

HON. ATTY. GEN. MACDONALD said—Before the debate is resumed, I wish to say a few words. I would call the attention of the House to the telegram received to-day—which is rather confused in its terms—with reference to a debate in the House of Lords on the subject of the defences of Canada. According to this telegram, “Earl DE GREY, Secretary of State for War, admitted the importance of the question, but regretted that any doubt should be expressed of the conciliatory intentions of the Americans. The Government would ask a vote of £50,000 for the Quebec defences, while the Canadians would undertake the defences of Montreal and westward.” The amount, according to another statement, is £30,000. The figures are apparently a mistake for £300,000. My object in rising was to state that so far as we could gather from this confused summary of the debate, the Imperial Government were about to ask a certain amount for the defences of Quebec, while the Canadians would undertake the defence of Montreal and the country westward. I may state it is quite true that the Imperial Government made a proposition some time ago to the effect that they were willing and prepared to recommend to Parliament a vote for the defence of Quebec, as is here stated, provided this province undertook the defence of Montreal and points westward. Negotiations have been going on on this question between the Imperial Government and the Canadian Government ever since, and I think that there is every reason to believe that these negotiations will result most favorably, and that arrangements will be made in a manner such as to secure the defence of Canada, both east and west—in a manner such as to ensure the fullest protection to the country, and as at the same time will not press unduly on the energies of the people. (Hear.) Sir, those negotiations are still proceeding—they have not yet concluded—and it must be obvious to every honorable member who has read this short synopsis of the debate in the Imperial Parliament, that it is of the greatest possible importance that Canada should not be unrepresented in England at the present time. (Cheers.) It must be evident to all that some of the leading members of the Administration should be in England at this juncture, for the purpose of attending to Canadian interests, and of concluding these negotiations without any loss of time whatever. (Hear, hear.) It is desirable, as I stated yesterday, that the two questions of Federation and Defence should be discussed

at the same moment, and that the opportunity should be taken of exactly ascertaining the position of British North America with respect to her degree of reliance on the Imperial Government in a political sense, as well as with regard to the question of defence. Therefore, there should not be any loss of time whatever, and with that view the Government would ask this House—as the discussion has already gone on to a considerable length, and a great many honorable gentlemen have spoken on the subject—that it will offer no undue delay in coming to a conclusion in this matter. Of course the Government would not attempt to shut down the floodgates against all discussion; but they would merely ask and invite the House to consider the importance of as early a vote as the House can properly allow to be taken upon this question. It is for the House to determine whether the Federation scheme which has been proposed by the Government and laid before the House is one which, with all its faults, should be adopted, or whether we shall be thrown upon an uncertain future. In order that the House may at once come to an understanding in the matter, I shall, as I stated yesterday, take every possible step known to parliamentary usage to get a vote as soon as it can conveniently be got, and I have therefore now to move the previous question. (Ironical Opposition cheers and counter cheering.) I move, sir, that the main question be now put. (More cheering.) Honorable gentlemen opposite know very well that my making this motion does not in any way stop the debate. (Hear, hear.) The House will be gratified to hear, and will still have an opportunity of hearing, from the honorable member from Chateauguay (Hon. Mr. HOLTON), who cries “Hear, hear,” an expression of opinion whether this scheme is so objectionable that the House would be wise in rejecting it, with nothing now offered as a substitute, and no future to look to. It will afford us all great pleasure to hear the honorable gentleman say whether we should adopt this scheme. There is an independent motion on the paper of my honorable friend from Peel (Hon. J. H. CAMERON). My motion does not interfere with that. But if the House should consider that this scheme ought to be adopted, my honorable friend will then have an opportunity of proposing his motion. (Hear, hear.)

THE SPEAKER—If honorable gentlemen desire it, I will read the rule of the House as to the previous question. The 35th rule of the House is as follows:—“The previous