respects, the differing attitudes of the various colonies to the question of imperial defence.

if Canada had taken the matter up a little more warmly, as I think it was a good opportunity of making a good impression upon the public mind here."<sup>69</sup>

Soon after this memoranda Tupper was invited to discuss with the Under-Secretary of State for War the organisation and employment of imperial forces. Upon cabling Macdonald for the governments position on this question he received an abrupt reply: "Govt. has never offered military force. Individuals have volunteered to raise corps for Imp. service. Canada does not object. Colonial Secretary has been so informed by Governor."<sup>70</sup> Tupper went on to suggest that the Canadian government could perhaps offer something. Any hopes he might have had that such an offer would be forthcoming were to be cut short by the following memoranda from Macdonald:

We [my colleagues and I] think the time has not yet arrived, nor the occasion, for our volunteering aid to the Mother Country. We do not stand at all in the same position as Australasia - and we do not ask England to quarrel with France or Germany for our sakes... Why should we waste money and men in this wretched business?...Our men and money would therefore be sacrificed to get Gladstone and Co. out of the hole - they have plunged themselves into by their own imbecillity sic

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69. Ibid., 344.

70. Ibid., 344.

Again the reciprocal aid to be given by the Colonies and England should be a matter of treaty deliberately entered into and settled on a permanent basis -71

Not surprisingly, Macdonald's views received considerable support in Canada. Great Britain was in no danger and Canada had virtually no interest in the Sudan. Canadian nationalism was not to be subjected to the surge of imperialism, and as it happened two events postponed until a later date the question of Canadian contributions to an imperial conflict. The first of these was the decision of the Imperial government not to pursue the campaign in the Sudan while the second was the outbreak of the second Riel Rebellion. Nevertheless, the Sudan incident was not without its importance, and as C.P. Stacey says, the expedition was, in some respects, a landmark in Imperial relations - a turning point between the little Englandism of the 1860's and the fervent imperialism of the 1890's.

At the same time as Canadian volunteers were on campaign for the Empire the Canadian government appointed a committee to sift through the papers on defence in the Public Archives and report on their usefulness. The appointed committee consisted of the Minister of Militia,

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71. J.S. Ewart, Canada and British Wars, pp. 7-8.

A.P. Caron,<sup>72</sup> the Deputy Minister of Militia and Defence, Lieutenant-Colonel E. Panet,<sup>73</sup> the General Officer Commanding, Major-General F. Middleton,<sup>74</sup> and Lord Melgund.

Sir Alexander Campbell had prepared a report on Defence in 1880 which had been shelved. Colin Campbell, the secretary to the committee, was of the opinion that the present survey would go the same way, being convinced that the government was carrying out the enquiry as a matter of routine. Campbell was to correspond extensively on this question with Melgund whom he considered to be the only one who gave him "any encouragement in this tedious and trying work",<sup>75</sup> and he was not averse to expressing some very strong opinions. He stressed the need to do something "to improve and extend the present militia system" although Caron thought that such an expression would frighten the Prime Minister.<sup>76</sup>

The committee confined itself to a discussion of coastal defence, deciding that the question of land defence

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72. Adolphe P. Caron, (1843-1908), Minister of Militia and Defence, 1880-91; Postmaster-General 1892-96.
73. Charles E. Panet, (1829-98), Deputy Minister of Militia and Defence, 1875-98.
74. Sir Frederick D. Middleton, (1825-1898), General Officer Commanding 1884-90.
75. P.A.C., M.P., Film A 130, Colin Campbell to Lord Melgund, November 3, 1884.
76. Ibid., Campbell to Melgund, January 18, 1885.

was too large, and it gave Melgund a valuable insight into the workings, such as they were, of Canadian defence organisation. Melgund was anxious to emphasise the efforts the Australian colonies were making in the direction of defending their coasts, a point with which Campbell was in full agreement: "If I know my countrymen at all, I believe you can get more sacrifice out of them through their jealous instincts than in any other way short of actual necessity".<sup>77</sup> In another letter to the Military Secretary Campbell brought out both the lack of funds for military purposes and the problem of military interference in the militia: "My observation has been that it takes a strong wrench to turn the key of the Canadian cash-box when money is wanted for the Military service beyond matters of political, personal or local interest."<sup>78</sup> The secretary also recorded a conversation with Sir Leonard Tilley, the Minister of Finance, whose attitude can be taken as representative of that of the Government:

He expressed himself, in a general way, favourably to any plan that would improve and develop our powers of defence without going into any considerable expense. His whole remarks, however (in a very talk) were in the line that there was no money to spare...<sup>79</sup>

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77. Ibid., Campbell to Melgund, November 5, 1884.

78. Ibid., Campbell to Melgund, January 18, 1885.

79. Ibid., Campbell to Melgund, February 26, 1885.

Nevertheless, several useful suggestions were made by the committee, among them Melgund's proposal for the development of a marine militia - a suggestion which was to be constantly reiterated by the Imperial authorities. However, the strength of Canada's militia and the need for reform were soon to be even more sharply demonstrated by the uprising in the North-West.

The government of the North-West had been a constant problem to the Dominion and in 1869 an insurrection there led to the establishment of a provisional government which threatened any attempt of the Canadian government to take over the territory. A mixed imperial and colonial force under the leadership of Colonel G.J. Wolseley was then despatched to the area and its success helped to secure the territory for the Dominion. The problem was by no means resolved however, and in 1885 Louis Riel once more established a provisional government in defiance of the Dominion authorities. On this occasion the settlement was entirely in the hands of the Canadian government and, fortunately for them, the Canadian Pacific Railway was nearing completion. The problem of controlling the North-West had always been one essentially of communication and it is significant that within nine days of the first shot being fired a contingent of artillery from Quebec had arrived in Winnipeg.

The last vestiges of opposition had been subdued by June 2nd, and the expedition, under the command of General Officer Commanding Sir F. Middleton, was, from this point of view, a success. However, there were several serious disabilities with which the force had to contend: the creation of a Medical staff and an Ambulance Corps had to take place on campaign, and the supply planning was so inadequate that a contract had to be made with the Hudson's Bay Company. It is hardly surprising that in his report the Deputy Minister of Militia and Defence, while praising the courage and resourcefulness of the troops, made the following observations.

In consequence of the suddenness of the call to arms, the efficiency of the Department of Militia and Defence, not at all anticipating so great and urgent a demand, was very severely tried. What would have been, comparatively speaking, an easy task, had the financial resources of the Department permitted the constant expenditure necessary to provide for unusual emergencies, became on this occasion a very trying and arduous one.<sup>80</sup>

This was, of course, an official report, and the Deputy Minister was obliged to temper his disapproval of existing militia conditions. Lord Lansdowne was far more outspoken in a personal reply to a letter written on April 25th while Melgund was on campaign. The views he expressed

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80. Sessional Papers, 1886, Report upon the Suppression of the Rebellion in the North-West Territories, and Matters in Connection Therewith, in 1885, ix.

applied to the expedition in particular and to the Canadian militia in general:

...I was never under any illusion on the subject of the fight and all things considered it is fortunate things were no worse - untrained men led by untrained officers against such an enemy and on such ground supply all the materials for a disaster. I have no doubt that however liberal the policy and just the intentions here, the execution suffers owing to the scarcity of competent, and often I fear of honest men to carry them out. This is the secret of the rottenness which one encounters again and again, whenever one is tempted to force one's penknife into the political fabric of this country. We must try and effect a purification when all this is over...<sup>81</sup>

Lansdowne's comments, though harsh, well expressed imperial dissatisfaction with the incompetence which prevailed within the Canadian defence organisation. To help eradicate this failing the Imperial government was anxious that a greater degree of co-operation should develop between the imperial and colonial defence forces. However, Chamberlain became Colonial Secretary without Canada becoming any more committed to imperial defence, with the exception of a rather surprising offer of colonial troops for service abroad made in 1894. This incident brings out well the fact that the Dominion government had not, as yet, formulated any clear concept of the relationship which existed between itself and the Imperial government on military questions. It also illustrates the rather weak

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<sup>81</sup>. P.A.C., M.P., Film A 129, Lord Lansdowne to Lord Melgund, May 8, 1885.



control which the Canadian Prime Minister, Sir John Thompson<sup>82</sup> appears to have had over his Cabinet. Equally important, the offer was one of a series of unfortunate incidents arising from a high sense of duty on the part of an over-zealous General Officer Commanding, in this instance Major-General Herbert.

Herbert had succeeded Sir. F. Middleton as General Officer Commanding in 1891 and, as has been seen, he was the key figure in the militia reforms of the early 1890's. One of his favourite schemes was the interchange of colonial and imperial officers and troops - a scheme with which most of the later General Officers Commanding were in accord, for it afforded at the same time an opportunity to increase efficiency and to bind tighter the bonds of Empire.

Thus, in May, 1894, Herbert submitted such a scheme to London for War Office consideration. No action was taken at the time, but on October 10th

the Colonial Office was startled to receive a completely unsolicited offer of a contingent of Canadian Permanent Force Troops for service abroad as part of the Imperial Army. In a telegram the Dominion Government stated its intention to offer the Royal Regiment of Canadian Infantry to the Imperial government for service in Hong Kong in the event that foreign garrisons were increased.<sup>83</sup>

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82. Sir. John Thompson (1844-94), Minister of Justice 1885-92; Prime Minister 1892-94.

83. G.R. Maclean, "The Canadian Offer of troops for Hong Kong, 1894", C.H.R., XXXVIII (Sept. 1957), 277.

The offer placed Thompson in a rather embarrassing position. Under pressure from Herbert the Canadian Minister of Militia, J.C. Patterson,<sup>84</sup> had sent the cable on his own responsibility and not on the order of the Cabinet. The Prime Minister rightly protested that Patterson's action had been unconstitutional but he nevertheless rectified the telegram by an ex-post facto Order-in-Council. Fortunately for Canada the offer was not acted upon, nor, thanks to the intervention of the British Secretary of State for War, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman,<sup>85</sup> was the offer made public.

Nevertheless, "it is interesting...to speculate on what would have happened had Joseph Chamberlain been Colonial Secretary"<sup>86</sup> and it is to his period in office that this discussion now turns. The first stirrings of military reform had been witnessed in Canada and the first attempts by the imperial authorities to secure greater military co-operation within the Empire had been made. The next decade was to witness the effort of Chamberlain to convince the colonies of the need for a unified defence policy.

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84. James Colebrooke Patterson, (1839-1929), held in turn the portfolios of Secretary of State and Minister of Militia and Defence, 1891-95.

85. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, (1836-1908). Became leader of Liberal opposition, 1898; Prime Minister, 1905-08. Opposed South African War and Chamberlain's tariff reform proposals.

86. G.R. Maclean, "The Canadian offer of troops for Hong Kong, 1894", 282.

## Chapter II

### CHAMBERLAIN'S IMPERIALISM AND IMPERIAL DEFENCE

Joseph Chamberlain was to be the driving force behind the movement for the closer unity of the Empire during his term of office as Colonial Secretary. He was fortunate in being able to bring his ideas to the fore at a time when public opinion in England was receptive to them. Had he brought forth his schemes for closer imperial collaboration twenty years earlier it is doubtful whether more than a handful of people would have listened to him.

However, "the twenty years which elapsed between the consolidation of Canada and the calling of the first Colonial Conference were years of transition for the British Empire,"<sup>1</sup> and they witnessed the change in popular sentiment from "Little Englandism" to passionate enthusiasm for the Empire.

Although the creation of the Imperial Federation League in 1884 marked a key stage in this transition, numerous other factors influenced the transformation. Not only were the prophecies of the "Little Englanders" not being fulfilled, but public opinion was no longer indifferent to the question of the colonies. The

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1. D.M.L. Farr, The Colonial Office and Canada, 1867-1887, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1955) p. 276.

extension of the franchise in 1867 had also helped the imperial cause and the imagination of the emancipated lower classes was to be captured by the imperialistic writings of Tennyson and Kipling.<sup>2</sup> In addition to these factors the rapid development of communications made closer union more feasible and, in view of the aggressive nationalism which characterised the age, more urgent. As J.R. Seeley wrote: "Science has given to the political organism a new circulation, which is steam, and a new nervous system, which is electricity. These new conditions make it necessary to reconsider the whole colonial problem."<sup>3</sup>

The Conservative espousal of the imperial theme gave further impetus to the movement for imperial consolidation and expansion. In his famous Crystal Palace speech of 1872 Disraeli, the Conservative leader, had emphasised the necessity of preserving the Empire.

Furthermore, by stating that the grant of responsible government should have been accompanied by a policy of imperial consolidation, a military code and an imperial council<sup>4</sup> he was outlining schemes which Chamberlain was

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2. An example of working class support for the retention of the colonies is provided by the petition to the Queen of 104,000 working men in London in 1870. The petition stressed the advantages to be gained from a consolidation of the Empire. See C.A. Bodelsen, Studies in Mid-Victorian Imperialism (Copenhagen: Glydendalske Boghandel, 1924) pp. 86-7 and 104-5.
  3. J.R. Seeley, The expansion of England, (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1900), p.87.
  4. W.L. Strauss, Joseph Chamberlain and the theory of Imperialism, (Washington D.C.: American Council on Public Affairs, 1942), p.11.

to attempt to put into practical application.

Perhaps the most potent factor however was the creation of a new balance of power which resulted from the unification of Germany, Italy and the United States. Great Britain, no longer finding herself unquestionably supreme, sought safety and strength in a consolidation of her Empire. Consolidation was to be accompanied by expansion, for the colonial spoils which Britain did not take might well be grasped by her rivals. Thus the late nineteenth century witnessed a surge of imperialism which saw the "carve-up" of Africa and the rapid extension of European rule throughout the world:

The 'eighties witnessed a boom in Imperialism. The race between the Great Powers for the acquisition of colonies, the growing militarism on the Continent, and the defeat of Free Trade in almost all foreign countries had placed the value of colonies beyond all doubt.<sup>5</sup>

A generally held view of the time was that the future history of the world would be determined by the great empire states and Chamberlain himself was of this opinion.<sup>6</sup> The greatest obstacles to his plans for imperial unity were to come from the self-governing colonies themselves however. Slowly making the first

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5. C.A. Bodelsen, Studies in mid-Victorian Imperialism, p.205.

6. Ibid., pp. 62-3.

faltering steps onto the international scene they were reluctant to surrender any of their self-government to a wider imperial organisation. This reluctance was, at times, to pull in the opposite direction to centralisation, and Chamberlain had to either break down these centrifugal forces or incorporate them into channels more to his purposes.

It is obvious too, that with colonies as divergent in economic development, prospects and geographical location, as those of Britain's, common colonial attitudes would be hard to achieve. New Zealand, for example, thousands of miles from the heart of the Empire and fearful of Japanese and German expansion, felt herself more insecure and therefore more dependent upon the mother country than did Canada, protected as she was by the Monroe Doctrine.

This is the background against which Chamberlain became Colonial Secretary in 1895 and he brought to his new position a strength and conviction which no other British politician of his age could have matched. Not content with merely gathering up the existing trends towards imperial unity he was to impose his own dynamic leadership on the movement. Under this direction the Colonial Office became the most powerful ministry, Chamberlain himself virtual co-premier, and imperial unity the dominating theme.

Chamberlain's career was one of the most remarkable in British political history: he entered the House of Commons in 1876 a neo-republican, radical, free-trader; he retired from active public life thirty years later as the leader of tariff reform and imperial unity, having, during that time, shattered both major parties. It has been said of him that he "denounced with ferocity what he formerly advocated, and advocated passionately what he formerly denounced"<sup>7</sup>. Some clue to his notorious inconsistency may be found in the following speech to his loyal Birmingham supporters in 1905:

I know that there are some people who say that in the course of our long experience you and I have been inconsistent or have changed our opinions. I do not know that it matters whether we have or not; the main point is that we should always be right.<sup>8</sup>

A self-made man, Chamberlain soon became a force in municipal politics, being responsible for the organisation of the innovationary Birmingham caucus. The great social work he inaugurated in Birmingham gave him the city's undying support throughout his long and tempestuous political career. Entering the House of Commons in 1876 as one of Birmingham's representatives, he soon made his presence felt. In 1878 parliament was summoned on account of the

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7. A. Mackintosh, Joseph Chamberlain: An Honest Biography, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914), p. 331.

8. Ibid., pp. 334-5.

military expedition to Afghanistan and Chamberlain violently attacked the new imperialism:

Unless this spirit [of annexation] were, either by Parliament or by the people at large, severely and sternly repressed there could hardly be a limit to the responsibilities which might be fastened upon us, and none to the difficulties and even the disasters yet in store for this country.<sup>9</sup>

In 1880 he became President of the Board of Trade and in the following year was rather surprisingly selected by Gladstone to defend the Government's decision to retain the Transvaal. In 1882 he came out in support of British intervention in Egypt because "anarchy in Egypt would effect British interests of paramount importance, and I would say the interests of civilisation generally",<sup>10</sup> although he wrongly anticipated that the occupation would be of short duration. Some clue as to the complexity of Chamberlain's views on Empire at this time may be found in W. Strauss's explanation that "his ideas on domestic reform colored his policy with reference to Imperial questions."<sup>11</sup> In areas of British rule he wanted social reform to be well entrenched before Britain withdrew. Certainly he was not attacking the existence of the Empire

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9. Ibid., p. 51.

10. Ibid., p. 67.

11. W.L. Strauss, Joseph Chamberlain and the theory of Imperialism, p. 33.



as such, but rather any additions to the already vast complex. Social reform in Great Britain was still his overwhelming preoccupation however and shortly after his appointment as President of the Board of Trade he confessed that he looked

with greater satisfaction to our annexation of the gas and water, to our scientific frontier in the improvement area, than I do to the result of that Imperial policy which has given us Cyprus and the Transvaal.<sup>12</sup>

Ironically, it was to be domestic politics, in the form of the Irish question, which was to irrevocably centre Chamberlain's attentions upon imperial affairs. This question dominated the British parliamentary scene during the last quarter of the nineteenth century and when the elections of 1886 made Parnell<sup>13</sup> the arbiter of English politics the Irish fillibuster brought the issue to a head. Gladstone was by this time convinced of the necessity of Home Rule, and the decision was to be fatal for the liberal party: Chamberlain resigned on the issue and led the Unionist breakaway.<sup>14</sup> He had smashed the

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12. October 26, 1880, quoted in A. Mackintosh, Joseph Chamberlain: An Honest Biography, p. 370.

13. Charles Stewart Parnell, (1846-1891), leader of the supporters of Home Rule in parliament.

14. When the vote was taken on the second reading of the Home Rule Bill, June 8, 1886, the government was defeated by a majority of 40; 93 Liberals voted against the Bill, 46 being followers of Chamberlain. In the ensuing general election the figures were as follows: Conservatives = 316 + 78 Liberals, Liberals = 276 (including 85 Nationalists).

Liberal party and ended any chance of becoming Gladstone's successor. His own explanation of the break was that Home Rule threatened the unity of the Empire:

Since I have been in public affairs I have called myself...a Radical. But that title has never prevented me from giving great attention to Imperial interests. I have cared for the honour and the influence and the integrity of the Empire, and it is because I believe these things are now in danger that I have felt myself called upon to make the greatest sacrifice any public man can be called to make.<sup>15</sup>

The break was undoubtedly aggravated by the growing personal animosity between Chamberlain and Gladstone,<sup>14</sup> a situation which was not improved by the Prime Minister's refusal to give Chamberlain the office of Colonial Secretary in 1886, when the latter had to settle instead for the Presidency of the Board of Trade. Nevertheless, from this moment Chamberlain concentrated increasingly upon imperial affairs, and in 1887 he headed the British delegation sent to Washington to settle the Canadian-American fishing dispute. J.L. Garvin claims he was henceforth an emphatic imperialist, and "for over a decade his ambition to be Colonial Secretary never...swerved... No statesmen entering upon that office had been so well prepared for it."<sup>16</sup>

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15. W.L. Strauss, Joseph Chamberlain and the theory of Imperialism, p. 49.

16. J.L. Garvin, The life of Joseph Chamberlain, (London: Macmillan and Co., 1934), III, 9.

Chamberlain's decision to join the Conservatives, a party he had hitherto violently denounced, is not as strange as may at first appear. Having turned his attentions to the wider sphere of imperial relations he found the Conservatives, traditionally the party of Empire, more conducive to his ideas. Furthermore, it was becoming increasingly obvious that the Empire, far from being on the verge of collapse, was expanding rapidly, and the glories and opportunities of expansion contrasted strikingly with the more desolate arena of domestic politics.

In the autumn of 1889 Chamberlain visited Egypt, and "a new revelation of Britain's organising power in the East made him whole as an Imperialist. The change of view on Egyptian policy completed a long process."<sup>17</sup> In the same year Chamberlain broached for the first time the subject of a centralised system of defence for the Empire, although he was not yet sure of the practicability of imperial federation:

And although I have never seen my way to any practical scheme of Imperial Federation, yet I do not deem that idea to be altogether beyond the reach of statemanship...I hold it to be right and proper...that we should do everything in our power to bring it about; and as the first step to any such large arrangement I am convinced that the perfection of our means of mutual defence stands in the foreground.<sup>18</sup>

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17. Ibid., II, 447.

18. Ibid., II, 468.

The possibility of some form of imperial Zollverein also came to Chamberlain's attention but he realised the time was not yet propitious: the colonies would have to abandon protection and Great Britain free trade. As neither development seemed imminent common measures for defence seemed to offer the best approach to closer imperial unity.

Chamberlain was confident that world supremacy was to be the ultimate destiny of the Anglo-Saxon race. This idea was elaborated upon in a speech he gave at the Board of Trade dinner given in his honour in Toronto on December 30, 1887:

That idea is the greatness and importance of the destiny which is reserved for the Anglo-Saxon race - for that proud, persistent, self-asserting, and resolute stock, that no change of climate or condition can alter, and which is infallibly destined to be the predominant force in the future history and civilisation of the world.<sup>19</sup>

Nor were these bonds of Anglo-Saxon unity to be confined to members of the Empire, for Chamberlain also hoped to achieve a union which would include the United States. He was, in fact, to make proposals along these lines on more than one occasion.

Chamberlain's early political life had confronted him with numerous examples of social injustice and it is not surprising that he developed a sense of colonial

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19. W.L. Strauss, Joseph Chamberlain and the theory of Imperialism, p. 60

trusteeship more commonly associated with a later era. The old concept of colonial possessions as mere appendices to the mother country, to be utilised as sources of raw-materials and potential markets, was now qualified by the ideals of responsibility and obligation. The development of British territories should be for their own good as well as for the benefit of the world at large, and Britain was well qualified for this task:

The Providence that shapes our ends intended us to be a great governing power - conquering, yes conquering, but conquering only in order to civilise, to administer and to develop vast races on the world's surface, primarily for their advantage, but no doubt for our advantage as well.<sup>20</sup>

Expansion of Empire was not, in itself, sufficient:

It is not enough to occupy certain great spaces of the earth's surface unless you can make the best of them, unless you are willing to develop them. We are landlords of a great estate; it is the duty of the landlord to develop his estate.<sup>21</sup>

Chamberlain was, however, far from satisfied with the existing situation and in a speech to the House of Commons in August, 1895, he criticised the development, or lack of it, which had hitherto taken place:

I regard many of our Colonies as being in the condition of undeveloped estates, and estates which can never be developed without Imperial assistance...Cases have already come to my knowledge of colonies which have been British Colonies perhaps for more than a hundred years

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20. A. Mackintosh, Joseph Chamberlain: An Honest Biography, p. 218.

21. W.L. Strauss, Joseph Chamberlain and the theory of Imperialism, p. 64.

in which up to the present time British rule has done absolutely nothing...I shall be prepared to consider very carefully myself, and then, if I am satisfied, confidently to submit to the House, any case which may occur in which by the judicious investment of British money those estates which belong to the British Crown may be developed for the benefit of their population and for the benefit of the greater population which is outside.<sup>22</sup>

These words were not idly spoken for during Chamberlain's regime the development of the colonial dependencies, especially in West Africa and in the West Indies, proceeded apace. An example of this humanitarianism of Chamberlain's was his founding of the London School of Tropical Medicine and his encouragement of similar projects elsewhere. Indeed J. Amery goes so far as to claim of the Colonial Secretary that "when the final account comes to be drawn, it may well be judged that he did here [in the field of tropical medicine] his greatest service to humanity."<sup>23</sup>

By the time of his appointment as Colonial Secretary in 1895 Chamberlain had, however, no clearly defined views on empire beyond a desire to seek some closer unity - a unity which he considered essential if Britain was to continue to be a major world power. Consequently, when he entered Salisbury's cabinet he

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22. J.L. Garvin, The life of Joseph Chamberlain, III, 19-20.

