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**House Commons Debate**, 14th May 1901. ARMY ORGANISATION

Sir John Colomb:

*I hope the House will appreciate the difficulty in which this ruling of the Chair has placed me. This resolution is one with which I disagree for reasons which I am not allowed to give. I would point out that this Army reform, being a development of the new departure of policy in 1871, is to continue a policy that expends vast sums upon military home defence upon a theory of invasion, and neglects the real military wants of the Empire over sea. And it does all this upon a hypothesis which has never been proved, upon which His Majesty's Ministers themselves totally differ, and which, I say, and say fearlessly, will not stand the test of scientific examination. I decline, for one, to vote for the resolution as a part of that policy. I absolutely decline to vote any more money for military home defence until I am satisfied that there is some ground for it. The one redeeming feature of the policy we have pursued since 1871 is the magnificent force of Volunteers which have been produced and are actually in existence. That is the one real grand thing which we have got out of it. Speaking with some knowledge of the subject, and after a painstaking examination of the facts of the case, I say that, in my judgment, that force, if sufficiently well organised and 122 treated in a common-sense way, is more than sufficient in numbers, if made reasonably efficient, to perform all the military defensive duties in the United Kingdom in time of war, under conditions of sea supremacy; and if you have not got sea supremacy it is no good trying to survive.*

**House Commons Debate**, 13th March 1911. ARMY AND NAVY EXPENDITURE.

Mr William Byles, MP for Salford North:

*I have already quoted the right hon. Baronet's words to the effect that this policy of increasing expenditure upon armaments was leading to national bankruptcy, and I have charged him with going on with that policy a step further and coming here to defend it. I ask the House gravely to consider what this expenditure is for. Are we going to invade anyone, or is anyone going to invade us? If so, let us know who it is. It cannot be the United States, because that is unthinkable and geographically they are too far from us. It cannot be France that we are afraid of because, I suppose, we have an entente with France, how close or comprehensive has never been explained. Of course, it is Germany, as we have been told over and over again in this Debate. There is a section of the population in this country obsessed with the fear of Germany, and they see German spies just as a drunkard sees stars which do not exist. When they are having their chin shaved by a German barber they think he is a German spy, and when they sit at the table with a German governess they think she is writing home 1950 to her friends acting as a spy against this country. Surely it is not worthy of the Government to entertain such ridiculous suspicions as those. The fact is, we are as closely intertwined and intermarried, both in our domestic relations and in a thousand ties of commerce, with Germany as we can be to any nation. Even our Court speaks with a German accent. I do not believe there is anyone in this House or in the country who really wants to injure or to destroy that great neighbour nation.*

**House Commons Debate**, 5th August 1914. ALIENS RESTRICTION BILL.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. McKenna):

*Information in the possession of the Government proves that cases of espionage have been frequent in recent years, and many spies have been caught and dealt with by the police. Within the last twenty-four hours no fewer than twenty-one spies, or suspected spies, have been arrested in various places all over the country, chiefly in important military or naval centres, some of them long known to the authorities to be spies. The*

*arrangements contemplated by the Order have been designed with a view to cause as little inconvenience as possible to alien friends, while leaving effective control over dangerous enemy aliens.*

**Other posts of possible interest:**

Rupert, G.G. (1911) The Yellow Peril

Conan Doyle, A. (1913) Great Britain and the Next War

Lowe, C. (1910) About German Spies