23. J. Amery, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, IV, 222.

took the Colonial Office "in the hope of furthering closer union between them [the colonies] and the United Kingdom."<sup>24</sup>

To many such a choice of office came as a surprise, for the Colonial Secretaryship had long been looked upon as a minor post. Chamberlain however was to make both the office and himself preeminent. The history of his term of office, which ended with his resignation in 1903, was, unfortunately, to be dominated by the struggle for the Transvaal, a struggle which culminated in the Boer War. Nevertheless other important developments also took place: a growth of kinship between the colonies and the mother country for which the Boer War, stimulating as it did a dual nationalism, was partly responsible; the expansion of British rule in Africa, and the establishment of the Commonwealth of Australia.

The approach which Chamberlain brought to his post helped to create the enthusiasm with which his appointment was received in the colonies.<sup>25</sup> Here was a statesman to whom they could look for just and sympathetic treatment, a statesman who could represent the Empire as well as Great Britain. It was only when the theory of Chamberlain's imperialism moved towards a

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24. J.L. Garvin, The life of Joseph Chamberlain, III, 5.

25. Canadian Magazine, 1903-04, (Toronto: Ontario publishing Co., 1904), XXII, 130.

practical application which cut into colonial nationalism that this initial enthusiasm became tempered with apprehensions.

During the first few years in office Chamberlain was in a position to attempt to carry out his plans for expansion and consolidation of Empire. He strengthened Britain's position on the Nile and, refusing to be bullied by France, he secured an acceptable settlement of the boundary disputes in West Africa. The South African problem was not so easily solved however and the ill-fated Jameson Raid once more brought matters there to a head. Chamberlain was subsequently "whitewashed" of all complicity in the raid by a Royal Commission, but the stain remained and the Kaiser's telegram, congratulating Kruger, the Transvaal leader, on his success, carried the effects of the raid into the sphere of European diplomacy.

Britain's world isolation was, in fact, becoming increasingly apparent. Colonial expansion of the European powers had led to clashes with France and Germany and in 1895 the Venezuelan boundary dispute had also lead to threats of war between Great Britain and the United States. Britain's desire to avoid hostilities at all costs led to a renewal of Anglo-American friendship, but the incident had again illustrated Britain's increasingly insecure world position.



Chamberlain was all too well aware of the situation and he strove prodigiously to secure an alliance with Germany. This was not to be however, and it was to the Empire that Chamberlain looked to strengthen Britain's position. Speaking at the Canada Club in 1896 he brought together defence and trade as the means of furthering imperial unity:

The recent isolation of the United Kingdom, the dangers which seemed to threaten us, have evoked from all our colonies, and especially from Canada, an outburst of loyalty and affection which has reverberated throughout the world... We may endeavour to establish common interests and common obligations... What is the greatest of our common obligations? It is Imperial defence. What is the greatest of our common interests? It is Imperial trade. And those two are very closely connected. It is difficult to see how you can pretend to deal with its great question of Imperial defence without having first dealt with the question of Imperial trade.<sup>26</sup>

In June of the same year, while addressing the third Congress of the Chambers of Commerce of the Empire, Chamberlain again emphasised the necessity of a commercial union, hoping that if this project were realised, a Council of the Empire and a system of unified defence would follow.<sup>27</sup> The situation was not auspicious for such developments however, and in Canada, which was seen by Chamberlain as the key to imperial unity, it was more than discouraging. Indeed, in 1896 Sir. R. Cartwright,<sup>28</sup> the Minister of Trade

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26. J.L. Garvin, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, III, 179.

27. Ibid., III, 182.

28. Sir Richard John Cartwright, (1835-1912), Minister of Finance, 1873-78; Minister of Trade and Commerce, 1896-1911.

and Commerce in the Laurier government, expressed the opinion that Canada could well move towards reciprocity with the United States rather than with Great Britain.

Nevertheless, a start had been made in Great Britain to develop a scheme for systematic imperial defence,<sup>29</sup> and the establishment of a Committee of National Defence in 1895 seemed to indicate further progress. The establishment of such a committee, originally a suggested reform of the Hartington Commission<sup>30</sup>, was greeted with both enthusiasm and optimism. These hopes were not to be realised however and the experiment proved a dismal failure. No important plans for imperial defence were really developed, much less put into practice, and although the body existed until 1902, it effected little of consequence. The weaknesses of the body were manifest and included

Obscure duties and responsibilities; lack of real power; the absence of the Prime Minister as chairman ex officio; the membership of excessively preoccupied departmental ministers and the absence of such key figures as the Secretaries for Foreign Affairs and for the Colonies, and the military leaders; and the lack of a permanent secretariat.<sup>31</sup>

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29. See Chapter I.

30. The bulk of the recommendations of this committee were not to be taken up until after the Boer War. See Chapter III.

31. F.A. Johnson, Defence by Committee, (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), pp. 34-5.

In Great Britain as in Canada it required the Boer War to act as a catalyst in instilling the necessity and urgency for military reform and the complacency induced by the Victorian era of peace and prosperity was to be rudely shattered. As F. Johnson says:

The existence of the cabinet (of which the ministers for the armed forces were influential members), the Defence Committee of that Cabinet, the Colonial Defence Committee, and the Joint Naval and Military Defence Committee - a whole galaxy of organisations - could not alter the unwillingness of statesmen to look abroad and see the world of British hegemony was changing and act accordingly.<sup>32</sup>

There was at this time, apart from Canada's welcome though unexpected decision to increase her British preference<sup>33</sup>, little to suggest that the Empire was moving closer together. Nevertheless, Chamberlain decided to take advantage of the upsurge of imperialist sentiment created by the diamond jubilee celebrations to invite the Premiers of the self-governing colonies to England. The Colonial Secretary hoped that the meeting would produce

an interchange of ideas about matters of common and material interest, about closer commercial union, about the representation of the Colonies, about common defence, about legislation, about other questions of equal importance which cannot but be productive of the most fruitful results.<sup>34</sup>

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32. Ibid., p. 35.

33. The Canadian general tariff was reduced by 12 per cent on British goods, and provision was made to increase the reduction to 25 per cent the following year.

34. J.L. Garvin, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, III, 185.

The Conference, which was held in London from 24th June to 31st July was distinguished by the fact that for the first time all the delegates were the heads of their respective states. Chamberlain, in his opening address, expounded upon the subjects he thought most worthy of attention. Regarding political relations within the Empire he expressed the hope that imperial federation would become a reality and he suggested as a first step the creation of an imperial council:

...it might be feasible to create a great council of the Empire to which the Colonies would send representative plenipotentiaries ...it might slowly grow to that Federal Council to which we must always look forward as our ultimate ideal.<sup>35</sup>

He hastened to add that although the Imperial government was open to any suggestions it was not attempting to force the issue. On the question of imperial defence he was more adamant however - the question of closer relations was paramount and within this wider question that of defence was vital. After expressing the hope that the colonies would come to play a greater part in the government of the Empire Chamberlain explained that

with the privilege of management of control will also come the obligation and the responsibility. There will come some form of contribution towards the expense for objects which we shall have in common...this gigantic navy [Great Britain's] and the military forces

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35. C.8596, Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1897, pp. 5-6, P.A.C., Governor-General's files, G.21, No. 168.

of the Empire are maintained, as you know, at heavy cost. More than one third the total income of the country...Now, these fleets, and this military armament, are not maintained exclusively, or even mainly, for the benefit of the United Kingdom, or for the defence of home interests. They are still more maintained as a necessity of Empire, for the maintenance and protection of Imperial trade and of Imperial interests throughout the world.<sup>36</sup>

Chamberlain then explained that were it not for the military and naval strength of Great Britain Canada would still be, to a great extent, a dependent country. He thanked the Cape and Australia for their contributions to imperial defence, even though "the amount is at the moment absolutely trifling,"<sup>37</sup> and emphasised that "it is of first importance that we, all having a common interest, should have before-hand a scheme of common defence against any possible or at all events any probable enemy."<sup>38</sup>

Other far-reaching proposals suggested by the Colonial Secretary were uniformity of arms and equipment throughout the Empire and the interchange of troops between the colonies and the mother country. A further contribution to the discussions on defence was made by the First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. Goschen<sup>39</sup>. He explained that the imperial navy had to locate its ships in the

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36. Ibid., pp. 6-7.

37. Ibid., p. 8.

38. Ibid., p. 9. See Appendix II, p. 175.

39. George Joachim Goschen, (1831-1907), First Lord of the Admiralty, 1871-74 and 1895-1900; Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1887-92.

most advantageous position, no matter where that might be, and he stressed the need for the colonies to look after their shore defences.

Despite these arguments of Chamberlain and Goschen on the question of defence the colonial delegates did not fall in line with their suggestions: Laurier refused to commit Canada to any form of naval cooperation; Australia adhered to its principle of supporting squadrons for service in their own seas, and the Cape agreed to make a small annual contribution. Nevertheless the principle of uniformity in organisation and equipment was approved and agreement was reached to establish closer co-operation among the defence departments of the Empire. Also, Dr. F. Borden, the Canadian Minister of Militia and Defence, invited the Imperial government to send a committee to examine the state of Canada's defence organisation.

On the question of closer political relations within the Empire the outcome of the Conference was hardly more encouraging. A resolution was adopted to the effect that

the Prime Ministers here assembled are of opinion that the present political relations between the United Kingdom and the self-governing Colonies are generally satisfactory under the existing condition of things.<sup>40</sup>

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40. Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1897, p.15.

Although Mr. Seddon<sup>41</sup> and Sir E. Braddon<sup>42</sup> dissented from this resolution the general impression of the delegates was that with colonial growth closer union would develop as a matter of course, and with it colonial participation in the management of Empire.

However:

It was recognised at the same time that such a share in the direction of Imperial policy would involve a proportionate contribution in aid of Imperial expenditure, for which at present, at any rate, the Colonies generally are not prepared.<sup>43</sup>

Nevertheless, a resolution was passed suggesting triennial meetings of the Conference and Chamberlain, as if grasping at a straw, stressed the importance of this:

For the first time in our history and in our Imperial history we are suggesting and agreeing to the desirability of a periodical conference of the representatives of all Colonies. That is the beginning of it - the beginning of a Federal Conference.<sup>44</sup>

Chamberlain continued to hope that closer unity was still possible and the worsening situation in South Africa seemed to offer the opportunity to effect such a

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41. Richard John Seddon, (1845-1906), Prime Minister of New Zealand, 1893-1906.

42. Sir Edward Nicholas Coventry Braddon, (1829-1904), Prime Minister of Tasmania, 1894-99.

43. Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1897, p. 15.

44. J.L. Garvin, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, III, 192.

development. Following the breakdown of the Bloemfontain Conference, Chamberlain drafted a suggestion that, in the event of war, the colonies should join with the mother country in a show of imperial unity.<sup>45</sup> The South African situation then improved somewhat but three weeks later, in a secret memoranda to Lord Minto<sup>46</sup>, Governor-General of Canada, Chamberlain renewed the suggestion, explaining that the British government was considering sending an ultimatum to the Transvaal. For Chamberlain the chances of the ultimatum being accepted would depend upon a show of unity and force from the Empire, and he saw an offer of troops by the Canadian government as absolutely essential. He was anxious however that the offer should come spontaneously from the Dominion and not as a result of any outside pressure.<sup>47</sup>

The Canadian situation did not prove encouraging but with the outbreak of war and the despatch of other colonial troops to South Africa Chamberlain once more determined, by taking advantage of the imperial sympathy generated by war, to bind closer the ties of empire.

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45. Ibid., III, 527. June 9, 1899. The suggestion was prepared for Lord Minto but not sent.

46. Upon the death of his father on February 12th, 1891, Lord Melgund succeeded him as Fourth Earl of Minto.

47. P.A.C., M.P., XIV, Chamberlain to Minto, July 3rd, 1899.



Writing to Minto on March 2nd, 1900 he suggested the formation of an Imperial Council:

It [the question] is whether the time has not now come for the creation of something in the nature of an Imperial Council, sitting permanently in London and acting as permanent advisers to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in much the same way as the Indian Council advises the Secretary of State for India.<sup>48</sup> Probably in the first instance questions concerning Imperial Defence would be those which would be chiefly considered by the Council. Some understanding might be come to as to the number and character of the forces which would be permanently maintained by each colony, their organisation and employment in time of war, as well as schemes for the naval defence of the Empire, would be discussed and reported upon.<sup>49</sup>

Minto's reply was not encouraging however for the Governor-General was of the opinion that "he Laurier is devoid of the British feeling for a United Empire."<sup>50</sup> Certainly Laurier's position was not an easy one. He had to avoid antagonising the French Canadians and he had to reconcile opposing views on the need for Canada to strengthen her military resources. He was convinced that Canada could best spend her money on other projects. In refusing once again to commit Canada to increased military expenditure he stressed the need for the Dominion to develop her own resources:

Canada, with a vast territory and sparse population, has much to do in the way of building railways and canals, improving navigation, and otherwise developing her

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48. The Council of India was chiefly a consultative body.

49. P.A.C., M.P., XIV, Chamberlain to Minto, March 2nd, 1900.

50. R.H. Wilde, "Joseph Chamberlain's proposal of an Imperial Council in March, 1900," C.H.R., XXXVII (September 1956), 230/

resources and extending her trade. Apart from these obligations she is expending very considerable sums in the maintainance of her militia system, for the defence of her own territory. Under such circumstances I do not think it would be sound policy at the present time to ask Canada to apply a larger portion of her revenue to a definite plan of Imperial military organisation.

It was becoming increasingly obvious that although some of the self-governing colonies might well be willing to send troops to help the mother country in time of war, the idea of a unified imperial command with a permanent imperial force was still a long way from realisation. Nevertheless hopes that such a development might take place were still held in Great Britain. The Times, for example, was of the opinion that the use of colonial troops for Imperial service was "a possibility which the recent outbursts of enthusiasm throughout the Empire had raised to the rank of probability and which tact, good feeling and sympathy may well convert into an accomplished fact."<sup>52</sup>

In March, 1900 it was announced that 114 commissions in the British army were to be offered to colonials and it seemed to many that closer imperial military organisation was really getting under way. In fact, the situation was by no means as encouraging as

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51. P.A.C., M.P., I, Confidential, Laurier to Minto, April 9th, 1900.

52. R.H. Wilde, "Joseph Chamberlain's proposal of an Imperial Council in March, 1900", 242.

Chamberlain had hoped for. The South African war had brought the Empire together, and it was to act as a great catalyst for military reform, but really concrete evidence of closer military union of the Empire was not forthcoming. Laurier, in fact, had gone so far as to say that "the arrangement of tariff questions is far more likely to bring about Imperial unity than any joint system of Imperial defence."<sup>53</sup> Chamberlain wisely decided to refrain from stressing the theme of closer imperial unity. He would wait and see what changes in the colonial attitudes the next Colonial Conference might bring.

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53. J.L. Garvin, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, III, 630.

### Chapter III

#### REFORMS IN THE CANADIAN MILITIA: 1895-1904

During F.W. Borden's tenure of office as Minister of Militia and Defence from 1896-1911, the Canadian militia was virtually transformed. The major impetus for military reform was provided by the South African War and the years 1899-1904 marked the key stage in this development. However, the reforms of the early 1890's were to be continued and implemented throughout the period.

Major-General Herbert, during his five year tenure of office as General Officer Commanding had effected important changes in the military establishment of Canada; the Permanent Force was established on a regimental basis, the Headquarters Staff was enlarged, and a renewal of equipment was undertaken. From the imperial point of view a scheme for sending Canadian officers to England for training was established on a permanent basis and an arrangement was reached for the joint defence of Esquimalt. Despite these and other improvements the state of Canadian defences was still extremely unsatisfactory, and Herbert, in his annual report for 1894 urged "the adoption of a systematic organisation, by which alone can the security of any country be assured"<sup>1</sup>.

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1. Dominion of Canada, Sessional Papers, 1895, No. 19, Report of the Department of Militia and Defence, 1894, vi.

In the following year the Colonial Defence Committee received from the Colonial Office a copy of the Annual report of the Department of Militia of Defence for 1895. The last paper that had been referred to the Committee on Canadian defence was in 1866 and it was noticed that few of their earlier proposals had been implemented. The Committee then prepared a report upon which Chamberlain, writing to the Governor-General, Lord Aberdeen<sup>2</sup>, commented as follows:

As the Colonial Defence Committee pointed out in paragraph 6 of their remarks Canada, with one exception is the only part of Her Majesty's Dominions for which no general scheme of defence has yet been prepared, and revised from time to time. The Committee in their remarks have pointed out clearly the advantages of a carefully prepared scheme and the inevitable disadvantage of leaving everything in the way of mobilisation arrangements, organisation of Staff and Departmental services, such as transport supply and medical, to be hurriedly settled on the actual outbreak of war.<sup>3</sup>

Chamberlain expressed the hope that the Canadian government would take the matter in hand, and organise a defence committee for the purpose of preparing the necessary scheme.

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2. John Campbell Hamilton Gordon, Marquess of Aberdeen, (1847-1934), Governor-General of Canada, 1893-98; Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 1886 and 1905-15.
  3. P.A.C., Department of Militia and Defence, IIA6, 4, 1739, Chamberlain to Aberdeen, October 20, 1896.

This hope was in part fulfilled when the Venezuelan crisis of 1895 brought about the last important military preparations made in Canada against attack by the United States. Although, in retrospect, a war between Great Britain and the United States in 1895 seems highly improbable, the existence of a national emergency was proclaimed in Canada and immediate steps were taken to prepare for a possible invasion. Orders were placed in England for the purchase of 40,000 Lee-Enfield magazine rifles and for 2,300 Lee-Enfield carbines, many of the existing Canadian rifles being obsolete weapons left by the British on their withdrawal in 1871. Orders were also placed for new artillery guns and Maxim guns and the cartridge factory at Quebec was altered to suit the manufacture of .303 ammunition.<sup>4</sup> A defence scheme was also drawn up, organising the militia into divisions, brigades and detachments, each with its mobilisation centre. As Stanley says, these reforms were sketchy and inadequate, but they represent "the first serious attempt to plan in advance for the mobilisation of Canadian armed forces in the event of war."<sup>5</sup>

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4. The militia estimates for 1896 showed an expenditure of over \$1,000,000 for arms and ammunition. Sessional Papers, 1897, No. 19, Report of the Department of Militia and Defence, 1896, viii.

5. G.F. Stanley, Canada's Soldiers, (Toronto: The Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1960), p. 275.

These piecemeal reforms bore out Chamberlain's warning that the organisation of the Dominion's defences would be hurriedly settled on the eve of war and this danger prompted two reports from the Colonial Defence Committee urging that Canada should arm on the Great Lakes and should make Halifax better prepared for war. It was also suggested that the Halifax militia be affiliated with the imperial garrison there.

That Canada's defences were still inadequate can be seen from the following statement of the General Officer Commanding, Major-General W.J. Gascoigne<sup>6</sup>, in his annual report for 1896:

As already urged by my predecessor, one of the greatest needs of the militia is a systematic organisation throughout the whole service. No force which consists merely of a number of individual units such as regiments, battalions and batteries with no organised staff and without those departments which clothe, feed, arm, nurse and pay an army in the field, can be looked upon as a force available for war.<sup>7</sup>

In his annual report for the following year the General Officer Commanding stressed the need for increased estimates, to deal especially with the renewal of equipment. He was satisfied, however, with the progress made by the Permanent Force and pleased to see that the line of

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6. Major-General W.J. Gascoigne, General Officer Commanding, 1895-1898.

7. Sessional Papers, 1897, No. 19, Report of the Department of Militia and Defence, 1896, 18.

demarcation between the Permanent Force and the Militia was fast disappearing. He noted that "each is willing to recognise the mutual dependence the one on the other, and the obligation towards each other which is mutually due."<sup>8</sup> Of even greater significance was the successful experiment of exchanging a company of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Infantry with a company of the imperial forces.<sup>9</sup> Of imperial interest, too, was the representation of the Permanent Force, the Active Militia and the North West Mounted Police at the Queen's Jubilee celebrations in London.

Despite the rather disappointing results of the Colonial Conference of 1897 Chamberlain still hoped that closer military co-operation within the Empire was possible and in 1898 two very important reports were prepared which provide a good indication of the hopes which the Imperial government entertained regarding Canadian defence. The first of these was the report of the General Officer Commanding, Major-General E.T. Hutton<sup>10</sup>, and the second was the report of the Special Committee on Canadian Defence<sup>11</sup>.

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8. Sessional Papers, 1898, No. 19, Report of the Department of Militia and Defence, 1897, 23.

9. Number 4 Company of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Infantry was exchanged with a Company of the Royal Berkshire Regiment, stationed at the time at Halifax, for a period of nearly six months.

10. Major-General E.T.H. Hutton, General Officer Commanding, 1898-1900.

11. P.A.C. Privy Council Despatches, series 5, 229, L.1900 Despatch 295, Report of the Committee on Canadian Defence, 1898. The report was printed by the Colonial Defence Committee. It was, of course, treated as highly secret.



The Imperial government had, as yet, no clearly defined scheme for the defence of the Empire.<sup>12</sup> However, broad principles governing imperial defence had been enunciated. The Duke of Devonshire,<sup>13</sup> as President of the Colonial Defence Committee, spoke as follows in a public speech at the Guildhall on December 3rd, 1896: "The maintenance of sea supremacy has been assumed as the basis of the system of Imperial defence against attack from the sea. This is the determining factor in shaping the whole defensive policy of the Empire."<sup>14</sup>

Despite this emphasis on naval power the military aspect of defence could not be underrated and in the final analysis the Imperial government could argue that "in an Empire so constituted as the British, an army of home defence becomes an army of Imperial destruction."<sup>15</sup> Ideally, the Imperial government wanted to develop a co-operative system of defence for the Empire which would fulfil the following requirements: first a definition of Britain's imperial responsibilities, second the defence of the Empire as a whole by co-operation between all its parts, and third the defence of each portion of the Empire.

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12. See Chapter II.

13. Spencer Compton Cavendish, Marquess of Hartington and Eighth Duke of Devonshire, (1833-1903), Secretary of State for War 1866, Chief Secretary for Ireland, 1870-74; Secretary of State for India, 1880-82; Secretary of State for War, 1882-85; President of the Council 1895-1902 and 1902-03.

14. P.A.C., M.P., xix, 18.

15. General Sir I. Hamilton, Report of the military institutions of Canada, (Ottawa: Government printing bureau, 1913), p.12.

The colonies were, of course, far more preoccupied with their own defence requirements than with those of the whole Empire. The Imperial government, while looking forward to greater defence co-operation in the future, appreciated the somewhat parochial point of view of the colonies. Thus a memorandum of the Colonial Defence Committee on local defence conditions in the Empire reported as follows in 1897:

Doubtless a time will come when the increasing strength and resources of the Colonies will enable them to materially assist the Mother Country, by placing at her disposal for operation in any quarter of the globe bodies of troops formed from the excellent material of strong self-reliant colonists, but at present the development of their own vast territories in time of peace, and the effective protection of them in time of war, is undoubtedly the best contribution the Colonies can offer to Imperial defence.<sup>16</sup>

Many of these principles enunciated by the Imperial government were embodied in the recommendations of both Hutton's report and that of the Special Committee on Canadian Defence. There were, however, two important divergencies between the reports. Whereas Hutton expressly stated that a basic factor behind the organisation and administration of a Canadian army should be the ability to participate in the defence of the British Empire, the report of the Special Committee only went so far as to express the hope that if Britain were committed to war the colonial government would make a contribution to the war

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16. Privy Council Despatches, v. 206, K1897. Memorandum of the Colonial Defence Committee, August 7, 1897.

effort. In the second place, the committee report suggested that the General Officer Commanding the Imperial Troops in Canada<sup>17</sup> should have a closer relationship with the General Officer Commanding the Canadian Militia, and might even make inspections of the militia. Hutton however, was of the opinion that "no man can serve two masters,"<sup>18</sup> and that such action would be looked upon by the Canadian government as unjustifiable interference.

As mentioned, the report of the Special Committee contains virtually all the recommendations suggested by Hutton and the report is even more comprehensive than that of Hutton's. To avoid unnecessary repetition emphasis will therefore be placed on the former report. The Committee developed from the suggestion of Borden at the Colonial Conference of 1897 that a special committee should be sent out from England to enquire into Canadian defences. It was appointed by the Admiralty and the War Office and came to Canada under the Presidency of Major-General E.P. Leach.<sup>19</sup> Other officers serving on the Committee were Colonel J.C. Dalton,<sup>20</sup> Captain W.G. White<sup>21</sup> and

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17. The General Officer Commanding the imperial troops in Canada at this time was Lord William Seymour.

18. M.P., XXI, 99.

19. Major-General E.P. Leach, imperial representative on the Committee, officer of the Royal Engineers.

20. Colonel J.C. Dalton, imperial representative on the Committee, officer of the Royal Army.

21. Captain W.G. White, imperial representative on the Committee, officer of the Royal Navy.

Colonel P.H.N. Lake,<sup>22</sup> the Canadian Government being represented by Sir Louis Davies,<sup>23</sup> Minister of Marine and Fisheries, and F.W. Borden.

The report of the Committee was divided into two parts: the first consisted of a general defence scheme for Canada, for immediate use in time of war; the second contained recommendations regarding the very extensive changes which would be necessary to effect the scheme, although it was realised that it would take a considerable time to implement all the proposals suggested. It is significant that the recommendations of the Committee were geared to prepare Canadian defences for an attack from the United States. Despite Chamberlain's hopes of an Anglo-Saxon alliance this threat of war with the United States is a constantly recurring theme, and by utilising it Great Britain hoped to pressurise the Dominion government into the necessary defence reforms.

The Governor-General, Lord Minto, in his introduction to the first report, made some interesting remarks which illustrate not only his close interest in military affairs, but also his keen appreciation of the problems facing militia reform in Canada. The imperial authorities were anxious to initiate a plan for the

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22. Sir Percy Henry Noel Lake (1855-1940), Chief of General Staff, 1905-08, Inspector-General, 1908-10.

23. Sir Louis Henry Davies, (1845-1924), Minister of Marine and Fisheries, 1896-1901; Chief Justice, 1918-24.

interchange of colonial and imperial troops as a means of implementing closer co-operation. Minto, however, pointed out some of the difficulties which would be encountered. He explained that the military forces of Canada consisted of two classes; the Permanent Force and the Active Militia. The Permanent Force, which enlisted for three years service under military law consisted of two squadrons of cavalry, two weak batteries of field artillery, two garrison companies and four companies of infantry - an approximate total of 850 men all ranks. Not only were these troops scattered throughout Canada, but their chief value was as instructors to the Active Militia. The Active Militia on the other hand, a volunteer force of approximately 35,000 all ranks, was composed of officers and men who were dependent upon civilian occupations for a living, and they assembled for drill for only twelve days a year. Inevitably their regimental organisation and discipline was extremely weak and in their present state they were hardly in a position to provide an adequate substitute for any imperial force. Minto also pointed out that in the event of a naval militia being established there might well be a dispute, in view of the opportunities for political patronage offered, as to whether the Department of Militia and Defence or the Department of Marine and Fisheries should have jurisdiction over it.

The report emphasised that in the event of an attack on Canada the Dominion would be best served by an active rather than a passive defence although Hutton concluded that "the Commission show most conclusively that the power to act as a military body in active operations in the field is quite impossible under the existing conditions."<sup>24</sup> The Committee also decided that any American attack on Canada would concentrate on the Lake Champlain route to strike at Montreal, with subsidiary attacks from New Hampshire and Maine to Quebec, across the Niagara to the Welland canal and from west of the Adirondacks to the St. Lawrence. There followed in the report details of the organisation, distribution of troops, division of command and means of communication with which Canada could best oppose these attacks.

It was also pointed out that:

Attention has been constantly called in the War Office Papers to the entire absence from the Militia forces of any organisation intended to deal with what are known as the Departmental services of an army in the field. It is but a truism to say that without them an army can neither live, march, nor fight.<sup>25</sup>

Consequently it was recommended that a Service Corps, a Medical Corps and a Pay Department should be

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24. Report of the Committee on Canadian Defence, 1898, I, ix.

25. Ibid., II, 51.

immediately raised, even if it entailed a temporary reduction of forces.

The report expressed the belief that in time of war Canada would need 100,000 men in the field and therefore there was an urgent need for the development of a Reserve Force. This force would have to be adequately trained, for "untrained masses do not, however, constitute an army, and any attempt to mobilise and manoeuvre in the field battalions composed largely of raw materials could only lead to national disaster"<sup>26</sup>.

For the scheme of naval defence the Commission noted that the United States had violated the Rush-Bagot agreement of 1817 and had also established a corps of naval militia. It was suggested that Canada do the same and that merchant vessels should be armed for use on the Great lakes. Other recommendations included the purchase of more armaments, ammunition and equipment. The Commission was thus in agreement with the Colonial Defence Committee Report of 1897<sup>27</sup> which had suggested that, as far as local conditions permitted, conditions of service, organisation and equipment should be similar to those of the imperial forces.

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26. Ibid., II, 67.

27. Privy Council Despatches, series 5, v. 206, K1897, despatch 416. Memorandum of the Colonial Defence Committee.

The total estimated cost for the implementation of the Committee's suggestions was \$4,000,000<sup>28</sup>. Bearing in mind Hutton's statement that "Parliament, whether Conservative or Liberal, grudgingly voted supplies from year to year with a feeling of ill-disguised hostility"<sup>29</sup> it is not surprising that the recommendations proposed were slowly implemented. Hutton also considered that "the attitude...of the Government towards the Commission was cold and apathetic in the extreme"<sup>30</sup>. Later developments would seem to bear him out: in December of 1901 Borden wrote to Minto explaining that the recommendations of the Defence Committee had been referred to a subcommittee of the Privy Council and that he hoped "to be able shortly to answer the enquiries of the War Office, which I regret to say have had to be several times repeated, with reference to our intentions in this matter"<sup>31</sup>. Two months later Major-General Leach, writing to the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, Sir Montague Ommaney,<sup>32</sup> asked why

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28. Report of the Committee on Canadian Defence, 1898, II, 78.

29. M.P., XIX, 10.

30. Ibid., 38.

31. M.P., VII, 80, Borden to Minto, December 20, 1901.

32. Sir Montague Ommaney, (1842-1925), Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1900-07.



no acknowledgment had been made by the Canadian government regarding the work of the Committee, especially as "both Borden and Louis Davies told me they were quite prepared to endorse everything we had written".<sup>33</sup>

Disappointed as the Imperial government was with the reaction, or lack of it, to the proposals made by the Committee, the Canadian government wisely made no mention of the issue domestically. As Borden explained to the Canadian people in October, 1903:

We had a Committee sitting here in 1898, for which we paid a very considerable sum of money, which made a report which has never seen the light of day. It was printed by the Defence Committee under the Imperial government. It is something secret.<sup>34</sup>

It remains to see what reforms were made in Canadian defence and to what extent these reforms coincided with the recommendations of the Committee.

In his annual report for 1899 Hutton stressed the need to create the nucleus of a trained general staff if the Canadian militia were to reach the level of a modern army, and a staff course was subsequently commenced at the Royal Military College in Kingston. Hutton also advocated an increase in the Permanent Force, which was more than 25 per cent below strength as over two hundred members had

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33. M.P., VII, 153, Leach to Ommanney, March 1, 1901.

34. Dominion of Canada, House of Commons Debates, 1903, VI, 134 22-3, October 8, 1903

volunteered for the Yukon Field Force, established in 1898. However, Hutton's aim of a "national army" took definite steps towards realisation with the creation in 1899 of an Army Medical Service, developed along the same lines as that of the imperial army. Two field companies of engineers were also formed in addition to the two existing independent companies, and Hutton proposed that in due course they should constitute the nucleus of a Canadian Engineers Corps.

In 1900 a further attempt was made to strengthen the military ties of Great Britain with Canada when an exceptional number of imperial commissions were granted to the Dominion. It was intended that the authority to allocate the commissions should be vested in the Governor-General, but the Dominion government argued the point, illustrating again its unwillingness to accept any responsibility without the necessary authority. Borden complained that the Headquarters Staff was in a position to ensure a wise selection of officers and he wrote to Laurier to the effect that "if the Government through the Militia Department is to have any responsibility in the matter the selection must be left with me in the regular way, otherwise I must most respectfully decline to have anything to do with it."<sup>35</sup> Minto, who feared political interference on the issue, wrote to Chamberlain as follows: "The party press on both

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35. L.P., 149, 44229, Borden to Laurier, April 2, 1900.

sides needless to say, made all the capital it can, on imperial and colonial grounds, out of the discussion."<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless a compromise was reached whereby the endowment of commissions was left in the hands of the Governor-General, although he had to "rely upon the assistance and advice of his Government".<sup>37</sup>

The political bickering which followed Canada's participation in the South African War detracted to a certain extent from the military achievements of the Dominion forces, but a strong impetus was nevertheless given to the reform and expansion of Canada's military establishment. As Colonel C.F. Hamilton Says:

The South African War caused the general public to sanction a more generous treatment of the force; it caused the Government to sanction the efforts of soldiers to deal seriously with the problem of defence, and a coherent effort was set on foot to give Canada a Militia Army capable of effective service.<sup>38</sup>

In his report for 1901 the General Officer Commanding, Major-General R.H. O'Grady Haly,<sup>39</sup> stressed the need to extend the training period of the militia, pointing out that the wastage in the rural corps brought about by this inadequacy represented perhaps the most serious drawback the militia had to face. The war had

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36. Governor-General's Files, G21, 222, Minto to Chamberlain, May 12, 1900.

37. M.P., VI, 130, Laurier to Minto, April 25, 1900. The word advice was later removed as it was felt that it must, if left in, constitutionally do away with any imperial responsibility.

38. Colonel C.F. Hamilton, "The Canadian militia, the change in organisation", Canadian Defence Quarterly, VIII, (October, 1930), 94.

39. Major-General R.H. O'Grady-Haly, General Officer Commanding, 1900-02.

also illustrated the need to develop a militia reserve, although on the question of defence in general quality rather than quantity should be the keyword. He hoped however that with time the militia would become "a real and most important factor in maintaining and solidifying Canada's important position in the British Empire."<sup>40</sup> In the following year an Army Service Corps was established but a discordant note was sounded with the ordering of Ross rifles for the militia - a move away from the ideal of uniformity of arms and equipment throughout the Empire.

It was not, however, until 1903, under the energetic leadership of Lord Dundonald,<sup>41</sup> that extensive reform got under way. In his report the Deputy Minister of Militia and Defence, Colonel L.F. Pinault,<sup>42</sup> emphasised the great changes which had been made, "changes so important as to practically involve a reorganisation."<sup>43</sup> The Department had, he claimed, developed more rapidly than in any other time during its history.

This rapid development of the force had made it

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40. Sessional Papers, 1902, No. 35, Report of the Department of Militia and Defence, 1901, 30.

41. Lord Dundonald, General Officer Commanding, 1902-04.

42. Colonel Louis Felix Pinault, (1852-1906), Deputy Minister of Militia and Defence, 1898-1906.

43. Sessional Papers, 1904, No. 35, Report of the Department of Militia and Defene, 1903- 7.

necessary to transfer the custody and issuing of stores to military supervision and the Militia Stores Branch thus became part of the Permanent Corps under the designation of the Ordnance Stores Corps. Henceforth only the Accountant's Branch remained under the jurisdiction of the civil authority. The Engineer Services Branch was reconstituted on military lines and the establishment of a small permanent unit of engineers was approved. Approval was also given to the establishment of a Signalling Corps and an Intelligence Branch, and to the reorganisation of the Headquarters Staff.

In his report Dundonald proposed a first line of defence of 100,000 troops with a reserve force of the same strength, and he suggested that the necessary equipment be purchased immediately. He was nevertheless satisfied with the progress that had been made:

Though in pursuance of my duty I have pointed out what in my opinion is necessary to secure an efficient Militia, able to defend the country, and though there is much to do before that object has been reached, yet at the same time I think we can look back on the year 1903 as having been well spent in the interests of the Militia, and in the far greater interests of the Dominion which are bound up with the efficiency of the force.<sup>44</sup>

Before discussing the even more important changes in the militia which came about in 1904 it is necessary to trace the developments which had been taking place in the

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44. Ibid., 43.

wider sphere of inter-imperial relations on the subject of defence.

In 1902 two jolts were given to Canada's complacency about the naval defence of the Empire. In February a motion was introduced in the British House of Commons to the effect that Canada might share in the enormous burden and in September the Australian Prime Minister, Sir Edmund Barton,<sup>45</sup> made the following speech at Vancouver:

I would like to remind you that you have two Imperial squadrons on the coasts of Canada, one at your eastern station and one at your western. We Australians, who propose to pay something towards the Navy, have only one. If it is right for us to make some contribution then are you helping us, or are you helping the cause of the Empire, by being at the same time the most populous and the most reluctant to assist of all the great nations of the Empire. <sup>46</sup>

The Colonial Conference of 1902 had shown, however, that Canada was unwilling to commit herself to naval expenditure and Laurier was to explain later that "there never was in Canada a scheme on foot to contribute any sum toward imperial defence."<sup>47</sup> In January, 1904, Borden gave a more explicit explanation of his government's position:

At present Canada makes no contribution in time of peace towards the Military defence of the Empire outside the limits of the Dominion.

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45. Sir Edmund Barton, (1849-1920), first Prime Minister of the Australian Commonwealth, 1901-03.

46. J. Castell Hopkins, The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1902, (Toronto: The annual review publishing Co., 1903), pp. 146-8.

47. Ibid., 1903, p. 274.

Canadian opinion has been opposed to the assumption of any burdens other than those imposed for the actual defence of the Dominion. The Canadian Parliament has never been willing to entrust troops to the control of the British War Office, or to subscribe the funds necessary for the maintenance of such troops.<sup>48</sup>

Yet again the Empire appeared to be entering upon a crucial stage of its development and Minto, addressing the delegates at the Chambers of Commerce Congress on August 20th, 1903, spoke as follows:

We stand very near the parting of the ways... what is to be our choice...a mighty Empire, a brilliant constellation of nations, united in common interests...or the gradual estrangement of the Empire's component parts and its ultimate disintegration.<sup>49</sup>

The chances of further co-operation seemed remote however. The divergent strategies endorsed by the War Office and the Admiralty respectively at the Colonial Conference of 1902 had not only helped the colonies in their military retrenchment, but had also exposed even more clearly the lack of adequate centralised planning and organisation.

Nevertheless, these deficiencies, basic as they were, helped to stimulate the formation of the Committee of Imperial Defence. The basic outlines of such a committee had been drafted by the Hartington Commission and further incentive was now provided by the reports of the Elgin and Norfolk

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48. M.P., IX, 39, Borden to Minto, January 7, 1904.

49. J. Castell Hopkins, The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1903, p. 249.

Commissions, both of which exposed the rather chaotic state of British defence planning. Finally, to put the issue beyond doubt, St. John Brodrick,<sup>50</sup> the Secretary of State for War, and Lord Selborne,<sup>51</sup> the First Lord of the Admiralty, "demanded of the Prime Minister a reorganisation of the Defence Committee so that it could survey the Empire's military needs and ensure the co-operation of their two departments."<sup>52</sup>

The Committee, which was not established on a permanent footing until January, 1904, had its first meeting in December, 1902, under the personal supervision of A.J. Balfour,<sup>53</sup> the British Prime Minister. Of great significance was the appointment of Sir F. Borden as a member of the Committee. This appointment not only set an important precedent for the future but it also heralded a new era of co-operation.

Although the body acted only in an advisory capacity it was a distinct improvement on the Defence Committee and a future Prime Minister, H.H. Asquith,<sup>54</sup> was to describe

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50. St. John Brodrick, Ninth Viscount Midleton and First Earl of Midleton, (1856-1942), Under-Secretary of State for War, 1895-98; Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1898-1900; Secretary of State for War, 1900-03; Secretary of State for India, 1903-05.
  51. Lord Selborne, (1859-1942), Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1895-1900; First Lord of the Admiralty 1900-05; High Commissioner for South Africa, 1905-10.
  52. F.A. Johnson, Defence by Committee, (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), pp.52-3. They made this the price of their remaining in the cabinet.
  53. Arthur James Balfour, First Earl of Balfour (1848-1930), First Lord of the Treasury, 1891-92 and 1895-1902; Prime Minister, 1902-05; Foreign Secretary, 1916-19.
  54. Herbert Henry Asquith, First Earl of Oxford and Asquith, (1852-1928), Home Secretary, 1892-95; Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1905-08; Prime Minister, 1908-16.



its functions as follows:

The function it performs is this, that we get by its means the best expert advice available on any particular question or set of questions, and the fact that the politicians are associated with the experts ensures or ought to ensure that the recommendations of the Committee are not merely correct from the technical point of view, but that they are also conformable to the exigencies of practical politics.<sup>55</sup>

Borden was invited to sit on the Committee in 1903, although it was understood that he was not in a position to commit his government to any policy, his position being advisory. Minto himself hoped that the experiment "would tend to encourage an appreciation of the necessity for a common understanding on military questions between the Dominion and the Motherland,"<sup>56</sup> although he insisted that on all matters concerning defence the Imperial government should continue to communicate with him first. Borden too was enthusiastic, although his government did not share this enthusiasm. Minto records that "Borden told me privately he knew there was a good deal of disapproval of it, ie, in the Cabinet."<sup>57</sup> Borden also expressed the opinion that he was not really a member of the Committee of Imperial Defence, but only an adviser.<sup>58</sup>

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55. F.A. Johnson, Defence by Committee, p. 110.

56. Governor-General's Files, G21, No. 339, II, 1900-04, Minto to Lyttleton, January 15, 1904.

57. M.P., XII, 180, Minto to Clarke, April 25, 1904.

58. Ibid., 181.

During the meeting of the Committee on December 11th, 1903, it was recommended that a British Officer should be in supreme command of Dominion forces in time of war and that three officers of the Regular Army should be on the Canadian General Staff. It was also suggested that "it would be advantageous if a Canadian Regiment of Infantry could be raised with two battalions, one of which would serve normally in Canada and the other in India."<sup>59</sup> Borden urged that this minute be removed from the records, but in a letter to Minto on January 7th, he expressed his approval of the suggestion: not only would a battalion raised for garrison duty in India be paid for by the Indian authorities, but on its return to Canada it would strengthen Canada's military power which was "scarcely adequate to act in aid of the Civil power in all emergencies".<sup>60</sup>

The need to alleviate these weaknesses in part explains the radical reforms initiated in 1904. The plans for reform were drawn up in 1903 and the Imperial government asked that Borden should consult them first about the proposed changes:

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59. Governor-General's Files, G.21, No. 339, II, 1900-04. Summary of the proceedings of the Committee of Imperial Defence, meeting of December 11, 1903.

60. M.P., IX, 40-41, Borden to Minto, January 7, 1904.

His Majesty's Government earnestly hope your responsible advisers will defer action with regard to important amendments until the matter has been freely discussed by the Minister of Militia with the Secretary of State for War and the Commander in Chief.<sup>61</sup>

The Canadian Government complied with this request and Laurier later wrote that Borden's proposals received the assent of the Imperial government "in toto."<sup>62</sup>

Borden, commenting on his plans for militia reform, explained to the House of Commons in March, 1904, that "times have changed since the existing law was enacted. Canada has grown and the militia force has grown, and it has been found impossible to carry on our militia system advantageously under the existing law."<sup>63</sup> He also stressed that "we follow, in the organisation of the Canadian militia, very much the lines of the British army,"<sup>64</sup> and the Canadian reforms were, in fact, based on those recently carried out in Britain.

These latter reforms were the work of a committee of three, appointed to advise on the reorganisation of the War Office. The body, to be known as the Esher Committee,

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61. L.P., 753 part 2, 215622, Chamberlain to Minto, April 20, 1903.

62. M.P., VII, Laurier to Minto, March 17, 1904.

63. Dominion of Canada, House of Commons Debates, 1904, I, 205, March 17, 1904.

64. Ibid., I, 300, March 22, 1904.

consisted of Lord Esher,<sup>65</sup> Sir John Fisher,<sup>66</sup> and Sir George Clarke<sup>67</sup>. Although their recommendation for the establishment of a general staff was not to be adequately implemented until later several of their other proposals met with early success. Of these, the most important was the abolition of the position of Commander-in-Chief and the substitution of an Army Council. This council was to be run on the lines of the Board of Admiralty, which controlled the fleet, appointments and general policy. The task of the newly-created council was in fact, to

administer and not to command the army. Executive command being vested in generals outside the War Office, who will be responsible for the training and efficiency of all troops within their districts, an independent Inspection Department must be provided for the information and the protection of the Council.<sup>68</sup>

The reaction to Borden's proposals in the House of Commons was for the most part favourable. Few criticised the increased expense and Mr. Thompson, M.P. for Haldemand, was moved to speak as follows:

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65. Reginald Baliol Brett, Second Viscount Esher, (1852-1930), key figure in military reforms and liaison minister between King and Ministers.
  66. John Arbuthnot Fisher, First Baron Fisher, (1841-1920), First Sea Lord, 1904-10. One of the greatest administrators in the history of the Royal Navy.
  67. George Sydenham Clarke, Baron Sydenham of Combe, (1848-1933), Secretary to Colonial Defence Committee, 1885-92; Secretary to Royal Commission on navy and army administration, 1888-90; member of Committee of Imperial Defence; Governor of Victoria, 1901-03; Governor of Bombay, 1907-13.
  68. Dominion of Canada, House of Commons Debates, 1904, V, 8159, August 2, 1904.

First of all as to this large expenditure...I believe that this is an excellent thing, and... I join in congratulating the minister upon his courage in making the announcement of this vote, not apologetically, as we are so accustomed to do when dealing with militia matters in this country, but bravely and boldly, as if he had something to be proud of - as I think he had in making this statement.<sup>69</sup>

Indeed, of all the proposed reforms the most controversial was that which suggested that henceforth the position of General Officer Commanding the Canadian Militia be open to a Dominion officer. The Conservatives, though they accepted the reforms as a whole feared that a Canadian General Officer Commanding might well become a political appointment and that the officer could well lack the necessary military qualifications. S. Hughes,<sup>70</sup> M.P. for Victoria, spoke as follows in the House, deprecating the weakening of the imperial tie which the proposed change would involve:

Weak as some of the General Officers Commanding may have been, unfit as some of them undoubtedly were, nevertheless I feel that, taking them all in all, they have done possibly much more good than would have been done if we had selected our commanding officers from the ranks of our Militia.<sup>71</sup>

Hughes also stressed that "under the system whereby a British officer was appointed we were able to get rid of an

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69. Ibid., 1903, VI, 13430, October 8, 1903.

70. Sir Samuel Hughes, (1853-1921), Minister of Militia and Defence, 1911-16.

71. Dominion of Canada, House of Commons Debates, 1904, I, 209, March 17, 1904.

objectionable man; whereas under the system as proposed we cannot get rid of him,"<sup>72</sup> and a colleague urged that Canada "strengthen this grand empire, and not insert the thin edge of the wedge, which, if driven home, will rend it assunder."<sup>73</sup>

These fears were shared by Minto who claimed that "the Imperial connection with the Militia force of Canada has for some time been in jeopardy"<sup>74</sup> and that to appoint a Canadian General Officer Commanding would be to take away from the Imperial government the advantage it held. He had no doubt too that the appointment would be a political one:

At the present moment there is not a single trained Staff Officer in Canada, or the means of training such an officer...every officer throughout the force is, more or less, under political influence, which would increase in proportion to the importance of his command.<sup>75</sup>

Nevertheless, the proposed reforms were enacted. The new Militia Act came into effect in November, 1904, and was immediately followed by an Order-in-Council establishing a Militia Council, "modelled after the pattern of the Imperial Army Council."<sup>76</sup> What advantages was it hoped to gain from the establishment of a Militia

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72. Ibid., 1904, I, 289, March 22, 1904.

73. Ibid., 1904, I, 300, March 22, 1904

74. Governor-General's files, G.21, No. 339, II, 1900-04, Minto to Chamberlain, May 28, 1903.

75. Ibid., Minto to Lyttleton, March 7, 1904.

76. Sessional Papers, 1905, No.35, Report of the Department of Militia and Defence, 1904, 91. See Appendix **III** for members of council.

Council?:

In the first place the Minister of Militia and Defence will have frequent opportunities, at regularly appointed times, of meeting in conference the Heads of the Branches who are responsible for the conduct of the whole of the business of the Militia Department under him... The Minister will thus be brought into closer touch with the officers actually concerned in carrying out his policy, while they, on the other hand, will have better opportunities of making themselves acquainted with that policy.<sup>77</sup>

The council also helped to eliminate the lack of continuity which had been a major weakness hitherto and it confirmed the supremacy of the Minister of Militia and Defence regarding policy decisions. Borden himself was adamant on this point despite the allegation of Tisdale<sup>78</sup> that his powers would be "arbitrary, unreasonable, subversive and destructive of the best interests of the militia."<sup>79</sup>

Although the Chief of General Staff, Brigadier-General P.H.N. Lake, reported in 1905 that the extensive decentralisation hoped for under the new system had not yet been effected,<sup>80</sup> the general results were satisfactory:

Fourteen months have now elapsed since the constitution of the Militia Council, and the anticipations expressed in the report for 1904 of the advantages to be attained thereby have,

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77. Ibid., 94.

78. David Tisdale, (1835-1911), Minister of Militia and Defence, May-July, 1896.

79. Dominion of Canada, House of Commons Debates, 1904, V, 8171, August 2, 1904.

80. Sessional Papers, 1906, No.35, Annual report of the Militia Council, 1904, 51.

it is believed, been fully realised.<sup>81</sup>

One effect of the new system was that "disputes between the Minister and the principal soldier became fewer and of more limited scope, "even though "the soldiers had more of their own way than before."<sup>82</sup>

The old Militia Act being entirely repealed, no reference was made to the naval militia as this department, when established, was to be under the jurisdiction of the Department of Marine and Fisheries. Henceforth too the militia was only to be called out in the defence of Canada and it was proposed to raise the strength of the Permanent Force from 1,000-2,000, their pay being increased. Another innovation was the ruling that Canadian officers of the same standing as imperial officers were no longer to rank lower.

These reforms undoubtedly made a very important contribution to the strength and efficiency of Canadian defence<sup>83</sup>. Unfortunately, however, they also constituted a distinct slackening of the military ties of the Dominion with Great Britain. The ideal of a Canadian national army, taking its place in a unified system of imperial

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81 Ibid., 7.

82. Colonel C.F. Hamilton, "The Canadian Militia, the change in organisation", quoted in C.P. Stacey, Introduction to the study of military history for Canadian students, (Ottawa: 1953,) 23.

83. See Appendix. IV, p. 177.



defence, faded into the background and "Canada relapsed into a provincial system of a small permanent Militia, an imperfectly trained active Militia, and a water-tight staff."<sup>84</sup>

In view of these developments it is not surprising that Chamberlain, who had resigned from the Cabinet to launch a campaign for a revised fiscal policy for the Empire, wrote to Minto as follows:

While I was in office I fear I trusted too much in this matter the appointment of General Officers Commanding to the War Office, and it is only recently that I have begun to see how impossible it is to force our views with regard to Imperial Defence upon the Colonies.<sup>85</sup>

Despite this admission of failure Chamberlain nevertheless insisted that "we must find some means of conciliating the colonial demand for local independence with the necessity for some organisation which would secure an efficient control of the whole forces of the Empire in time of danger."<sup>86</sup> It is significant however that, apart from the decision to take over the imperial garrisons at Halifax and Esquimalt, the Dominion government declined to include any mention of imperial commitments when describing the duties of the Canadian militia.

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84. J. Buchan, Lord Minto: A Memoir, (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1924), p.155.

85. M.P., XIV, Chamberlain to Minto, August 17, 1904.

86. Ibid.

## Chapter IV

### THE CONFLICT BETWEEN CANADIAN AND IMPERIAL DEFENCE REQUIREMENTS

#### Part I. Lord Minto as Governor-General and the Impact of the South African War on Canada

As Sir John A. Macdonald had prophesied, Lord Melgund returned to Canada as Governor-General, and his tenure of office, from 1898-1904, coincided with a crucial phase in the development of Canada's relations within the Empire.

As has been noted<sup>1</sup>, Minto's experiences as Military Secretary to Lord Lansdowne were invaluable. He had learnt much about the problems of a young colony, striving to develop internally while at the same time moving towards a greater autonomy in external affairs. At first hand he had witnessed the workings of government and the intricate problems of defence, both Canadian and imperial. These problems were to confront him again and he was to be a key figure in resolving them.

It has been suggested that Minto's appointment as Governor-General of Canada was a deliberate act of Chamberlain's to secure a man of his own inclinations in such a key post. The evidence does not support this however, for in the first place

The Colonial Secretary's choice had been the Duke of Connaught but the Queen had withheld her consent. It was only after several other distinguished

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1. See Chapter I.

nominees had declined the post, that Chamberlain consented to Minto, put forward by Lord Wolseley.<sup>2</sup>

Certainly Minto shared many of Chamberlain's views on Empire and he respected the drive and leadership of the Colonial Secretary. Military considerations also affected his appointment, Wolseley being an ardent supporter of his, and such support could not have been inconsequential. As Minto himself wrote on the eve of his appointment:

My Canadian negotiations are still proceeding. I have done nothing directly myself; friends, however, have done a great deal: Lord Salisbury, the Duke of Devonshire, Mr. Chamberlain, Arthur Balfour, have all been approached, and whether I go or not it is pleasant to think one has so many supporters.<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless, he appreciated far more clearly than Chamberlain the difficulties facing Laurier and throughout his correspondence with the Colonial Secretary there is a note of restraint, urging that closer imperial relations should not be pushed too quickly.

There is, however, some validity in the claim that Chamberlain hoped to utilise Minto's lack of political experience: "The choice of Governor without political experience was thus paradoxically a most political appointment."<sup>4</sup> Minto had never been very deeply immersed

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2. H.P. Gundy, "Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Lord Minto", C.H.A., XXXIII (June 1952), 29.

3. J. Buchan, Lord Minto: A Memoir, (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1924), p. 113.

4. G. Neuendorff, Studies in the Evolution of Dominion Status, (London: George Allan and Unwin, 1942), p. 61.

in politics, being a self-confessed military man. Indeed, while making reference to the Royal Commission established to enquire into the Jameson Raid, he had seen fit to describe professional politicians as "about the worst class of animal that exists."<sup>5</sup> Although his preference for military rather than civil personnel was to be tempered with time, it was never wholly eradicated.

Minto was in many ways typical of the breed of administrators with which Britain helped govern the Empire in the nineteenth century. His deep sense of justice and honesty appealed to Laurier, who was induced to say of him that "Lord Minto is the most constitutional Governor we have had."<sup>6</sup> This remark did not mean that Minto was always amenable to Laurier's suggestions, for the latter also wrote that "When he [Minto] came to Canada first, he was absolutely untrained in constitutional practice...but he took his duties to heart, and became an effective Governor, if sometimes very stiff."<sup>7</sup>

There exists inevitably conflicting opinions as to Minto's relationship with Laurier. Dafoe, for example, is of the opinion that "Laurier had five years of more or less continuous struggle with Minto... who was sent to Canada in

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5. J. Buchan, Lord Minto: A Memoir, p. 106

6. Ibid., p. 178

7. Ibid., p. 123.

1898, to forward by every means in his power the Chamberlain policies", and that

with the outbreak of the South African War Lord Minto regarded himself less as a Governor-General than as Imperial Commissioner charged with the vague and shadowy powers that go with that office, and Sir Wilfrid had, in consequence, to instruct him on more than one occasion that Canada was still a self-governing country and not a military satrapy...<sup>8</sup>

Both Buchan and Garvin, on the other hand, suggest that not only was Minto not an imperialist protégé of Chamberlain's, but that he came more and more to appreciate the Canadian rather than the imperial point of view. A.B. Keith has written that "experience shows that he [the Governor-General] felt it to be at least as important a part of his duties to impress Dominion views on British ministers as British views on Dominion ministers".<sup>9</sup> Minto himself seems to have been aware of this and in 1902 he wrote that "I suppose my eyes have been opened by my life on the other side of the Atlantic, for I confess there is much that is very insular at home in ideas and knowledge of mankind."<sup>10</sup> At the same time Minto suggested that Chamberlain was not perhaps sufficiently aware of the colonial viewpoint:

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8. J.W. Dafoe, Laurier: A Study in Canadian Politics, (Toronto: 1922), pp.78-9, quoted in H.P. Gundy, "Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Lord Minto," 28.
  9. A.B. Keith, "Recent changes in Canada's Constitutional Status", C.H.R., IX (June, 1928), lll, quoted in G. Neuendorff, Studies in the Evolution of Dominion Status, p.lll.
  10. J. Buchan; Lord Minto: A Memoir, p. 199.

"He [Chamberlain] is a very strong man but not a sympathetic one, and therefore his colonial administration is not without risk."<sup>11</sup>

As Buchan says, "A Governor-General in an autonomous Dominion walks inevitably on a razor's edge".<sup>12</sup> He has to strive for political impartiality, providing, as he does, the key link between the Imperial and Dominion governments. During his term of office pressure was exerted upon Minto from both sides and especially from Chamberlain, but he was able to preserve both his own integrity and that of his office.

The circumstances of the time, and Minto's own interests, determined that the years 1898-1904 would be dominated by developments relating to defence. Of these the most important were the South African War and the question of Canadian participation, the reform of the Canadian militia, and the incidents concerning the General Officers Commanding, Hutton and Dundonald. These issues illustrate the conflict between imperial and Canadian defence requirements. Minto was to play an important part in each of them.

Canada was in no way prepared for the South African War and when the question arose as to the extent, if any, of her commitment in the struggle, the matter had to be determined as a matter of expediency rather than as one of policy. The Dominion was not constitutionally committed

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11. Ibid., 199.

12. Ibid., p. 121.

to go to war, and although various pressures were applied to involve Canada in the struggle the decision to do so was, in the final analysis, her own.

To many Canadians the Boer War was essentially a British affair, and as such it did not concern Canada. Allied to these isolationist tendencies were the indifference and ignorance with which many Canadians viewed the struggle. The extent to which enthusiasm for Canadian participation in the war was aroused varied from province to province. Nevertheless, it was to become apparent by the time of the Boer ultimatum that a large majority of Canadians were in favour of government action.

In March, 1899, the War Office and the Admiralty had raised the question of the right of the Imperial government to request the Canadian militia to serve outside Canada in time of war, and had received two surprisingly different interpretations of this authority from Laurier and Minto. The Governor-General was of the opinion, as had been Sir John A. Macdonald, that the Militia Act gave the Imperial government no power to move Canadian troops outside the North American continent. Laurier insisted, however, that Canadian troops could be moved anywhere provided they were required for the defence of Canada. As Minto said:

Sir Wilfrid Laurier's opinion as now given to me is a most important acceptance of the literal meaning of the Act by the Government of Canada. They no doubt feel themselves quite safe in their opinion, as there is not a single Regiment of the active Militia of the Dominion capable of

being sent as a Regiment on foreign service.<sup>13</sup>

As C.P. Stacey says, this example of Lord Minto arguing against the interests of the Imperial government provides a good example of his "rugged honesty and common sense".<sup>14</sup>

Laurier's interpretation of this point seemed to back up the encouraging speech he had made to the Imperial Institute during his visit to England in 1897 when he had pledged Canada's aid to Britain in time of danger:

"England has proved at all times that she can fight her own battles, but if a day were ever to come when England was in danger...whatever we can do will be done by the colonies to help her."<sup>15</sup> It is significant, however, that on both instances referred to there was little prospect of war, and when the situation in South Africa deteriorated Laurier explained to Minto that the Imperial government could not expect any help from Canada:

The present case does not seem to be one in which England, if there is war, ought to ask us, or even to expect us, to take a part; nor do I believe that it would add to the strength of the Imperial sentiment, to assert at this juncture that the colonies should assume the burden of military expenditure, except-which God forbid-in the case of pressing danger.<sup>16</sup>

This induced Minto to report to Chamberlain that "there is

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13. P.A.C., M.P., I, memorandum of March 27, 1899.

14. C.P. Stacey, "Canada and the Nile Expedition of 1884-85", C.H.R., XXXIII (December 1952), 330.

15. M.P., XX, 2.

16. J.L. Garvin, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, (London: Macmillan and Co., 1932), III, 530, Laurier to Minto, July 30, 1899.



no chance of a contingent being offered",<sup>17</sup> and the Governor-General seemed to accept Laurier's point of view at this juncture. On September 28th he wrote to his brother, Arthur Elliot, to the effect that:

From the point of view of a Canadian statesman I don't see why they should commit their country to the expenditure of lives and money for a quarrel not threatening Imperial safety and directly contrary to the opinion of a colonial government at the Cape.<sup>18</sup>

This feeling was not shared by the leader of the Opposition, Sir Charles Tupper, who, after returning from a visit to England where he had been informed by Chamberlain that the Imperial government would gladly accept Canadian troops in the event of war, spoke as follows at the Halifax Exhibition on the 7th September:

I believe they [the Liberal government] will be correctly interpreting the sentiments of the people of Canada if they avail themselves of every means for enlisting a regiment of stalwart Canadians to bear arms for Her Majesty's Government should it need them...Should the present Government adopt that important step, they can rely on the hearty co-operation of myself and the Conservative Opposition of the House of Commons.<sup>19</sup>

The importance of this speech was increased by the fact that Tupper had, in the past, strongly resisted any suggestion that Canada should be required to contribute to an imperial defence fund. Despite this offer of co-operation the government refused to offer a contingent and on September 28th the Department of Militia and Defence issued a circular expressly discouraging volunteers:

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17. Ibid., 531.

18. J. Buchan, Lord Minto: A Memoir, p. 136.

19. M.P., XX, 16-17.

In reply to your enquiry [private Canadian offers to volunteer for imperial service] I have the honour to state that the last news received from the War Office in London is to the effect that the Imperial authorities are not recruiting for the army and are not preparing any expedition (or recruits) for Africa...it would be fruitless to forward your application to England.<sup>20</sup>

This was the situation when, on July 31st, shortly before the close of the regular session of parliament, the government presented three resolutions tending to the Uitlanders and to the Imperial government Canada's moral support in the current South African crisis. The resolutions were unanimously accepted and on August 11th parliament was prorogued, no further steps having been taken on the issue. Nevertheless, Tupper was in no doubt that

Parliament at this time [following the acceptance of the resolutions] would have readily provided an appropriation for the sending of a contingent had the Government asked it to do so.<sup>21</sup>

The government did not act however, and they could provide substantial arguments for not doing so: any offer of Canadian troops for imperial service would arouse widespread antagonism in Quebec; the troops would not be used for the defence of Canada and there was no real danger to the mother country; Canada had not been consulted on the South African question and any commitment on her part might create a dangerous precedent.

On October 3rd however, the newspapers published a despatch from Toronto which read as follows:

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20. Ibid., 15.

21. Ibid., 12.

The Military Gazette, which is said to be in close touch with the head-quarters staff at Ottawa says in today's issue if war should be commenced in the Transvaal, which seems most probable, the offer of a force from the Canadian Militia for service will be made by the Canadian Government.<sup>22</sup>

The despatch added that "arrangements for organising such a force have been completed and the officers selected, so that when the order is given to concentrate no confusion or loss of time will be given".<sup>23</sup>

Laurier immediately repudiated the report, explaining that the government had no right to send a contingent without the approval of parliament, which was not in session. On the same day however the following important cable was received from Chamberlain. Although the terms were not immediately made public the gist of the cable was published in the British press:

Secretary of State for War and Commander-in-Chief desire to express high appreciation of signal exhibition of patriotic people of Canada shown by offers to serve in South Africa.<sup>24</sup>

The despatch was a circular sent to all the colonies who had offered troops, officially or unofficially. In its application to Canada it could be taken to refer to the individual offers already received by the United Kingdom. That Chamberlain was aware that no official offer of troops had been made by the Canadian government can be seen by

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22. Ibid., 25

23. Ibid., 25

24. Ibid., 26

his despatch of October 5th: "From Canada no definite offer has as yet reached Lord Lansdowne, but he understands that 1200 men are anxious to volunteer. Lord Lansdowne would be glad to accept 4 units of 125 men each".<sup>25</sup>

Nevertheless, the Canadian government was thus placed in a rather compromising position. In effect the government had either to tell the Imperial government that no offers could be accepted, or they could give official sanction to the individual Canadian offers already made. Further pressures were to force their hand and solve the dilemma.

On the 5th October Tupper made a speech urging the sending of a contingent and he sent a telegram to Laurier to the same effect: "I hope you will send a contingent of Canadian volunteers to aid England in the Transvaal. I know it will be warmly welcomed by the British government, be of great service to Canada and promote the unity of the Empire".<sup>26</sup>

On the same day news came that the Imperial government had officially accepted two hundred troops from Queensland and two hundred and fifty from New Zealand. Australian offers had, in fact, been made three months before the outbreak of war and the Imperial government had also received

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25. Ibid., 26.

26. Ibid., 57-8.

offers of troops from Jamaica, Trinidad, Malaya, Hong Kong and Lagos.<sup>27</sup> Canada had long been regarded as the premier Dominion, and with these offers "the pride of Canadians was touched by being forestalled".<sup>28</sup>

This fact was made even more obvious when the New York Tribune reported that "the Dominion [Canada] is the one important British colony which makes no offer of material aid to the Mother Country in the South African War."<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, public opinion in Canada was becoming increasingly critical of the government's inaction, and the Montreal Star, probably the most influential paper in Canada, launched a vigorous campaign to get a contingent sent to South Africa. The paper addressed telegrams to the mayors of many Canadian cities and, significantly, only in Quebec and other French-speaking areas, did they receive an unfavourable response to their enquiries.<sup>30</sup>

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27. J.L. Garvin, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, III, 528.

28. W.S. Evans, The Canadian Contingents and Canadian Imperialism, (Toronto: The Publisher's Syndicate, 1901), p. 12.

29. M.P., XX, 59.

30. For examples of the French Canadian reaction to the Dominion's participation in the South African War see pp. 111-12. The attachments of the average French-Canadian to the British Empire were, like those of Laurier, more academic than emotional, and opposition to participation was consequently more emphatic.

Chamberlain, meanwhile, was becoming alarmed at the senior Dominion's failure to offer help. He wrote to Minto explaining that the whole point of any Canadian offer would be lost unless it were endorsed by the government, and applied to an organised body of colonial forces.<sup>31</sup> He did not have to wait long. On the 10th October war began and two days later Laurier made a hurried return from Chicago. A stormy Cabinet meeting ensued and on the 13th October Minto was able to cable to Chamberlain the news that the government had formally consented to send a contingent to the war: "Much pleasure in telling you that my Government offers 1,000 infantry on organisation proposed in your telegram of October 3rd."<sup>32</sup> An Order-in-Council issued on the 14th elaborated upon the offer which was gratefully accepted by the Imperial government: "Her Majesty's Government have received with much pleasure your telegram of October 13th., conveying Canada's generous offer of 1,000 troops, which they gratefully accept."<sup>33</sup>

For Chamberlain the Canadian offer was of the utmost significance. The unity of the Empire had been immeasurably strengthened by this offer of the premier Dominion. In a

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31. M.P., XIV, Chamberlain to Minto, October 7, 1899.

32. M.P., XX, 61.

33. Ibid., 61.

letter to Minto on the 15th October he expressed his jubilitation in no uncertain terms:

The desire thus exhibited to share in the risks and burdens of Empire has been welcomed not only as a proof of the staunch loyalty of the Dominion and of its sympathy with the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government in South Africa, but also as an expression of that growing feeling of the unity and solidarity of the Empire which has marked the relations of the Mother Country with the Colonies during recent years.<sup>34</sup>

In a later communication with Minto Chamberlain expressed the opinion that "all's well that ends well."<sup>35</sup> He explained that he was aware of the difficulties that Laurier had to face, and he was glad he had been able to overcome them.

One of the problems facing the government was the possibility that their active commitment to war would create a precedent for action in future British wars. This problem seems to have been taken care of however in the section of the Order-in-Council which read as follows:

The Prime Minister, in view of the well-known desire of a great many Canadians who are ready to take service under such conditions, is of opinion that the moderate expenditure which would thus be involved for the equipment and transportation of such volunteers may readily be undertaken by the Government of Canada without summoning Parliament, especially as such an expenditure, under such circumstances, cannot be regarded as a departure from the well-known principles of constitutional government and colonial practice, nor construed as a precedent for future action.<sup>36</sup>

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34. Ibid., 62A.

35. M.P., XIV, Chamberlain to Minto, October 29, 1899.

36. W.S. Evans, The Canadian Contingents and Canadian Imperialism, p. 66.

The government's decision, once made, was readily implemented, despite the fact that the Canadian military organisation, geared as it was to the defence of Canada, was hardly prepared to face such a contingency. The first troops left Canada on the 30th October and the unit, composed of volunteers from militia units, was designated the 2nd Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment. In his address to the departing troops Minto mentioned that "the people of Canada had shown that they had no inclination to discuss the quibbles of colonial responsibility",<sup>37</sup> but his statement received no adverse comment and on November 2nd the Canadian government offered a second contingent. After several reverses in the war the offer was gratefully accepted by the Imperial government and a preference for infantry was expressed, although the composition of the force was left to the judgement of the Dominion government. The contingent consisted of two battalions of Mounted Rifles and a brigade of field artillery.

In addition to these overseas contingents Lord Strathcona,<sup>38</sup> the Canadian High Commissioner in London, raised at his own expense a unit of mounted rifles known as Strathcona's Horse, and as the war dragged on further Canadian offers were accepted by the Imperial government:

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37. J. Buchan, Lord Minto: A Memoir, p. 143.

38. Sir Donald Alexander Smith, 1st. Baron Strathcona, (1820-1914), Canadian High Commissioner in England, 1896-1914.



early in 1901 the Canadian government authorised the enlistment in Canada of men for the South African Constabulary and towards the end of the year a contingent known as the "Canadian Mounted Rifles" sailed for Cape Town. A further contingent was sent late in 1902, but it did not arrive before the end of the war.

In Canada itself a further indirect contribution was made towards the war. Early in 1900 the Canadian government approached the Imperial government with a view to taking over the imperial garrison at Halifax and so releasing the troops stationed there for active service. On March 2nd, 1900, the take-over was accomplished and the Halifax garrison proceeded to South Africa.

In all, Canada provided 7,368 officers and men for service in South Africa, and 1,004 for garrison duty in Halifax, a total of 8,372. Including the Halifax garrison, 3,499 men were raised at Canadian expense.<sup>39</sup> Although Tupper argued that Canada could have been more generous financially, Laurier pointed out that the War Office had stipulated that, once in South Africa, all troops were to be paid by the Imperial government.<sup>40</sup>

When the Canadian parliament, which had been

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39. G.F.G. Stanley, Canada's Soldiers, (Toronto: The Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1960,)p.282.

40. M.P., XX, 66.

prorogued on the 8th August, 1899, met again on February 1st, 1900, the crucial decisions regarding the South African situation had already been taken - it remained only to censure or approve of these actions. Although parliament willingly voted the necessary expenses incurred by the raising and sending of the troops the government soon found itself under fire for its actions. A popular belief was that the government had not willingly participated in the war:

The insistent demands of a majority of the people, the danger to domestic harmony of longer delay, and the positive state of expectancy of the Imperial authorities, probably made the decision [to send troops] one of expediency rather than of principle.<sup>41</sup>

During the debates in parliament the government was usually on the defensive being attacked not only by the Opposition, but also by some French Canadian Liberals. Laurier, speaking in the House on 5th February explained that from a constitutional point of view the position of the Government was untenable:

From the constitutional point of view our position is weak, from the constitutional point of view our position might be absolutely indefensible. In fact there is no defence for it; we are without the law; our only justification is what I said a moment ago - that we knew that, in acting as we did against the provisions of constitutional government, we were simply carrying out what was the will and desire of the Canadian people.<sup>42</sup>

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41. W.S. Evans, The Canadian Contingents and Canadian Imperialism, p. 37.

42. Dominion of Canada, House of Commons Debates, 1900, I, February 5, 71.

The constitutional technicalities of the sending of troops is rather confusing. However, the position of the government was well put by the Minister of Justice, Mr. Mills, in his speech in the Senate on February 6th:

We know well that the Government had no legal authority to propose to send a contingent or propose meeting the expenses of the contingent, otherwise than it felt sure that by a bill of indemnity Parliament would hold it harmless from all expenditure which might be so incurred; and so we adopted a rule, which has been adopted in emergencies in England, and that is the constitutional rule of seeking the support of public opinion in anticipation of the approval which will be subsequently given by Parliament.<sup>43</sup>

The government was in an extremely compromising position. The Conservatives attacked the administration saying that it had acted too slowly and that the decision to send troops had been a result of irresistible public pressure rather than government policy. The French Canadians, on the other hand, accused the government of acting too hastily. On October 18th, 1899, Henri Bourassa<sup>44</sup> had resigned his seat in the House of Commons as a protest against the sending of troops and Israel Tarte<sup>45</sup> refuted Laurier's argument that, in sending her troops to South Africa, Canada

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43. W.S. Evans, The Canadian Contingents and Canadian Imperialism, p.65.

44. Henri Bourassa, (1868-1952), journalist and politician. Founder of the nationalist newspaper, Le Devoir.

45. Joseph Israel Tarte, (1848-1907), Minister of Public Works, 1896-1902.

had acted of her own free will:

It is very well to say that the people of Canada or of other colonies have this time made a voluntary offer. In point of fact, the Secretary of State for the Colonies sent a circular to all the Colonies the meaning of which is an invitation to send troops. In my opinion such an invitation means practically a request.<sup>46</sup>

The French Canadian attack on the government continued, and on March 13th, Bourassa moved a motion to the effect that

This House further declares that it opposes any change in the political and military relations which exist at present between Canada and Great Britain unless such change is initiated by the sovereign will of parliament and sanctioned by the people of Canada.<sup>47</sup>

In replying to this resolution, which was easily defeated, Laurier delivered his famous speech in which he stated that if Canada was to take part in British wars she must be consulted, and assume responsibilities as well as burdens. This speech was wrongly, though understandably, interpreted in Britain as being an invitation to press for closer unity of the Empire:

We were not forced by England, we were not forced by Mr. Chamberlain or by Downing St...We acted in the full independence of our sovereign power. What we did we did of our own free will...If we were to be compelled to take part in all the wars of Great Britain, I have no hesitation in saying that I agree with my honorable friend [Bourassa] that, sharing the burden, we should also share the responsibility. Under that condition of things,

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46. M.P., XX, 64.

47. Dominion of Canada, House of Commons Debates, 1900, I, March 13, 1837.

which does not exist, we should have the right to say to Great Britain: If you want us to help you, call us to your Councils; if you want us to take part in wars let us share not only the burdens but the responsibilities and duties as well.<sup>48</sup>

The great question of Canada's relationship within the Empire had been emphatically raised by the South African War, but the parliamentary debates on this issue were inconclusive. Neither of the major parties had, as yet, formulated any clear ideas on the subject and the debates had taken on a very partisan character. Nevertheless, it seemed to Chamberlain and many others that imperial unity, for so long a topic for debate and theorising, had now become embodied in practical achievement.

Minto expressed the opinion that the sending of the contingents marked a new epoch in the history of the Dominion<sup>49</sup>, and Chamberlain, in a speech to the British House of Commons on January 30th, 1900, explained that an important advance towards imperial unity had been made:

A sense of common interest, of common duty, an assurance of mutual support in the great edifice in which they are all members, have combined to consolidate and establish the unity of the Empire...and we are advancing steadily, if slowly, to the realisation of that great federation of our race which will inevitably make for peace and liberty and justice.<sup>50</sup>

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48. Ibid., 1845.

49. M.P., XX, 68.

50. J.L. Garvin, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, III, 543.

Speaking in 1902, the Secretary of State for War, St. John Brodrick, was to make an even more far-reaching claim: "The dream of Colonial Federation, which so many statesman had entertained for so many years had been made a reality by the Boer War."<sup>51</sup>

There was obviously no uniformity of opinion in Canada regarding the Dominion's participation in the South African War. Nevertheless, imperialist sentiment in both Canada and Great Britain was undoubtedly strengthened by this example of imperial co-operation. As in the First World War, however, conflict was to stimulate the growth of a dual nationalism - pride in membership of the Empire, and pride also in the fact that Canada was emerging on the international scene. Allied to this growing national self-consciousness was the fear that Canadian interests would be identified with those of Britain and the awareness that any strengthening of imperial ties might diminish the ever-increasing stature of the Dominion.

In many respects then the Boer War marked a vital turning point in Canada's relations with the mother country. Active imperialism had now become a reality. Very shortly a decision would have to be made whether the path towards centralisation under the auspices of Chamberlain was to be adhered to, or whether Canada was to chart a more independent course.

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51. J. Castell Hopkins, The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1902, (Toronto: Annual Review Publishing Co., 1903), p. 46.

## Chapter IV

### Part II. The General Officer Commanding

Although the Hutton and Dundonald incidents have received much attention, the history of the position of General Officer Commanding from its inception in 1874 was not a happy one, and "nearly all the General Officers Commanding had serious differences with the Ministers of the day."<sup>1</sup> This difficulty stemmed to a large extent from the constitutional position of the General Officer Commanding, the definition of which led to several conflicting interpretations.

The position was defined in the Militia Act of 1887 as that of "an officer holding the rank of Colonel... in Her Majesty's regular army, who shall be charged under the order of Her Majesty with the command and discipline of the Militia..."<sup>2</sup> A further section of the Act explicitly stated that in matters of militia expenditure the authority of the Minister of Militia and Defence was paramount, but the powers of the General Officer Commanding were nevertheless inadequately defined.

It had been hoped that to have the General Officer Commanding as an imperial officer working for the Canadian government would remove the possibility of Canadian politics affecting his decisions. From this point of view the move

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1. G.F.G. Stanley, Canada's Soldiers, (Toronto: The Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1960), p.260.
  2. N. Penlington, "General Hutton and the Problem of Military Imperialism in Canada, 1898-1900", C.H.R., XXIV (June, 1943), 159.

was quite successful but the General Officers Commanding often thought of themselves as being responsible to the Imperial rather than the Dominion government. Allied to this liberal interpretation of his powers was the unfamiliarity of the General Officer Commanding with Canadian conditions, and the short duration of his appointment.

In view of these difficulties it is hardly surprising that the position of the General Officer Commanding proved to be a constant source of friction, and with the appointment of Major-General E.T.H. Hutton to the post in 1898 matters inevitably came to a head. Hutton, a gifted soldier and an ardent imperialist, had, prior to his Canadian appointment, achieved great success as General Officer Commanding in New South Wales. He was convinced of the need for the colonies to participate in a unified scheme of empire defence, and he was determined to achieve this aim in Canada. Hutton's convictions were reinforced by determination, conceit and pride and "these three characteristics...were not only prominent, they were most influential in determining the course of the conflict which occurred between Hutton and the Canadian Government".<sup>3</sup>

It was regarded as more than a coincidence that Minto and Hutton both took up posts in Canada at a time when Chamberlain was vigorously pursuing his campaign for

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3. R.J. Aubrey, Major-General E.T.H. Hutton, (Carleton University: B.A. essay, April, 1957), p.8.



closer military collaboration within the Empire. Consequently shortly after his arrival in Canada Hutton was interviewed by a representative of the Mail and Empire who asked him whether these appointments were, in fact, connected with the Imperial government's plans for defence. Hutton's reply was both moderate and discreet, and gave no hint of future trouble:

Any change, alteration, or development which may be conceived or carried out as regards the Canadian forces is purely one for the Canadian Government. The General Officer Commanding carries out the policy indicated to him by the people speaking through their representatives.<sup>4</sup>

Hutton realised however that there was much to be done and many difficulties to be overcome. The first of these difficulties was Canadian apathy towards the militia - an attitude induced in part by the Dominion's concentration on internal development and partly by the protection afforded to Canada by the United States. As Laurier told the last General Officer Commanding, the Earl of Dundonald, "You must not take the Militia seriously... as the Monroe Doctrine protects against enemy aggression."<sup>5</sup> A further factor working against any reorganisation of Canada's defences was the infiltration of politics into the military system - a factor of which Minto had already

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4. W.S. Evans, The Canadian Contingents and Canadian Imperialism, (Toronto: The Publisher's Syndicate, 1901), p.51.

5. N. Penlington, "General Hutton and the Problem of Military Imperialism in Canada, 1898-1900", 156.

become painfully aware during his term of office as Military Secretary.<sup>6</sup>

Hutton was convinced however, that only by a liberal interpretation of his own position could the abuses in the militia be eradicated. Within four months of his arrival he was insisting that "if any system of sound military administration is to replace that which exists, it can only be by placing in the hands of the General Officer Commanding his legitimate functions".<sup>7</sup> His views on the militia were clearly expressed in his annual report for 1898. The report, written in very forthright terms, also elaborated upon the reforms he hoped to initiate, and to his surprise it received unanimous approval upon presentation to the House of Commons.

Canada in 1898 paid the lowest per capita military tax in the world - 33 cents per head.<sup>8</sup> It is not surprising therefore that Hutton considered the existing state of affairs in the militia to be utterly inadequate:

The existing condition of the military forces of the Dominion can only be characterised as unsatisfactory in the extreme...The Militia system is not, under the existing system, an army, in its true sense; it is but a collection of military units without cohesion, without staff, and without those military departments by which an army is moved, fed, or administered to in sickness.<sup>9</sup>

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6. See Chapter I.

7. G.F.G. Stanley, Canada's Soldiers, p.292.

8. N. Penlington, "General Hutton and the Problem of Military Imperialism in Canada, 1898-1900", 156.

9. Dominion of Canada, Sessional Papers, 1898, No. 19, Report of the Department of Militia and Defence, 1899, 38.

He did confess, however, that he had "been much impressed by the general excellence of the Permanent Force of the Dominion"<sup>10</sup> He added that without a great deal of increased expenditure the force could be considerably improved, if only proper organisation was adopted. He emphasised again that he was entitled to far wider powers than he actually possessed:

The Civil branch has usurped many of the functions of the Military command, thus reducing the powers of the General in Command, while leaving him his responsibilities as the military head under, and as the military adviser to the Minister of Defence.<sup>11</sup>

Hutton wanted to transform the militia into a national army which would serve a double purpose. It would obviously provide defence for Canada itself, but it should also "be capable of contributing to the military defence of the British Empire".<sup>12</sup> As part of this scheme Hutton was in favour of developing a mobile field force which could rapidly be sent anywhere within the Empire.

The acceptance of the report brought to a close a relatively harmonious period in the relations between Hutton and the Canadian government. Hutton had pursued his aims with vigour and determination, but there had been little indication of the political explosion which was to ensue. To a certain extent this relative harmony was a reflection of the government's continuing indifference to militia affairs,

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10. Ibid., 26.

11. Ibid., 41.

12. Ibid., 42.

but Hutton nevertheless felt extremely encouraged.

The turning point in Hutton's relations with the Laurier government came with the announcement in the Canadian Military Gazette on October 3rd, 1899, that Canada was offering a contingent of troops for service in South Africa.<sup>13</sup>

Although there is no evidence to suggest that Hutton had anything to do with the article, the opinions expressed certainly coincided with his own, and some members of the Cabinet suspected that he was deliberately trying to force their hand. "From this time on, members of the Government, the Prime Minister in particular, began to criticize Hutton's actions whenever an opportunity arose."<sup>14</sup>

Hutton, convinced that his policies were on the verge of being vindicated, found an ally in Minto, who agreed with him that the influence of politics on military affairs was a key to the trouble. Minto's position hampered his actions somewhat however, and it was not until the question of Hutton's dismissal arose that his own relations with the government became difficult. Hutton's relations with Borden were rapidly deteriorating however and he also involved himself in a damaging quarrel with Colonel S. Hughes. This quarrel not only lost Hutton the support of an ardent imperialist, but it also cost him much of his popularity.

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13. See Chapter IV, part I.

14. R.J. Aubrey, Major-General E.T.H. Hutton, p.42.

With the active participation of Canada in the South African War the question of imperial military collaboration had become a reality and the previous indifference of the Canadian government gave way to profound concern. Major-General Hutton presented an increasingly awkward problem and the opportunity to get rid of him soon presented itself. The immediate cause of Hutton's recall arose from three incidents: "First, from the organisation of the second contingent, secondly from that of the Strathcona Horse; and thirdly, from the startling discovery of secret instructions to officials of the Militia Department."<sup>15</sup>

In January, 1900, Hutton was given the job of forming a regiment of mounted infantrymen for the second contingent and he appointed a committee under Colonel Kitson<sup>16</sup>, the Commandant of the Royal Military College at Kingston, to supervise purchases in the open market. Borden, suspecting that preference might be shown to Conservative horse-dealers, appointed a Liberal member of parliament to report on the purchases. An aggrieved Hutton approached Laurier on the issue and explained in the course of an interview that he was only trying to raise the latent military enthusiasm in the militia and to strengthen Canadian patriotism to the Empire. The Prime Minister replied that he "could see little difference

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15. N. Penlington, "General Hutton and the problem of Military Imperialism in Canada, 1898-1900", 156.

16. Lieutenant-Colonel Gerald Charles Kitson, (1856-1950), Commandant Royal Military College, Kingston, 1896-1900; Military Attaché in Washington 1900-02; Commandant at Sandhurst, 1902-07; Quartermaster-General in India, 1909-12.

between inculcating patriotism and arousing military enthusiasm, and party politics."<sup>17</sup>

At the same time Lord Strathcona appointed Hutton to prepare the regiment to be known as Strathcona's Horse. The government made sure, however, that the force would be composed to their liking and Hutton again felt himself slighted. The government was by now convinced of the necessity of Hutton's recall. Despite Minto's protests Laurier was adamant and his position was strengthened by Borden's revelation that, unknown to him, Hutton had, over a year earlier, adopted a dual set of orders: one set was to be forwarded to Borden; the other was concerned with matters over which Hutton was convinced he had control, and the minister was not consulted about them. As Borden rightly argued, there was no justification for this action of Hutton's.

Minto was nevertheless convinced that the whole controversy was essentially a personal one between Borden and Hutton and he urged Laurier to avoid the far-reaching step of pressing for Hutton's recall. The Prime Minister remained unconvinced however and he informed Strathcona that Hutton "was meddlesome, ignores the authority of the Minister, and constantly acts as one who holds himself independent of civil authority."<sup>18</sup> Relations between the Prime Minister

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17. J. Buchan, Lord Minto: A Memoir, (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1924), p.146.

18. N. Penlington, "General Hutton and the problem of Military Imperialism in Canada, 1898-1900", 167.

and the Governor-General were becoming strained at this stage as Minto determined to stand by Hutton. The arguments of the two were based on their varying interpretations of the position of the General Officer Commanding.

On January 20th, Minto submitted a memorandum, intended for a select committee of the Cabinet, in which he emphasised the dangers of political interference in the militia and protested against the recent behaviour of Borden. This memoranda, which was seen by the entire Cabinet, brought forth a strong reply from the government. Although the Governor-General then modified his views he still thought that the demand for Hutton's recall was "based on the mistaken view [of the Government] of the relative positions of the Minister of Militia and the General Officer Commanding."<sup>19</sup> Minto even went so far as to indicate to Chamberlain that he would accept the government's resignation on the issue.<sup>20</sup> In a lengthy reply the government maintained its stand that the General Officer Commanding was completely subordinate to the Minister of Militia, and expressed regret "that your Excellency should approve of the conduct of an officer appointed under a Canadian statute, upon their advice, when his official conduct only serves to hamper and embarrass the Minister."<sup>21</sup>

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19. R.J. Aubrey, Major-General E.T.H. Hutton, p.77.

20. J. Buchan, Lord Minto: A Memoir, pp.146-7.

21. R.J. Aubrey, Major-General E.T.H. Hutton, p.77

On the 7th February an Order-in-Council was passed asking for Hutton's recall. Minto agreed to ratify the Order but, against the wishes of both Laurier and Chamberlain, he determined to make the government fully responsible for their action by submitting a formal protest:

It would be a great mistake to push an advocacy of the General's position to extremes. Though he has many supporters, anything like an attempt to over-press the Government to retain him would in all probability be taken as unjustifiable imperial pressure and be resented accordingly, so that there seemed to be no doubt as to my signing the request to H.M.'s Government for the General's recall. But it also appeared to me that considering the manner in which other Generals have disappeared from Canada with no apparent reason placed before the public, it was right that my Government should accept the official responsibility for their General's removal.<sup>22</sup>

On the 9th February Hutton was informed by the Imperial government that he was elected for active service in South Africa<sup>23</sup> and he was ordered home. The following day he handed in his resignation, which was accepted, and the affair seemed to be closed. Unfortunately, however, shortly before leaving Canada, Hutton made two speeches attacking the government. In the second of these he allegedly accused the government of indifference towards the militia and explained that his recall was due, not to personal animosities, but to "broader, wider and vastly more important issues".<sup>24</sup>

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22. J. Buchan, Lord Minto: A Memoir, p.148.

23. Minto was to write to Chamberlain that Hutton's appointment to the command of the colonial mounted troops in South Africa was regarded as a "slap in the face" by the Canadian government. P.A.C., M.P., XIV, Minto to Chamberlain, May 12, 1900.

24. R.J. Aubrey, Major-General E.T.H. Hutton, p.81.



The question was brought up in the Canadian House of Commons and Laurier, in reply to the charges brought against the government, spoke as follows:

The causes of difference between the Government and General Hutton were not over any broad questions of general policy; the causes of difference were that General Hutton was insubordinate and indiscreet, and deliberately ignored the authority of the minister in the administration of the department.<sup>25</sup>

Neither the British nor the Canadian governments wished to make any more of the matter, but it was impossible to ignore the problems which the Hutton incident had once more brought to the fore. On the question of Canadian and imperial defence an over-zealous imperial officer had clashed with an indifferent Canadian government and the issue could no longer be quickly ignored. Obviously, too, the position of the General Officer Commanding needed to be more closely defined. This was not immediately done however, and along with the problem of political patronage in the militia, it brought about another crisis involving the General Officer Commanding. The Canadian and Imperial governments still maintained differing views of the position and importance of the General Officer Commanding, and in May, 1900, Chamberlain wrote to Minto the effect that

The officer in command of the defensive forces in Canada should have a freer hand in matters essential to the discipline and efficiency of the militia than would be proper in the case of an ordinary civil servant, even of the highest position.<sup>26</sup>

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25. Ibid., p.81.

26. Ibid., p.84.

The Hutton incident had also seen a renewed desire to have a Canadian Officer as General Officer Commanding and Borden, speaking in the House of Commons shortly after the departure of Hutton, announced that "the time has come when we should enlarge the field from which we draw our commanding officers...we...should be able to put a Canadian officer in that position if we choose".<sup>27</sup> The Imperial authorities were not of the same opinion however, and the Canadian government agreed to wait. It was to need another crisis before this very necessary reform was inaugurated.

Hutton's immediate successor, Major-General R.H. O'Grady Haly was only a temporary appointment, but he proved to be very popular in Canada and for virtually the first time there was almost unanimous approval of his conduct and administration. On July 1st, 1902, he was replaced by Lord Dundonald, a professional soldier whose exploits in the South African War had made him a popular public figure. He had been chosen by Brodrick, the Secretary of State for War, as a man who would be able to secure the necessary reforms in the Canadian militia while at the same time remaining acceptable to the Canadian government. These hopes were to prove unduly optimistic for Dundonald had certain personal characteristics which made friction inevitable, being egoistical, extremely sensitive and possessing "a touch of the theatrical".<sup>28</sup>

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27. Dominion of Canada, House of Commons Debates, 1900, I, February 13, 1900, 339.

28. J. Buchan, Lord Minto: A Memoir, p. 150.

Allied to these weaknesses was his failure to observe the following warning, given to him before his departure by Chamberlain:

Hitherto, those who have accepted the position of General Officer Commanding have almost invariably come into conflict with the local authorities. It is not, in my opinion, a matter of blame to them, but it arises from the difference of appreciation between British officers accustomed to our system and Colonial politicians proceeding on other lines.<sup>29</sup>

However, coming as he did in the wake of O'Grady Haly's successful term of office, Dundonald was enthusiastically received in Canada, and he expressed the moderate opinion that he had come to "make and maintain an efficient military force composed of men who are not paid for their services."<sup>30</sup>

The bulk of the press was friendly, but on September 4th a note of warning was sounded by the editorial of The Montreal Herald:

Dundonald apparantly shares a delusion dear to Hutton. He seems to think the people of Canada are concerned about being in readiness for war, or that if they are not they are to be blamed and should be stirred up. Any man who thinks that way - and all soldiers do - fail to grasp the essential distinction between Europe and North America. With Europe war is a condition. With us it is a theory.<sup>31</sup>

Nevertheless, Dundonald plunged into the task of militia reform and he proved to be both successful and popular. He realised that the basic organisation needed to make a citizen army efficient in time of war did not yet

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29. G.F.G. Stanley, Canada's Soldiers, p. 294.

30. J. Castell Hopkins, The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1902, (Toronto: Annual Review Publishing Co., 1903), p.192.

31. Ibid., p. 193.

exist, but under his guidance the necessary reform proceeded satisfactorily.<sup>32</sup> Like Hutton, Dundonald emphasised the need to provide not only an effective force for the defence of Canada, but also for possible commitment within the Empire:

I need not dwell upon the vast importance of doing everything in our power to strengthen the sentimental connection between the Great Colonies and the Mother Country, and above all between the military forces of the Colonies and the Imperial Army.<sup>33</sup>

As late as the spring of 1904 there were no apparent signs of strain between Dundonald and the Canadian government. Indeed, the harmonious relations between the General Officer Commanding and the government developed by O'Grady Haly seemed to have been firmly consolidated. On January 11th the editorial in The Montreal Herald ran as follows:

Though Lord Dundonald's term in Canada has been comparatively short he has been active and has made the most valuable plans for the reorganisation of Canada's Militia which the Minister, Sir Frederick Borden, is arranging to have carried out, in part if not in whole. Throughout his command the hand of Lord Dundonald has been felt rather than seen. His recommendations have gone to the Minister as they should and have been given to the public by Sir Frederick in the regular way. The services of Lord Dundonald have been acknowledged by the Minister and the public has all along known whose was the expert hand in the preparations.<sup>34</sup>

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32. For an account of Dundonald's recommendations and the reforms implemented during his term of office see chapter III.

33. G.F.G. Stanley, Canada's Soldiers, p. 298.

34. J. Castell Hopkins, The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1904, p.111.

The Toronto Star bestowed even higher praise on Dundonald: "The General Officer Commanding so far, has shown a judicious deference to local sentiment. He is, in fact, the most competent, the most distinguished and the most diplomatic General Officer Commanding that Great Britain ever sent to Canada".<sup>35</sup>

In actual fact Dundonald's relations with the government, and with Borden in particular, were by no means as harmonious as they appeared to be. The General Officer Commanding had strongly resented the suppression of part of his 1902 report<sup>36</sup> and the re-editing of his report of 1903. Many of his proposals, such as the request for increased estimates and for the construction of fortifications on the United States border, were flatly rejected, and he was becoming increasingly exasperated with the growing evidence of political interference in the militia.

On March 9th a report of differences between Borden and Dundonald was broadcast through the press and was immediately refuted by both of them. On the 5th November, however, Bourassa attacked Dundonald in the House of Commons, explaining that it was the minister's job and not Dundonald's to define the military policy of Canada. If the General

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35. Ibid., pp.113-4.

36. Dominion of Canada, House of Commons Debates, 1903, VI, October 8th, 13422.

Officer Commanding did not agree, then "we are in the presence of a struggle between an irresponsible official of the Government and the responsible head of the Department".<sup>37</sup>

In his contribution to the discussion Laurier praised Dundonald but emphasised that he was answerable to the Minister. Borden however praised the General Officer Commanding, calling him

A man of sound sense and judgement, who was here for the purpose, not of self-aggrandisement, not of playing to the gallery and having his name sounded on every possible opportunity, but of developing the forces he found into one of the best fighting forces on earth.<sup>38</sup>

Nevertheless, Colonel L. Pinault, the Deputy Minister of Militia, stated in The Ottawa Citizen on June 17th that differences had occurred between himself and the General Officer Commanding and on March 17th proposed changes in the Militia Act were announced in the House of Commons. Not only did Dundonald oppose many of the suggested changes, but the clauses pertaining to the General Officer Commanding seemed to provide a veiled threat to his own position.

The final element leading to Hutton's dismissal was provided by the exposure in the summer of 1904 of further political interference in the militia. A new regiment, the 13th Scottish Dragoons, was being raised in the Eastern Townships, the constituency of the Minister of Agriculture,

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37. J. Castell Hopkins, The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1904, p.408.

38. Ibid., p. 410.

S. Fisher<sup>39</sup>, who was temporarily acting as Minister of the Militia. Among the names of officers submitted for approval was that of Dr. Pickel, a prominent Conservative, and his name was scratched out by Fisher on his own responsibility. The issue was not brought to light until Dundonald, in a sensational speech at a military banquet in Montreal on 4th June, elaborated upon what had happened:

Recently, gentlemen, a gross instance of political interference has occurred. I sent a list of officers of the 13th light Dragoons to be gazetted ...I was astonished to receive the list back with the name of one officer scratched out and initialled by the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Sydney Fisher. That gentleman is a man I considered well equipped to serve the King in the 13th Scottish Regiment - Dr. Pickel...I have been two years in Ottawa, gentlemen. It is not on personal grounds that I inform you of this, but it is on national grounds. I feel, gentlemen, anxious, profoundly anxious, that the Militia of Canada may be kept free from party politics.<sup>40</sup>

When Dundonald's remarks were published his position became untenable. The General Officer Commanding was undoubtedly right in suspecting political interference but the regulations of the British Army prohibited "deliberations or discussions by officers or soldiers with the object of conveying praise, censure, or any mark of approbation towards their superiors or any others in His Majesty's service".<sup>41</sup>

The regulations of the Canadian Militia were even more explicit on this point:

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39. Sydney Arthur Fisher, (1850-1921), Minister of Agriculture for Canada, 1896-1911,

40. J. Castell Hopkins, The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1904, p.116.

41. Ibid., p.125.

It cannot be permitted that officers shall bring accusations against superior officers or comrades before the tribunal of public opinion, either by speech or letters inserted in newspapers, such a proceeding being in glaring violation of the rules of military discipline and in contempt of authority.<sup>42</sup>

Dundonald had, therefore, committed a flagrant breach of discipline and the government was well within its rights in demanding his dismissal.

Unfortunately Dundonald, unlike Hutton, had not hesitated to cultivate both the Press and the Opposition. Thus, although the Liberals concentrated upon the constitutional aspect of the affair the Conservatives supported Dundonald and emphasised his exposure of political interference. The issue became, to a certain extent, a party issue, and arguments became very partisan. There was little doubt however, that the Order-in-Council calling for Dundonald's dismissal would be passed and on June 14th Minto gave it his approval. In a private memoranda on the subject the Governor-General wrote:

I entirely agree with my Government as to the immediate necessity of Dundonald's dismissal. As to their support of Fisher I entirely disagree with them; but surely the question as to whether public departments are to be run on political lines is not one to be settled by the Governor-General, but by the Dominion Parliament and the people of Canada...I don't care a damn what anyone says, and have not a shadow of doubt this is right.<sup>43</sup>

Minto resisted the pressure of Dundonald and others to make a political campaign out of the issue, although he

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42. Ibid., p.125.

43. J. Buchan, Lord Minto: A Memoir, p.151.



vainly suggested to Laurier that Fisher's resignation should be asked for as a warning against political interference in the Militia. On this particular aspect of the incident Minto entirely disagreed with Fisher's action, "though he was acting in accordance with Canadian custom".<sup>44</sup> He nevertheless insisted that it was for the Canadian government to find the solution to this problem. Skelton is of the opinion that Minto was more aware of his constitutional position in 1904 than he had been in 1900<sup>45</sup>, but in Minto's mind there was no doubt that whereas in Dundonald's case the government was in the right, over the Hutton incident the government had deliberately fashioned things to meet its own ends.

Dundonald rashly appealed to the press and the public. He described the Fisher episode as "the final incident in a long list of various phases of obstruction",<sup>46</sup> and he accused Canadians of living, as a result of government policy, in a fool's paradise. In 1905 he was reported in The Dublin Freeman's Journal as being of the opinion that political interference was the sole cause of his dismissal: "The facts are that my disagreement with the Government of Canada arose solely from my determination not to allow appointments in the Militia to be influenced by political considerations."<sup>47</sup>

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44. M.P., XXI, 74.

45. O.D. Skelton, review of J. Buchan's Lord Minto: A Memoir, C.H.R., VI (1925), 66.

46. J. Castell Hopkins, The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1904, pp.126-7.

47. Ibid., 1905, p.517.

Dundonald's case was taken up in the House of Commons by the leader of the Opposition, R.L. Borden<sup>48</sup>, who condemned the government for its action and made the dismissal of the General Officer Commanding subsidiary to the charge brought against the government of political interference in the Militia. F.D. Monk<sup>49</sup>, the French Canadian M.P. for Jacques Cartier, claimed that Dundonald was "recognised in the Province of Quebec as having been probably the most sympathetic, the most earnest, the most capable Commander we have had in this country"<sup>50</sup>. He also made the point that Fisher was only acting Minister of Militia and that full authority had never actually been conferred upon him. The Liberals, however, successfully maintained their argument that the military power should, and must, remain subservient to the civil power.

Perhaps the most devastating aspect of the whole affair was yet to come however for Dundonald, just before leaving Canada, went to receptions at Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa, and was given a tumultuous reception in each city.

The British Weekly claimed that:

The demonstrations at Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa, were more remarkable and were based on something far deeper and more permanent than mere political feeling. Had such a result been anticipated the Government would

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48. Sir Robert Laird Borden, (1854-1937), chosen leader of the Conservative Opposition in parliament, 1901; Prime Minister, 1911-20.
49. Frederick Debartzch Monk, (1856-1914), Minister of Public Works for Canada, 1911-12; leader of the Liberal-Conservative party in Quebec, 1900-04.
50. J. Castell Hopkins, The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1904, p.131.

never have allowed the quarrel to go so far.<sup>51</sup>

The Globe, on the other hand, claimed that the meetings were deliberate, premeditated, political acts, instigated by the General Officer Commanding.<sup>52</sup>

There was, nevertheless, general concern in Canada that the Dundonald affair should not adversely affect Canadian relations with the mother country, while in England the fear was that it would lead to a weakening of Canadian military ties, such as they were, with Great Britain and the rest of the Empire.

Dundonald's plans for imperial defence had, indeed, again aroused trouble in French Canada, where La Presse referred to him as an "Imperialist monster".<sup>53</sup> The racial elements had also been worsened by Laurier's unfortunate reference to Dundonald as a "foreigner". The Prime Minister had attempted to explain the slip on the grounds of language, an argument which many were not prepared to accept.

The suppression of part of Dundonald's report of 1902 had led to speculation as to the extent to which he was prepared to go to organise the defences of Canada in conjunction with imperial needs. The unpublished part had, in fact, contained his description of the condition of the militia and an outline of a comprehensive scheme for its reorganisation, but Dundonald had indirectly admitted that,

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51. Ibid., p.140.

52. Ibid., p.138.

53. Ibid., p.147.

in his estimate, thirteen million dollars should be spent on the defences of Canada over a period of two or three years. Such a policy would inevitably stir the mistrust of Canadians, no matter what race or party they may belong to, and unfortunately Dundonald helped to strengthen the anti-imperialism in Canada he was so anxious to erase.

Both the Hutton and Dundonald incidents had served to sharpen Canadian mistrust of imperial designs to secure military co-ordination within the Empire, and, ironically, they must be held partly responsible for the failure of such a scheme to materialise. Nevertheless, the vigour and sincerity of the imperial officers had also brought home to Canadians the graphic weaknesses of their defence system. It is doubtful, therefore, that the far-reaching reforms which were finally inaugurated in 1904<sup>54</sup> would have been introduced without Hutton and Dundonald's continuous encouragement and support.

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54. See chapter III.

## Chapter V

### THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE OF 1902 AND CHAMBERLAIN'S FAILURE TO ESTABLISH A UNIFIED SYSTEM OF DEFENCE FOR THE EMPIRE

Among the memoranda on defence submitted to the Colonial Conference of 1902 was one entitled "The organisation of colonial troops for imperial service."<sup>1</sup> This report, compiled by the Assistant Quartermaster General at War Office Headquarters, Lieutenant-Colonel E.A. Altham, indicated clearly the hopes entertained by the Imperial government on the subject of future colonial commitments to imperial defence.

The report explained that, prior to the outbreak of war in South Africa, colonial military responsibilities had been limited to local defence. The Imperial government may well have hoped that colonial assistance would be forthcoming in time of need, but no arrangements had been made to that effect. The Boer War had established several important facts, however, two of which were:

That the regular army, as organised before the war, was by itself inadequate in strength to the military needs of the Empire [and] that the self-governing Colonies are willing and able to assist in making good some part of the deficiency in military strength which the war has disclosed.<sup>2</sup>

The need to organise the defensive forces of the Empire was self-evident and it was noted that "success in a great war can only be ensured by a continuous policy of

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1. Dominion of Canada, Sessional Papers, 1903, No.29a, Papers relating to the Colonial Conference, 1902.
  2. Ibid., 49.

careful organisation and preparation in peace."<sup>3</sup> A basic weakness, however, was the absence of any power of the Imperial government to draw up and enforce "a definite uniform organization for Imperial service."<sup>4</sup> The Imperial authorities could only stress that, in time of war, the component parts of the Empire could not exist independently, but must stand or fall as a whole.

The report therefore laid down two conditions it considered essential to ensure the survival of the Empire in the event of a great war. The first of these was

That the supreme authority, which is responsible for the defence of the Empire as a whole, should be able to rely with certainty on Colonial contingents of definite strength being available for defensive and offensive operations in any part of the world, as soon as His Majesty's Navy has acquired such command of the sea as will permit of trans-marine movement of troops.<sup>5</sup>

The second condition stipulated that these contingents should be efficient in both equipment and training. An examination of the existing military organisations in the colonies was then undertaken in the light of the above objectives. On the subject of the Canadian militia the report noted the proximity of the United States and the existing weaknesses of the force. In view of this it was suggested that it was better to make the militia an efficient force rather than to maintain contingents for general imperial service. The report nevertheless concluded that "it is

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3. Ibid., 49.

4. Ibid., 50

5. Ibid., 50.

reasonable to assume that Canada will desire to co-operate with Australia in any steps that may be taken for creating a permanent organisation of Colonial Imperial forces."<sup>6</sup>

It was suggested that any such force should, for the present, be limited to a brigade division of field artillery and a brigade of infantry.<sup>7</sup>

These aspirations of the Imperial government were to prove somewhat optimistic. Nevertheless, on January 23rd, 1902, Minto received the following cable from Chamberlain, explaining his government's intention of calling for another Colonial Conference:

It is proposed by His Majesty's Government to take advantage of the presence of the Premiers at the Coronation of Edward VII to discuss with them the question of political relations between the mother country and the colonies, Imperial defence, commercial relations of the Empire and other matters of general interest.<sup>8</sup>

The Canadian government did not receive this suggestion very enthusiastically, considering that only the question of commercial relations within the Empire offered hope of really valuable discussion. Minto therefore cabled as follows to the Colonial Secretary:

The political relations now existing between the Mother Country and the great self-governing Colonies, and particularly Canada, are regarded by my Ministers as entirely satisfactory, with the exception of a few minor details and they do not anticipate that in the varying conditions of the colonies there can be any scheme of defence applicable to all.<sup>9</sup>

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6. Ibid., 55

7. It was hoped, by this means, to enlist a total of 16,500 Colonial troops for imperial service, (3000 Canadian) Ibid, 55.

8. P.A.C., L.P., 753, 215428, Chamberlain to Minto, Jan. 23, 1902.

9. L.P., 753, 215431, Minto to Chamberlain February 3, 1902.

This correspondence was laid before the Canadian House of Commons and the ensuing debate on the forthcoming Colonial Conference illustrates to a certain extent the differing views of the two major parties on the question of imperial defence - differences which were to be confirmed upon the accession of the Conservatives to power in 1911.

R.L. Borden, the Leader of the Opposition, deprecated as discourteous the government's decision not to discuss imperial defence, explaining that he saw no objection to such a discussion. He emphasised that "we must not shut our eyes to the fact that we participate in all the benefits and advantages resulting from the existence of the British army and navy and the influence which they make felt throughout the world."<sup>10</sup> Turning to Canada's future Borden outlined what he considered to be the alternatives - independence, annexation or a continuation of present conditions - and stressed his preference for the latter.<sup>11</sup>

Laurier, replying to the Conservative Leader explained that, as others would undoubtedly raise the subject at the Conference, the question of defence would be discussed, although "neither my colleagues nor myself believe that any useful purpose can be served by such discussion."<sup>12</sup> He then made one of his most famous speeches - a declaration which

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10. Dominion of Canada, House of Commons Debates, 1902, II, May 12, 1902, 4706.

11. Ibid., 4706.

12. Ibid., 4726.



clearly expressed the isolationism of French Canada and the more general fear of commitment in European affairs:

There is a school abroad there is a school in England and in Canada, a school which is perhaps represented on the floor of this Parliament which wants to bring Canada into the vortex of militarism which is the curse and the blight of Europe. I am not prepared to endorse any such policy.<sup>13</sup>

Dissatisfaction was expressed however with the failure of the government to enunciate its policy concerning the Conference. John Haggart, the Conservative M.P. for South Lanark even went so far as to claim that the government had no policy and he urged the necessity of developing a system of mutual defence.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, the general feeling that internal development should come before extensive military commitments was well expressed by the Liberal M.P. for North Norfolk, J. Charlton:

Canada has great internal problems before her; problems that require money which would be diverted from its proper use if it were expended in furthering British interests in China or in the Eastern Archipelago or in some remote part of the earth where our own direct interests did not reach. We have our great North-west to look after, and into that country we are just about to receive a deluge of population...We lacked transportation facilities to get the crop out of that country last year...Works of this nature are those that imperiously demand the expenditure of our resources and our money.<sup>15</sup>

Charlton was also of the opinion that if Canada were to make any hard and fast military agreements with Great

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13. Ibid., 4726.

14. Ibid., 4742

15. Ibid., 4737.

Britain then "we might be held by the nation to the south of us to have joined in a military national armament of European standing, and we would perhaps bring upon ourselves the interference of the United States."<sup>16</sup>

Despite this evidence of Canadian disenchantment with any scheme for military collaboration Chamberlain's enthusiasm remained undaunted. He anticipated great results from the Conference and was equally confident that the strengthening of imperial ties, though perhaps slow, was nonetheless inevitable. Addressing a dinner given in his honour in London on August 1st he spoke as follows:

If we move slowly, we move surely. I for one have absolute confidence in the future. All our children are invited to this great partnership of Empire, and I believe that as they grow, - and they are growing quickly - to the full stature of nationhood, as they enter more completely into the glorious privileges of our common heritage, we shall not find them either blind or backward to the necessity of sharing, in an even greater degree, the obligations which Empire entails. I believe that this Conference we are holding will lead to considerable results. I believe that it will mark a considerable advance. If that be so, I think we may look forward with confidence to the future.<sup>17</sup>

Chamberlain was quite prepared to put pressure on the colonial delegates to secure a favourable military arrangement for the Empire. Coercion however was both impossible and, to his mind unnecessary. The Canadian delegates were nevertheless not only prepared for pressure

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16. Ibid., 4738.

17. J. Castell Hopkins, The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1902, (Toronto: Annual Review Publishing Co., 1903), p.116.

but determined to resist it. As early as June Borden had written to Laurier that "It is quite clear that Brodrick wishes to commit us to 'something definite'."<sup>18</sup> The Minister of Militia and Defence went on to explain that he was entirely against this so far as contributions of either men or money to foreign affairs was concerned. It would seem that, as regards Canadian contributions to the defence of the Empire, the failure of the Imperial government at the Conference of 1902 was apparent in advance.

In his opening address to the Colonial Conference Chamberlain explained that:

Our paramount object is to strengthen the bonds which unite us, and there are only three principal avenues by which we can approach this object. They are: through our political relations in the first place: secondly by some kind of commercial union. In the third place, by considering the questions which arise out of Imperial defence.<sup>19</sup>

The Colonial Secretary who considered that in spite of many difficulties "the political federation of the Empire is within the limits of possibility"<sup>20</sup> then made reference to Laurier's "call us to your councils" speech<sup>21</sup>. Replying to this offer Chamberlain spoke as follows:

Gentlemen we do want your aid...the weary Titan staggers under the too vast orb of its fate. We have borne the burden for many years. We think it is time that our children should assist us to support it, and whenever you make the request to us, be very sure that we shall hasten gladly to call you to our Councils.<sup>22</sup>

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18. L.P. 237, 66304, Borden to Laurier, July 2, 1902.

19. Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1902, (Colonial Office, 1902), p.2.

20. Ibid., p.2.

21. See chapter IV. part I, pp.13-14.

22. Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1902, pp.3-4.

Despite this eloquent plea of the Colonial Secretary it was decided that the time had not yet come for closer political integration of the Empire, although a decision was made to hold Colonial Conferences at intervals not exceeding four years.<sup>23</sup>

On the question of imperial defence<sup>24</sup> Chamberlain pointed out that Great Britain was spending an enormous sum of money on the defence, not of England alone, but of the whole Empire. Why, he argued, should Britain bear this tremendous burden alone, for "justification of union is that a bundle is stronger than the sticks which compose it, but if the whole strain is to be thrown on one stick, there is very little advantage in any attempt to put them into a bundle".<sup>25</sup>

This argument was taken up by Lord Selborne, the First Lord of the Admiralty, who attended the discussions relating to the naval defence of the Empire. Selborne, after explaining that "the sea is to the Empire as the breath of life"<sup>26</sup> urged that all members of the Empire make a personal rather than a financial contribution to the imperial navy. The discussion which followed however revealed a wide divergence of interests and opinions on the subject and it was agreed that the representatives of the various colonies

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23. Ibid., p.105. Laurier had objected to the suggestion that the Conferences be held at fixed intervals. Ibid., p.103.

24. See Appendix V, p. 179.

25. Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1902, p.38.

26. Ibid., p.20.

meet privately with the First Lord of the Admiralty.<sup>27</sup>

Significantly, Laurier refused to commit Canada to naval expenditures although he explained that the Dominion was contemplating the establishment of a local naval force. He emphasised however that Canada had expended large sums on the development of public works. The Colonial Secretary, replying later to this argument explained that, without the help of Great Britain, the colonies would have to spend a great deal of money on defence:

What would you do, where would you be, if your were absolutely independent nations? In spite of what you are spending for old age pensions, and railways, and all those other things, you would have to spend a vast deal more than you are spending to make an adequate, or any kind of proportionate preparation for your own defence.<sup>28</sup>

On July 25th, the fifth day of the Conference, the topic of discussion was the military defence of the Empire, and St. John Brodrick opened the proceedings by making reference to the following motion formulated by the New Zealand government:

That it is desirable to have an Imperial Reserve Force formed in each of His Majesty's Dominions over the seas for service in case of emergency outside the Dominion or Colony in which such Reserve is formed. The limits in which such Reserve force may be employed outside the Colony wherein it is raised to be defined by the Imperial and Colonial Governments at the time such Reserve

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27. See Appendix VI, p. 180.

28. Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1902, p.38.

is formed, and to be in accordance with any law in force for the time being respecting the same. The cost of maintaining and equipping such Imperial Reserve Force to be defrayed in such proportion and manner as may be agreed upon between the Imperial and Colonial Governments.<sup>29</sup>

The motion, which was identical with that embodied in The New Zealand Defence Act Amendment Act, 1900, had already been referred to the Colonial Defence Committee which had prepared a memorandum on the subject which was presented to the Conference. The Committee gave full support to the suggestion, emphasising that in any emergency it would be "essential to success that the military forces of the Empire should be employed against the common foe in conformity with one general plan, and that the supreme military control of those forces should be vested in one central authority."<sup>30</sup>

Brodrick too expressed his wholehearted approval of the terms of the motion. He then proceeded to give a brief survey of defence developments during the past thirty years, and explained that Great Britain had, "either abroad at this moment, or liable to go abroad on any emergency, close upon a quarter of a million men,"<sup>31</sup> The Secretary of State for War then outlined the weaknesses of a system which produced troops of different calibre and training and speaking of the Canadian militia in particular he referred to the last annual

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29. Ibid., p.81.

30. Sessional Papers, 1903, No. 29a, Papers relating to the Colonial Conference, 1902, 47.

31. Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1902, p.81.

report of the General Officer Commanding:

Anybody who reads the report will see that, however fine might be the patriotic ardour and keeness of Canada at a given moment, troops hastily improvised from such material can only be placed by a General against trained troops with very considerable caution.<sup>32</sup>

Brodrick then appealed for the creation of an Imperial Reserve Force with their services "absolutely pledged in the event of the Government to which they belong proffering assistance to the Imperial Forces in the emergency",<sup>33</sup> and he even suggested that to achieve this the colonies reduce the members of their regular militia.

The New Zealand motion did not prove acceptable however. Borden, rather piqued by Brodrick's references to the Canadian militia, argued that the force was greatly improved and that the latter's attack on it was "somewhat misleading: rather unfair".<sup>34</sup> He explained that the object of the Canadian government was to make "that force [the Canadian militia] self-contained, self-reliant, absolutely complete within itself."<sup>35</sup> The Canadian Minister of Militia and Defence also explained that:

The suggestion made that there should be a special force known as an Imperial force, for Service abroad, is one that I cannot subscribe to because I believe, in the first place, it would have a derogatory effect upon the Militia itself and...upon the [Canadian] Militia at large.<sup>36</sup>

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32. Ibid., pp.83-4.

33. Ibid., p.84.

34. Ibid., p.85.

35. Ibid., p.85.

36. Ibid., p.86.

As an alternative Borden suggested that the numerical strength of the Canadian militia be reduced and its efficiency improved. He then proceeded to give a detailed account of recent improvements in the militia establishment of the Dominion.<sup>37</sup>

Brodrick, while welcoming any development which would improve the efficiency of the Canadian militia, doubted whether the whole force "could be brought up to such a standard of efficiency as we desire"<sup>38</sup> and expressed disappointment with the rather hostile reception of his proposals. There were, however, two developments relating to imperial defence which, although of lesser importance, contributed to the ideal of a unified policy. During the debates on army and navy supply contracts it was agreed that in all government contracts preference should be given, where practicable, to products of the Empire.<sup>39</sup> Also, on the subject of colonial naval and military cadets a resolution was adopted to the effect that the number of commissions offered should be increased.<sup>40</sup>

Although these two resolutions were adopted unanimously the question of imperial defence in general had revealed considerable differences of opinion. Australia, like Canada, had refused to contribute to an Imperial Reserve Force whereas the delegates of Cape Colony, Natal and New

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37. For a comprehensive description of the Canadian government's attitude towards imperial defence see Appendix VII, p. 182.

38. Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1902, p.101.

39. Sessional Papers, 1903, No.29a, Papers relating to the Colonial Conference, 1902, XIII.

40. Ibid., XI.



Zealand had approved of the proposal. These divergencies were not to be reconciled however, and Brodrick was left with the hope that in the future Australia and Canada would see their way to closer military co-operation with the rest of the Empire: "I can only express the pious hope that those two great continent authorities will find themselves some day or another, after seeing the start that is made, able to consider something on similar lines".<sup>41</sup>

That the Conference had gone badly from the imperial point of view can be seen from the closing speech of the Colonial Secretary - a speech which contrasted vividly with the one he had made on August 1st. Having thanked the delegates for their attendance and co-operation Chamberlain spoke as follows: "I have no doubt many outside, who know nothing of our difficulties, will be disappointed with the results which we have achieved. I could have wished that these results could have been greater."<sup>42</sup>

The failure of the Conference to produce more tangible results was in no small way a result of the attitude of the delegates of the leading Dominion. Although the Liberals hailed their leader's approach as masterful, the Conservatives considering it inexcusable, less partisan observers held Laurier responsible for the apparent failure of the gathering. Principal Peterson of McGill said in

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41. Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1902, p.171.

42. Ibid., p.197.

The Star of the 30th November that "The general impression in England is that the Canadian delegates went to the Imperial Conference to put a drag on it and that they succeeded in doing so."<sup>43</sup> I.N. Ford, the correspondent of the Toronto Globe and the New York Tribune was even more explicit, and he cabled from England as follows:

[Laurier] will not discuss the work of the Imperial Conference, but it is an open secret that he has exerted a decisive influence in keeping the colonies out of what he calls the vortex of European armaments. There was without a doubt, vigorous effort on the part of Mr. Chamberlain to concentrate attention on this subject as the most available ground for common action, but there has been a complete failure to commit the colonies to a costly policy for the military and naval defence of the Empire.<sup>44</sup>

The Colonial Conference of 1902 underlined a development which, although in existence throughout the period, had not hitherto been so forcibly expressed. This was the incompatibility in many respects of not only colonial and imperial interests, but also of interests relating to affairs between the colonies themselves - differing environments had inevitably produced divergent views and interests.

From no point of view were these incompatibilities more obvious than from that of defence. The Imperial government could undoubtedly argue that Canada, preoccupied as she was with internal developments, failed to see that

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43. J. Castell Hopkins, The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1902, p.115.

44. Ibid., pp. 116-17.

in the final analysis her security and independence were in the hands of the imperial navy. Canada, on the other hand, could argue that her geographical position did not merit any extensive preparations on defence.

There were two avenues by which the Dominion could conceivably be attacked - by land from the United States, and by sea. An attack by any naval power, which seemed unlikely, would presumably be countered by the imperial navy. The other alternative, also improbable, was one against which it would be extremely difficult to secure an effective defence. It was, in any case, in the interests of the United States that satisfactory relations with Great Britain should be maintained. Occasional disputes between the two powers might well occur, as in the case of the Venezuelan and Alaskan affairs. However, the Monroe Doctrine, which formed the basis of United States foreign policy in the nineteenth century, had been formulated on the understanding that Great Britain would uphold it. Its durability rested upon the support of British sea power, and with the extension of United States foreign commitments into the Pacific it became even more imperative that Britain should not be alienated.

There were, of course, other very important reasons for the failure of Chamberlain to induce Canada to participate in a great military union of the Empire. Canada was essentially an unmilitary nation. Relying as she had done for so long on British forces there had developed in the Dominion no

great military tradition. Military affairs were regarded, for the most part, with indifference or in the light of political advantages that could be gained. That Chamberlain, Minto and successive General Officers Commanding had helped to alleviate these problems cannot be doubted, but the underlying motivations nevertheless remained.

In addition to these factors was the growth of Canadian isolationism. This attitude was relatively undeveloped and it was also by no means universal. R.L. Borden, for example, was far more willing than Laurier that Canada should undertake more extensive external commitments, provided that extra responsibilities were accompanied by adequate consultation. Nevertheless this isolationism, though not as strong as that of her southern neighbour, developed from a similar environment, and gave the Dominion a fear of becoming involved in what seemed to be the increasingly dangerous and warlike tendencies of European diplomacy.

On the domestic front the Canadian government had a rather difficult position to maintain. Taking its support, as it must, from areas economically, racially and culturally diverse, it had been the policy generally of Canadian governments to pursue a middle course, the "golden mean", and this policy was adopted towards the imperial tie. The government had to be careful also to alienate neither the fervent imperialists nor their anti-imperialist counterparts.

In Canada opposition to imperial association and entanglement reached its peak in French Canada. An example of this feeling was given at a large meeting in Montreal on

August 24th, 1903. The gathering was addressed by the French Canadian nationalist, Henri Bourassa, and the following resolution was adopted:

This meeting declares that the Canadian people have in the past done more than their duty to ensure the maintenance of British power in America; they refuse to assume further sacrifices to organise the defence of the Empire, and assert that the duty of the Colonies in this respect is limited to the defence of their respective territories.<sup>45</sup>

Racial unrest, a permanent feature of Canadian life, had been brought to the surface again by such developments as the Riel crisis, the Manitoba Schools question and Canadian participation in the Boer War. It was hoped that Laurier, a French Canadian and an ardent admirer of English liberalism, would be able to conciliate the two races and the Prime Minister had, in fact, given precedence to this objective: "My object is to consolidate Confederation, and to bring our people long estranged from each other, gradually to become a nation. This is the supreme issue. Everything else is subordinate to that idea."<sup>46</sup>

As a means of achieving this objective the Laurier government strove to concentrate on the internal development of Canada. Indeed, the Prime Minister's statement that the twentieth century belonged to Canada seemed no empty boast, for the Liberal tenure of office, from 1896 to 1911,

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45. J. Castell Hopkins, The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1903, p.269.

46. H.B. Neatby, "Laurier and Imperialism", C.H.A., (June 1955), 24.

coincided with an unprecedented expansion of the Dominion's economy: "Directed by the national policies of all-Canadian railways, western settlement and protective tariffs it [the trans-continental economy] grew with a rapidity surpassing all expectations".<sup>47</sup>

Economic circumstances were unusually favourable for such an expansion which, having its origin in the wheat boom of the North-West, triggered off rapid economic growth in other parts of the Dominion. This development was closely connected to the all-Canadian transportation system and the protective tariffs with the result that "an economically loose transcontinental area was transformed into a highly integrated national economy".<sup>48</sup>

This enormous expansion of the economy required immense capital expenditure and although vast sums were acquired from abroad for this purpose a heavy burden also fell on the Dominion government. Indeed, between 1896 and 1913 total Dominion, provincial and municipal current outlay was multiplied four times, rising from \$63,000,000 to \$253,000,000<sup>49</sup>. Few questioned the extensive commitment of the federal government to the economic growth of the country. Indeed, with the fervent optimism prevalent at the time it was more than welcomed and "with expanding revenues its

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47. Report of the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations, Book I, (Ottawa : Queen's Printer, 1954), p.66.

48. Ibid., 68.

49. Ibid., 80.

[the Dominion government's] operations gained a new magnitude and sweep surpassing all its previous efforts."<sup>50</sup> It was no accident then that at the Colonial Conferences the Canadian delegates constantly stressed the need for internal development as a reason for failing to make any real contribution to the military expenses of the Empire. A more indirect consequence of this rapid development of the Dominion was its encouragement of national consciousness and pride of achievement. These factors undoubtedly helped Laurier in his stand against greater centralisation of the Empire.

From the imperial point of view much depended on the Colonial Secretary and the Governor-General - the one the chief architect of imperial policy, the other the key connection between the Imperial and Dominion governments. The Colonial Secretary's ambitions for North America were by no means confined to Canada however for his ideal of a federated Empire was implemented by a desire to see a great Anglo-Saxon union. Speaking in public on May 13th, 1898, Chamberlain said that he would:

...go so far as to say that, terrible as war may be, even war itself would be cheaply purchased if, in a great and noble cause, the Stars and Stripes and the Union Jack should wave together over an Anglo/Saxon alliance.<sup>51</sup>

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50. Ibid., 81.

51. P.A.C., M.P., XIX, 21.

Canada had good reason to appreciate Chamberlain's desire for such a union as she considered herself to have been on more than one occasion the pawn in the game for Anglo-American friendship. Canada's external relations, limited as they were, involved the United States more than any other foreign power, and as E. McInnis says, "the process of defining Canada's position within the Empire went on against a background of increasingly close integration with the United States".<sup>52</sup>

Nevertheless, Canada's relations with the colossus to the South were by no means satisfactory and one of the most awkward problems facing the Dominion in this period was that concerning the settlement of the Alaska boundary dispute. This problem, precipitated as it was by the Yukon gold rush, was finally settled by a tribunal containing three members from the United States and three from Canada. The United States however, despite the strength of its claim, appointed delegates who could hardly be considered impartial and the decision was made in favour of America when Lord Alverstone, the British Chief Justice who was a member of the Canadian panel, voted against the Canadian claim after having earlier expressed agreement with much of it. The incident was to have important repercussions. Canada was given further incentive to secure greater control of her external affairs, and stimulus was given to the

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52. E. McInnis, Canada, A Political and Social History, (Toronto: Rinehart and Co., 1952), p.395.



anti-Americanism which formed a part of Canadian nationalism.

Chamberlain's acute interest in the defence of the Empire did not mean that he was fully acquainted with Canadian conditions. Indeed, Kitson, following an interview with Chamberlain in 1900, expressed the opinion that the Colonial Secretary failed completely to appreciate the seriousness of militia difficulties in the Dominion. The Commandant also considered that "his [Chamberlain's] policy seems to be, take all you can get the Colonies to offer, but ask for nothing - I don't think any pressure or enquiry will be made, as to what Canada will do for the general defence of the Empire."<sup>53</sup> Chamberlain did not, in fact, want to put pressure on the colonies unless it was absolutely necessary. He wanted the move for closer union of the Empire to come from the colonies themselves and it was not until the end of his tenure of office that he realised that this was not what they desired.

Chamberlain's dynamic leadership had undoubtedly helped to create a new feeling of identity within the Empire. At the same time he had, by the very nature of this leadership, instilled misgivings in the colonies as to their ultimate destination within his schemes for closer centralisation. Chamberlain was convinced that closer integration of the Empire was essential, not only to the future welfare of Great Britain, but also to that of the colonies themselves. Indeed,

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53. M.P., XXI, Kitson to Minto, December 8, 1900.

after the failure of his attempts at closer political and military co-operation he turned, in vain and as a last resort, to fiscal preference. Mutual economic benefits obviously played a large part in such a decision, but unity of the Empire was at the heart of the scheme. He failed to appreciate, however, the strength of colonial nationalism and the extent to which the interests of Great Britain differed from those of the colonies.

As Minto said, the Colonial Secretary often failed to judge fairly the unwillingness of colonial statesmen to embark upon extensive imperial commitments.<sup>54</sup> The Colonial Secretary was certainly impatient by nature and he is alleged to have said of Laurier that "I would rather do business with a cad who knows his own mind."<sup>55</sup> Minto, on the other hand, had great respect for Laurier as both a man and a Prime Minister.

The Governor-General's influence was inevitably of a more subtle nature than that of Chamberlain's being, as he was, a representative not only of Great Britain's, but also of the Canadian government in its relations with the mother country. His influence was nevertheless considerable and the following description of the manner in which he secured the alleviation of abuses in the government of the Yukon is deserving of wider application:

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54. J. Buchan, Lord Minto: A Memoir, (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1924), p.199.

55. Ibid., p.205.

He had dared to be more than an official puppet; had put his spoke in the Canadian wheel; had not feared to essay the amendment of palpable abuses; and yet had interfered so cleverly that there was not the slightest soreness discoverable anywhere.<sup>56</sup>

Minto's appreciation of the difficulties facing the Laurier administration did not detract from his desire to see some measure of closer unity within the Empire. Nevertheless, as Buchan says:

It is impossible to read his letters and journals without realising that there was growing up in him a feeling that after all Sir Wilfrid might be right - that in a new land, with so many incompatible elements inside her borders, the slow game might be the wise game, that the time was not ripe for a clenched and riveted formula of Empire, and that the true solution must be left to the processes of time.<sup>57</sup>

The sphere of imperial relations with which Minto, by both inclination and circumstance, was most concerned was that of defence. He was anxious that inter-imperial military ties should be strengthened and was sorely disappointed with the failure of this project. However, his interest in the Canadian militia was a genuine one, based on the desire to see the establishment of a more efficient organisation irrespective of imperial commitments. Political interference in military matters was something he reluctantly came to accept as a matter of course however. He persistently remarked upon the prevalence of the abuse but accepted that, in the final analysis, it was a situation which only the

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56. Ibid., p.178.

57. Ibid., p.205.

Dominion government could remedy. He likewise accepted that on the subject of closer imperial co-operation in general no amount of imperial pressure would induce the Dominion to take up a position it considered contrary to its own interests.

In the Dominion the most influential men concerned with defence were Laurier, by virtue of his position as Prime Minister, and his Minister of Militia and Defence, Borden. Unfortunately Laurier knew virtually nothing about military affairs and he was essentially indifferent to them except where Canadian autonomy was in question. In a private letter Laurier himself admitted his "ignorance in all military matters."<sup>58</sup> Minto had already come to the same conclusion and he gave the following illuminating description of Laurier's attitude to the question of defence in general:

Sir Wilfrid is never very clear as to this, but I think on the whole is inclined to recognise the principle that Canada should guarantee the efficiency of its own forces as the garrison of the Dominion and thereby perform its duty as a factor in the defence of the Canadian portion of the Empire. Of course the efficiency of the Canadian forces means a great deal - as to which I am afraid, it is almost impossible to sufficiently impress Sir Wilfrid... He apparently considers Canada is safely removed from any possible hostilities on her own territory.<sup>59</sup>

Despite the urgings of the Governor-General Laurier refused to take the militia seriously and he continued to regard it from a political rather than a military point of view.

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58. L.P. 275, 75840, Laurier to Bruce Carruthers, August, 1903.

59. M.P., II, memorandum of conversation with Laurier, June 3, 1902.

Borden however, as befitted a Minister of Militia and Defence, was more knowledgeable on military matters. Minto, for example commented that "For some occult reason my Government have always been averse to any consideration of military questions, with the exception I am glad to say of Sir Frederick Borden."<sup>60</sup>

The position of Minister of Militia and Defence was not looked upon as a major Cabinet position however, and in consequence Borden can hardly be considered really influential. Hutton found him a political pleaser who "with little serious political conviction...was easily persuaded to change his opinions when formed."<sup>61</sup> The General Officer Commanding also records the following remark, allegedly made by Borden following the disasters of "Black Week" in December, 1899: "General, I ask myself this question - Is it worth Canada's while to remain part of an Empire, which can suffer disasters such as those of Methuen, Gatacre and Buller?"<sup>62</sup> In the same letter however, Hutton talks of the time when Australia, South Africa and Great Britain will send troops to Canada to quieten the "anti-imperialism" of French Canada and it is quite probable that Borden's remark was made as a result of deliberate provocation on the part of Hutton.

Despite his shortcomings Borden was genuinely interested

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60. Governor-General's Files, G.21, No.339, II, 1900-04, Minto to Chamberlain, May 28, 1903.

61. M.P., XIX, 32.

62. M.P., XVII, Hutton to Minto, January 10, 1902.

in militia reform and the differing approaches to defence of the Minister and his Premier are well illustrated by a letter written by Borden to Laurier in December, 1905. Borden, having heard that Laurier desired a considerable reduction in militia expenditure, explained that at the Colonial Conference of 1902 Canada undertook to make her militia efficient. Borden, having reduced this proposed expenditure and spread it over a number of years, had taken his proposals to Council where, after a lengthy discussion they were accepted, as they were later in the House of Commons. As a result of these developments Borden stood up to Laurier and insisted that the proposals be carried out as "we are committed to Parliament and I think we are fully committed by our memoranda to the Colonial Conference."<sup>63</sup>

Borden, however, had failed to provide the dynamic leadership needed to bring about a thorough reform of the Canadian militia. He was not averse to making political gain out of militia appointments and his lack of convictions made his relatively weak position even weaker. The Canadian public, indifferent as they were to military questions, had this indifference strengthened by the almost complete lack of publicity of military affairs. Minto claimed that on military questions "the public has, to a great extent been kept in the dark"<sup>64</sup> and he feared that this had led to a

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63. L.P., 392, 10441-4, Borden to Laurier, December 18, 1905.

64. Governor-General's Files, G.21, No.339, II, 1900-04, Minto to Chamberlain, May 28, 1903.

situation where "the whole tendency of Canadian public opinion is towards the maintenance of its own army, possibly its own navy, with a blind belief in the complete efficiency of its forces and the genius of its officers."<sup>65</sup>

The turn of the century had seemed to many an auspicious moment for the introduction of measures for a closer integration of the Empire. Great Britain found her earlier supremacy challenged throughout the world and the Colonial Office under the dynamic leadership of Chamberlain had achieved a power hitherto undreamt of. The South African War had created a situation where it seemed natural that the Empire should unite together. It is ironic therefore that in the decade preceding the First World War far greater steps were taken to bring about military union of the Empire than during the period 1895-1903.

These developments were only gradual however and the initial attempts of Sir Alfred Lyttleton, Chamberlain's successor at the Colonial Office, to secure closer collaboration of the Empire met with scant success. On April 20th, 1905, the Colonial Secretary wrote to the Canadian Governor-General, Lord Grey<sup>66</sup>, to the effect that the title Colonial Conference was hardly adequate to describe such meetings and that Imperial Council would perhaps be more adequate. He also suggested

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65. Ibid.

66. Albert Henry George, Fourth Earl Grey, (1851-1917), Administrator of Rhodesia, (1896-97; Governor-General of Canada, 1904-11.

the appointment of a permanent commission to investigate and prepare material for the attention of the Imperial Council.<sup>67</sup>

These proposals, while receiving a favourable response from Australia, the Cape and Natal, were coldly rebutted by Canada. The Canadian reply to the proposals stated that any change in the title or status of the Colonial Conference should come from the body itself, and any such change would, they feared, "be interpreted as marking a step distinctly in advance of the position hitherto attained in the discussion of the relations between the Mother Country and the Colonies."<sup>68</sup> Also, a permanent institution on the lines suggested might "eventually, come to be regarded as an encroachment upon the full measure of autonomous legislation and administrative power now enjoyed by all the self-governing Colonies."<sup>69</sup>

In 1905 however, Canada followed up the proposals made at the Colonial Conference of 1902 and agreed to take over the fortresses of Halifax and Esquimalt and to provide them with Canadian garrisons. Although the British withdrawal was seen in some quarters as a sign of disapproval, others acknowledged that at least Canada was assuming the burden of Empire. As The Globe said:

While this new departure is on the one hand obviously a long step toward fuller autonomy, it is on the other, and just as obviously a means of indefinitely strengthening the tie which binds

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67. J. Castell Hopkins, The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1905, pp.437-8.

68. Ibid., p.439.

69. Ibid., p.439.



Canada to the Empire.<sup>70</sup>

An even greater step towards military centralisation of the Empire was taken at the Colonial Conference of 1907 when the decision was made to form an Imperial General Staff which "would lay down not only strategic doctrine, but also the provisions for uniform training, organisation and material for all land forces in the Empire."<sup>71</sup> It was also agreed that branches of the Imperial General Staff would be established in each Dominion, with British and colonial officers collaborating.

In 1909 a special Conference on Imperial Defence, resulting in part from the worsening international situation, confirmed the need for standardisation of military arms and equipment throughout the Empire. The meeting was a milestone in the military history of the Empire and the British Prime Minister, Asquith, described its achievements as follows:

The result is a plan for organising the forces of the Crown wherever they are, that, while preserving the complete autonomy of each Dominion, should the Dominion desire to assist in the defence of the Empire in a real emergency, their forces could be rapidly combined into one homogeneous Imperial Army.<sup>72</sup>

Perhaps the most important step was made during the Colonial Conference of 1911 when matters relating to defence were referred to a special meeting of the Committee of Imperial

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70. Ibid., p.462.

71. F. Johnson, Defence by Committee, (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), p.87.

72. G.F.G. Stanley, Canada's Soldiers, (Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1960), pp.303-4.

Defence, the development marking "the transfer of the common consideration of imperial, foreign and defence policies from the publicized Imperial Conferences."<sup>73</sup> The reduction of publicity lent itself to increased Dominion commitment and the Committee of Imperial Defence became "the key forum of Imperial consultation upon those policies which determined the external security of the Empire."<sup>74</sup>

This trend towards Canadian commitment in Imperial defence was strengthened by the accession to power of Borden and the Conservatives in 1911. The Conservative leader showed a greater willingness to co-operate and to accept responsibility, and he secured permanent Canadian representation on the Committee of Imperial Defence. As L. Harcourt,<sup>75</sup> who became Colonial Secretary in June 1910, wrote in 1912: "There is, on the part of Canadian Ministers and people, a natural and laudable desire for a greater measure of consultation and co-operation with us in the future than they had in the past."<sup>76</sup> Certainly Canada found herself more deeply committed to a policy of Imperial defence than could possibly have been anticipated in the Dominion during Chamberlain's tenure of office, and in the words of Stanley, "Because it was now less

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73. F. Johnson, Defence by Committee, p.111.

74. Ibid., p.113.

75. Lewis Harcourt, First Viscount Harcourt, (1863-1922), Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1910-15; Commissioner of Works, 1915-16.

76. A.B. Keith, Speeches and Documents on British Colonial Policy, 1763-1917, (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p.341.

obvious Imperial centralisation was more nearly attained."<sup>77</sup>

To what extent was the Dominion, from the point of view of both her own defences and inter-imperial co-operation prepared for the halocaust in which she was to find herself? From the naval standpoint the situation was somewhat discouraging. The Admiralty had continued to press for direct colonial contributions but the Liberal government in Canada had decided instead to develop its own separate naval force and a bill to this effect was introduced in 1910. This Naval Service Bill, which aroused widespread opposition in Quebec, was not to be effectively implemented however. In the following year the victory of the Conservatives under Borden saw the decision made to contribute instead direct help to the imperial navy. Borden was anxious that any contribution to the imperial navy should be accompanied by adequate consultation and he spoke as follows in the House of Commons on November 17th, 1910:

When Canada, with the other great Dominions within the Empire, embarks upon a policy of permanent co-operation in the naval empire, it ought, from every constitutional standpoint, from every reasonable standpoint as well, to have some voice as to the issues of peace and war within the empire.<sup>78</sup>

Unfortunately, Borden's naval programme, which proposed an emergency contribution of \$35,000,000 to cover the

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77. G.F.G. Stanley, Canada's Soldiers, p. 304.

78. G.N. Tucker, The Naval Service of Canada, (Ottawa; King's Printer, 1952), p.176.

cost of three battleships, to be built and manned in Britain, failed to find approval in the Liberal-dominated Senate. Thus although Canada's naval resources, such as they were, were readily made available to Great Britain, the outbreak of hostilities saw Australia as the only Dominion with a naval force to be reckoned with.

Canada's war effort was thus concentrated upon the army and her efforts to co-operate with Great Britain in this sphere, hitherto so negligible, now surpassed those of the other Dominions. In 1910 Sir John French,<sup>79</sup> the Inspector-General of the imperial forces, had carried out a thorough investigation of the Canadian militia at the request of the Dominion government. His report echoed many of the complaints of the General Officers Commanding, but important reforms were soon forthcoming. The militia was organised on a divisional basis, with emphasis placed on decentralisation, and a general mobilisation scheme was prepared. In conjunction with the imperial authorities plans were also laid for the mobilisation of an overseas expeditionary force and inter-imperial co-operation was consolidated: "The period from 1812-14, taken altogether, was one of intense activity in Empire-wide military preparation compared with the past. These plans went smoothly and rapidly into effect in 1914."<sup>80</sup> The net result of this activity was

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79. John Denton Pinkstone French, First Earl of Ypres, (1852-1925), Inspector-General, 1907-12; Chief of the Imperial General Staff, 1913; Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 1918-21.

80. F. Johnson, Defence by Committee, p.126.

that the Empire as a whole was far better prepared for war than at any other period in modern times.

With the British declaration of war on August 4th Canada automatically found herself also at war. However, the Dominion government alone had the authority to determine the extent of its commitment in the conflict. There was, nevertheless, no question that the Dominion would not do its utmost. Laurier, the leader of the Opposition, called for an end to party strife and committed himself and his party to the wholehearted support of Britain in the struggle ahead:

We are British subjects, and to-day we are face to face with the consequences which are involved in that proud fact. Long we have enjoyed the benefit of our British citizenship; to-day it is our duty to accept its responsibilities and its sacrifices. We have long said that when Great Britain is at war we are at war; to-day we realize that Great Britain is at war and that we are at war also.<sup>81</sup>

The Canadian contribution to the war effort was an extensive one. A total of 628,462 men were enlisted for service, 428,589 of them going overseas. Over 5,000 men were also enrolled in the Royal Canadian Navy and 24,095 with the British Air Services. Of this grand total 60,661 were to die for the Allied cause.<sup>82</sup> Although arrangements had been made prior to the outbreak of war to the effect that the Canadian navy would come under imperial control in time of

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81. O.D. Skelton, Life and Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1921), II, 433.

82. G.F.G. Stanley, Canada's Soldiers, p.313.

emergency the position of the Dominion troops was uncertain. This situation was clarified during the course of the war, Their status was that of "volunteer Militia on active service, employed in defending their country abroad"<sup>83</sup> and they were able to maintain their separate identity.

Canada's tremendous contribution to the war effort invoked increased demand in the Dominion that her representatives should have an adequate say in the policy decisions of the war. Borden himself was adamant on this point. In 1914 he took the innovationary step of appointing Sir George Perley<sup>84</sup>, the Minister without Portfolio, as Canadian High Commissioner in London on the understanding that he would have authority to sit on any session of the Committee of Imperial Defence which was of concern to the Dominion.

The Committee of Imperial Defence was, however, concerned with preparation rather than action. Some other means had to be devised of giving to the Dominion more responsibility for the direction of the war. The resultant body was the Imperial War Cabinet which consisted of the Dominion Prime Ministers or their representatives along with the British war cabinet. Borden described the Cabinet as follows:

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83. Ibid., 315.

84. Sir George Halsey Perley, (1857-1938), Canadian High Commissioner in London, 1914-22; Minister of the overseas military forces of Canada, 1916-17; Secretary of State, 1926; Minister without Portfolio, 1930-35.

We meet there on terms of perfect equality. We meet as Prime Ministers of self-governing nations... it is a Cabinet of Governments. Every Prime Minister who sits around that board is responsible to his own Parliament and to his own people; the conclusions of the War Cabinet can only be carried out by the Parliaments of the different nations of our Imperial Commonwealth. Thus, each Dominion, each nation, retains its perfect autonomy.<sup>85</sup>

The Canadian Prime Minister went on to express the hope that in the Imperial War Cabinet "may be found the genesis of a development in the constitutional relations of the Empire, which will form the basis of its unity in the years to come."<sup>86</sup> Others cherished the same hope and for some time it looked as though their aspirations would be realised. Dominion representation at the Peace Conferences and their membership of the League of Nations and other international bodies saw them accepted as independent nations in their own right and the Imperial government continued to press for a closer centralisation of the Empire.

The Dominion Governments were reluctant to follow this course, however, and the dream of imperial centralisation was to be finally shattered in the 1920's. This period finally confirmed what had first become apparent during Chamberlain's tenure of office as Colonial Secretary - the centrifugal forces of the Empire were too strong to be successfully obstructed as the stature of the self-governing Dominions increased.

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85. A.B. Keith, Speeches and Documents on British Colonial Policy, 1918-1931, (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p.5.

86. Ibid., p.5.

APPENDIX I

Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1887: Papers laid before the Conference., C. 5091 v.11. (Printed for the use of the Colonial Office), p.353.

"Certified copy of a report of a Committee of the Honourable the Privy Council for Canada, approved by His Excellency the Governor-General in Council on 12th April, 1887."

The Committee of the Privy Council have had under consideration a despatch, dated 20th January, 1887, from the Rt. Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies, requesting to be furnished with a return showing the preparations made and the expenditure incurred in defences against aggression by maritime powers.

The Minister of Militia and Defence, to whom the despatch was referred, submits the following statement with reference to the total expenditure incurred by the Dominion of Canada on defensive measures under the different heads therein specified.

1. Personnel - Canada maintains an Active Militia Force, strength 37,350 officers and men, composed as follows:



|                     | Permanent Force | Active Militia Force | Total strength officers and men |
|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Cavalry             | 43              | 1944                 | 1987                            |
| Field Artillery     | -               | 1440                 | 1440                            |
| Garrison Artillery  | 329             | 2013                 | 2342                            |
| Engineers           | -               | 179                  | 179                             |
| R.M.C. Cadet Corps. | -               | 64                   | 64                              |
| Mounted Infantry    | 105             | -                    | 105                             |
| Infantry and rifles | 319             | 30,914               | 31,233                          |
|                     | 796             | 36,554               | 37,350                          |

The expenditure for this and other services specified in the Colonial Office Circular, since the withdrawal of the Imperial forces from Canada in 1871, up to January, 1887, has been approximately as follows:-

- \$
1. Pay and maintenance of the force above specified..... 12,467,533
  2. Armaments, military service, including ordnance, shot and shell etc., small arms and ammunition, camp equipment and general stores..... 1,585,215
- Armaments, naval service.
3. Fortification, viz. erection of batteries at Esquimalt Harbour, British Columbia, in 1878... 3,820
  4. Military building and establishments, viz. erection of barracks, military buildings, and repairs to existing buildings and fortifications..... 1,350,512
  5. Floating defences..... -

|  | \$         |
|--|------------|
| 6. Submarine mine apparatus.....   | -          |
| Total expenditure by the Department of Militia<br>and Defence during above period for the services<br>specified.....   | 15,407,100 |
| Or an average annual expenditure during the<br>fifteen years of.....   | 1,027,140  |
| 7. Any further expenditures projected. The general<br>question of the defences being still under<br>consideration, any special expenditures cannot<br>meantime be specified. |            |

APPENDIX II

C. 8596, Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1897,  
p. 190, P.A.C., Governor-General's files, G.21, No. 168.  
Colonial Defence: Memoranda by the Colonial Defence  
Committee. (For the information of the Secretary of State  
for the Colonies).

Mr. Chamberlain considers advantage should be  
taken of the presence of the Colonial Premiers in this  
country...to discuss with them various questions of interest  
to the Empire at large, and has asked for suggestions from  
the Colonial Defence Committee as to the defence matters  
which should be discussed, and for the views of the  
Committee in regard to them.

After careful consideration of the subject, the  
Committee recommend the following topics, stated in what  
appears to be their order of relative importance, for  
discussion:

- I. Colonial assistance towards the maintenance of the  
Imperial Navy.
- II. Uniformity of military laws, regulations and conditions  
of service.
- III. Uniformity in arms, equipment, stores, etc.
- IV. Preparation of defence schemes, and organisation of  
Colonial forces in accordance with them.
- V. Interchange of military units Great Britain and the  
self-governing Colonies.
- VI. Federal defence of adjacent territories.
- VII. Colonial military manufacturing and educational  
establishments.
- VIII. Regulation of civil population and utilisation of  
private property in war.

APPENDIX III

Sessional Papers, 1905, No. 35, Report of the Department of Militia and Defence, 1904, 91.

The Militia Council as authorised by the Order-in-Council of November 17, 1904

- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <u>President</u>           | - Sir F.W. Borden, Minister of Militia and Defence.            |
| <u>1st Military Member</u> | - Brigadier-General P.H.N. Lake, Chief of the General Staff    |
| <u>2nd Military Member</u> | - Colonel B.H. Vidal, Adjutant-General                         |
| <u>3rd Military Member</u> | - Colonel D.A. Macdonald, Quartermaster-General                |
| <u>4th Military Member</u> | - Colonel W.H. Cotton, Master-General of the Ordnance          |
| <u>Civil Member</u>        | - Colonel L.F. Pinault, Deputy Minister of Militia and Defence |
| <u>Financial Member</u>    | - J.W. Borden, Accountant, Department of Militia and Defence   |
| <u>Secretary</u>           | - E.F. Jarvis, Chief Clerk, Department of Militia and Defence. |

APPENDIX IV

L.P. 349, 93136, Memoranda of the Minister of Militia and Defence relating to the militia estimates, 1905-06.

Comparative Statement of the Militia: 1896-7 and 1904-5

|                     | ESTABLISHMENTS |        |           |        |
|---------------------|----------------|--------|-----------|--------|
|                     | 1896-7         |        | 1904-5    |        |
|                     | All Ranks      | Horses | All Ranks | Horses |
| Cavalry             | 2,295          | 2,099  | 5,795     | 5,361  |
| Artillery           | 4,028          | 835    | 4,371     | 1,614  |
| Engineers           | 212            | -      | 768       | 124    |
| Infantry            | 28,962         | 354    | 35,330    | 410    |
| Army Service Corps. | -              | -      | 856       | 768    |
| Corps of Guides     | -              | -      | 185       | 185    |
| Signalling Corps.   | -              | -      | 90        | -      |
| Medical Corps.      | -              | -      | 795       | 26     |
| Totals              | 35,497         | 3,288  | 48,190    | 8,488  |
| Permanent Corps.    | 801            | 183    | 1,245     | 250    |
| Grand Totals        | 36,298         | 3,471  | 49,435    | 8,738  |

Sessional Papers, 1906, No. 35, Annual Report of the  
Militia Council, 1905, 36.

Statement of militia expenditure for 10 years  
ending June 30, 1905

| 1895-6     | 1896-7    | 1897-8    | 1898-9    | 1899-1900              |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------------------|
| *2,136,713 | 2,413,651 | 1,688,213 | 2,500,635 | 3,624,654              |
| **121,892  | 45,119    | 44,899    | 44,670    | 1,558,756              |
|            |           |           |           |                        |
| 1900-1     | 1901-2    | 1902-3    | 1903-4    | 1904-5                 |
| 3,106,241  | 2,828,887 | 2,513,309 | 3,551,941 | 3,953,162 <sup>2</sup> |
| 1,036,822  | 377,393   | 243,199   | 109,987   | 109,987                |

\* Totals (in dollars)

\*\*Total expenditure of an Imperial nature<sup>1</sup>.

1. ie. Defences of Esquimalt, special services for South Africa and Halifax provisional garrison.
2. The largest amount ever expended on the Militia in one year.

APPENDIX V

Dominion of Canada, Sessional Papers, 1903, No.29a, Papers relating to the Colonial Conference, 1902, 59.

Admiralty memorandum on sea power and the principles involved in it.

Appendix "A". British Empire. Naval Expenditure

| Year    |                              | Population                          | Naval Expenditure             | Naval Expenditure per Head of Population |                 |
|---------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| 1902-3  | United Kingdom               | 41,454,621                          | 31,255,500                    | 15                                       | 1               |
|         |                              | 1901                                | 1900                          |  |                 |
|         | New South Wales              | 1,352,509                           | 47,831                        | 0  | 8½              |
|         | Victoria                     | 1,199,068                           | 59,401                        | 1  | 0<br>(nearly)   |
|         | Queensland                   | 496,596                             | 34,796                        | 1  | 4½              |
|         | South Australia              | 362,604                             | 17,594                        | 0  | 11½             |
|         | Western Australia            | 182,553                             | 4,732                         | 0  | 6½              |
|         | Tasmania                     | 172,475                             | 4,970                         | 0  | 7<br>(nearly)   |
|         | Total Australia              | 3,765,805                           | 169,324                       | 0  | 10½             |
|         | New Zealand                  | 772,719                             | 20,924                        | 0  | 6½              |
| 30-6-99 | Canada                       | 5,312,500                           | Nil                           | Nil                                      |                 |
| "       | Newfoundland                 | 210,000                             | Nil                           | Nil                                      |                 |
| "       | Cape of Good Hope<br>(white) | 538,000                             | 30,000                        | 1  | 1½ <sup>1</sup> |
| 1898    | Natal                        | 53,688                              | 12,000                        | 4  | 5½ <sup>2</sup> |
| 31-3-99 | India*                       | 216,710,483<br>Europeans<br>168,000 | 413,747<br>(for year<br>1960) | -  |                 |

\* Includes £100,000 contribution towards H.M. ships on East India station, and £61,000 subsidy to Admiralty for manning and maintaining H.M. ships for Naval Defence of India.  
 1 £30,000 paid annually towards expenditure of Imperial government.  
 2 £12,000 paid in lieu of 12,000 tons of coal.

APPENDIX VI

- A. Dominion of Canada, Sessional Papers, 1903, No.29a, Papers relating to the Colonial Conference, 1902, 18.

The Board of Admiralty received the following offers of assistance towards the naval expenses of the Empire. The offers were made as a result of individual discussions between the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Selborne, and the representatives of the colonies concerned during the Conference.

Cape Colony: £50,000 per annum to the general maintenance of the navy. No conditions.

Commonwealth of Australia: £200,000 per annum to an improvised Australasian squadron and the establishment of a branch of the Royal Naval Reserve.

Natal: £35,000 per annum to the general maintenance of the navy. No conditions.

Newfoundland: £3,000 per annum (and £1,800 as a special contribution to the fitting and preparation of a drill ship) towards the maintenance of a branch of the Royal Naval Reserve of not less than 600 men.

New Zealand: £40,000 per annum to an improvised Australasian squadron, and the establishment of a branch of the Royal Naval Reserve.



B. Dominion of Canada, Sessional Papers, 1903, No. 29a, Papers relating to the Colonial Conference, 1902, 19.

Even with these increased offers the taxpayers of the British Empire would, in respect of naval expenditure, still be in the following relative positions.

|                           | Population (White) | Naval contribution per caput per annum |     |
|---------------------------|--------------------|--|-----|
| United Kingdom            | 41,454,621         | 15                                     | 2   |
| Cape Colony               | 538,000            | 1                                      | 10½ |
| Commonwealth of Australia | 3,765,805          | 1                                      | 0½  |
| Dominion of Canada        | 5,338,883          | Nil                                    |     |
| Natal                     | 64,951             | 10                                     | 9½  |
| Newfoundland              | 210,000            | 0                                      | 3½  |
| New Zealand               | 772,719            | 1                                      | 0½  |

APPENDIX VII

Dominion of Canada, Sessional Papers, 1903, No.29a, Papers relating to the Colonial Conference, 1902, 82-3.

Memorandum by the Canadian Ministers Concerning Defence

The Canadian Ministers regret that they have been unable to assent to the suggestions made by Lord Selborne respecting the Navy and by Mr. St. John Brodrick respecting the Army. The Ministers desire to point out that their objections arise, not so much from the expense involved, as from a belief that the acceptance of the proposals would entail an important departure from the principle of Colonial self-government. Canada values highly the measure of local independence which has been so productive of beneficial results, both as respects the material progress of the country and the strengthening of the ties that bind it to the motherland. But while, for these reasons, the Canadian Ministers are obliged to withhold their assent to the propositions of the Admiralty and the War Office, they fully appreciate the duty of the Dominion, as it advances in population and wealth, to make more liberal outlay for those necessary preparations of self-defence which every country has to assume and bear.

That the taxpayers of the United Kingdom should desire to be relieved of some of the burdens which they bear in connection with military expenditure is quite reasonable. Canada in the development of its own militia system will be found ready to respond to that desire by taking upon itself some of the services in the Dominion which have hitherto been borne by the Imperial government. What has already been done

by Canada must give assurance of the disposition of the Canadian people to recognize their proper obligations.

In the early years of the Dominion an understanding was come to between the Imperial and Canadian government that Canada should expend about \$1,000,000 annually on her militia system. From time to time that expenditure has been voluntarily increased, and at present apart from the special outlay in connection with the maintenance of the garrison at Halifax, the Dominion is expending about \$2,000,000 annually on her militia.

The efficiency of the Canadian Militia Service having been called in question, it may be of interest to note that many improvements have been made during the past few years; notably the organization of an Army Medical Corps and the creation of an Army Service Corps, the strengthening of the headquarters and district staffs, the exercise of greater care in the selection of permanent force officers, and the affording of greater facilities for the training of the officers of the active militia.

A Militia Pension Law has been enacted for the staff and the permanent force. Annual drillin camps of instruction for the rural corps, and at battalion headquarters for city corps, has been carried out each year during the past six years. A school of musketry has been established at Ottawa, with most encouraging results, rifle ranges have been and are being constructed at the public expense at important centres all over the Dominion, and financial aid is being

offered to local corps in smaller places for the same object. Rifle Associations, whose members are pledged to military service, if required, are being organized and their formation encouraged by the loan of rifles and by grants of free ammunition. A reserve of officers has been established and improvements have also been made in several other important aspects.

The work done by the Militia Department in sending contingents to South Africa may be fairly cited as proof of reasonable efficiency. Without referring to anything which was done outside of the purely Canadian contingents, it is worthy of mention that the first contingent, under Colonel Otter, composed of 1,000 men drawn from every section of Canada embraced within 4,000 miles of territory lying between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, was organised, fully equipped and embarked within a period of 14 days; and that a second contingent, composed of 1,200 men, composed of Field Artillery and Mounted Rifles, was shortly afterwards similarly organized, equipped and embarked within the space of three weeks.

But while thus calling attention to the progress that has already been made by Canada in her militia organization, the Ministers are far from claiming that perfection has been attained. If defects exist, there is every desire on the part of the Canadian government to remove them, and for this purpose the advice and assistance of experienced Imperial officers will be welcomed and all reasonable efforts made to secure an efficient system.

At present Canadian expenditures for defence services are confined to the military side. The Canadian government are prepared to consider the naval side of defence as well. On the sea-coasts of Canada there is a large number of men admirably qualified to form a Naval Reserve, and it is hoped that at an early day a system may be devised which will lead to the training of these men and to the making of their services available for defence in time of need.

In conclusion, the Ministers repeat that, while the Canadian government are obliged to dissent from the measures proposed, they fully appreciate the obligation of the Dominion to make expenditures for the purposes of defence in proportion to the increasing population and wealth of the country. They are willing that these expenditures shall be so directed as to relieve the taxpayer of the mother country from some of the burdens which he now bears; and they have the strongest desire to carry out their defence schemes in co-operation with the Imperial authorities, and under the advice of experienced Imperial officers, so far as this is consistent with the principle of local self-government, which has proved so great a factor in the promotion of Imperial unity.

Bibliographical Note

This study is based principally on documentary sources to be found in the Public Archives of Canada. The most useful single source was the Minto Papers. Minto's preoccupation with military questions, both by inclination and circumstance, determined that material on defence would constitute a large part of this collection. Minto's desire for improvements in the Canadian defence establishment and his hopes for closer inter-imperial military co-operation are well brought out in his papers. His extensive correspondence with Chamberlain, Laurier, Borden and other lesser figures provided the basic material for this study.

The Laurier Papers were of much more limited usefulness. Such material as there was on defence was scattered throughout the papers and bears out the contention that Laurier was predominantly concerned with the political and economic aspects of the problem.

Other valuable sources were provided by the Records of the Department of Militia and Defence, the Despatches of the Privy Council Office and the Governor-General's files. The records of the Department of Militia and Defence, containing imperial despatches relating to defence, covered all aspects of the question. The Governor-General's files contained similar material, although it was less extensive. The importance of the Privy Council despatches lay chiefly in the reports of the Colonial Defence Committee on Canadian and imperial defence.

Of the printed primary sources the most valuable were the Sessional Papers of the Dominion of Canada. The Annual Reports of the Department of Militia and Defence were indispensable, and provided the most comprehensive description of the condition of the Canadian militia. Other Sessional Papers provide detailed information on the North-West Rebellion and the South African War. The House of Commons Debates of the Dominion of Canada were useful in providing material on attitudes towards Canadian defence in particular and imperial defence in general. The reports of the Colonial Conferences were, of course, indispensable. Bringing together the representatives of Great Britain and the self-governing colonies, the conferences clearly reveal the differing interests and ambitions of the constituent parts of the Empire.

A valuable contemporary source was provided by the Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs. Of particular value was its extensive use of newspaper commentaries. Of the secondary sources the biographies of Minto, Chamberlain and Laurier provided valuable supplements to the primary material. Aubrey's essay provided a comprehensive survey of the Hutton affair and Evans' study on the South African War dealt with all aspects of the question affecting the Dominion. These and other sources are discussed in greater detail in the attached bibliography.

Bibliography

Primary Sources - Manuscript

A. Manuscript Group 27: Political Figures, 1867-1948

Minto Papers:

These papers provide the most useful single documentary source for this study. They bring out clearly Minto's preoccupation with military questions during his tenure of office. Of particular relevance were the following volumes:

- 1-2 Memoranda of conversations with Laurier.
- 5-7 Correspondence with Laurier, mainly relating to external affairs.
- 8-9 Correspondence with Borden.
- 12 Correspondence with Lansdowne, Wolseley, Brodrick, Lyttleton, Ommanney, Clarke, Borden.
- 13 Correspondence with Sir J. Paunceforte, British attaché in Washington, predominantly concerned with the Alaskan dispute.
- 14 Correspondence with Chamberlain.
- 15-17 Correspondence with Hutton.
- 18 Correspondence relating to the Hutton incident.
- 19 Hutton's incomplete narrative of Minto's career, and the former's general impressions of Canadian conditions.
- 20 Lengthy memoranda of Tupper to Minto on the South African War, based on government despatches, Tupper's correspondence, newspaper reports and House of Commons debates.
- 21 Correspondence with Kitson and Dundonald. Includes Minto's own memorandum on the Dundonald incident.
- 22 Correspondence with Seymour.

Also of great value were the papers microfilmed in 1955:

- Reel A129: Material on the North-West Rebellion and the Sudan expedition.
- Reel A130: Material on Canadian defence in general and the Canadian Defence Commission, 1884-5, in particular. Correspondence relating to the raising of Canadian troops for imperial service.

B. Manuscript Group 26: Prime Ministers' Papers

Laurier Papers:

The material on defence, such as it was, was scattered throughout the papers. Volumes used were 750-56, (correspondence concerning external relations), 149, 150,



209, 219, 237, 275, 349, 369, 392. Relevant material was often limited to one or two items each volume.

C. Record Group 2: Privy Council Office, 1867-1943

This material was taken from series No.5 and consists predominantly of despatches from the Colonial Office to the Governor-General.

- i. Volume 205, K.1897, Despatch 411, July 31, 1897: Remarks of the Colonial Defence Committee on the Annual Report of the Department of Militia and Defence for 1896.
- ii. Volume 206, K.1897, Despatch 416, August 7, 1897: Memorandum of the Colonial Defence Committee on the principles which should govern Canadian defence.
- iii. Volume 206, K.1897, Despatch 430, August 20, 1897: Memorandum from Chamberlain on the need for uniformity of equipment.
- iv. Volume 229, L.1900, Despatch 295, April 30, 1900: Reports I and II of the Committee on Canadian Defence, 1898.

D. Record Group 7: Governor-General's Office

This material was taken from G.21, the Governor-General's numbered files.

- i. No. 339, Volume II, 1900-04; Includes valuable material on Canadian militia reforms, Borden's membership of the Committee of Imperial Defence and inter-imperial military co-operation in general.
- ii. No. 168: Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1897.

E. Record Group 9: Department of Militia and Defence

II A6, Volumes 4, 5, 6, 7. These volumes contain the imperial despatches affecting the department for the period 1894-1903. The material covers most aspects of Canadian and imperial defence.

Primary Sources - Printed

A. Dominion of Canada, Sessional Papers:

I. Annual Reports of the Department of Militia and Defence

Sessional Paper, No. 19, 1895, "Annual Report of the Department of Militia and Defence for the year ended June 30, 1894."

Sessional Paper, No. 19, 1896, "Annual Report..... June 30, 1895."

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These reports provide a comprehensive account of the strength of the Canadian militia, its yearly activities, the total expenditure on the force and, most important, the report of the General Officer Commanding. In his report the General Officer Commanding gave a critical assessment of the force along with recommendations for its improvement.

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Further Opposition attack was also provoked by the exposure, in the annual reports, of weaknesses in the militia. Nevertheless, two of the chief Conservative spokesmen on defence, Hughes and Tisdale, were genuinely interested in the militia and usually welcomed increased expenditure and any move to promote greater efficiency. The Conservatives often agreed with the report of the General Officer Commanding and on the question of closer military co-operation with Great Britain were generally more sympathetic than the Liberals. Nevertheless, members of both parties expressed fear of European entanglement and the need to concentrate government expenditure on internal development.

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