

in the light of the definition of Canada's attitude by Mr. St. Laurent which was circulated with the document under review:

"In view of the historic position of Canada, I wish to make it clear, so far as Canada is concerned, that in agreeing to recommend consultation between Commonwealth governments to arrange cooperative action in matters of defence, it would be unreal for us to regard as effective either general or regional plans of defence which would comprise Commonwealth countries exclusively, and which did not also include other peace-loving countries prepared to cooperate in resisting aggression."

7. Canada is ready at all times to exchange information and consult with the nations of the Commonwealth in order that each may be in a position to decide how its resources may be used most effectively in the defence of peace. However, as was clearly stated by Mr. St. Laurent at the meeting of Prime Ministers, it would be unreal for us to contemplate military planning on any basis that would not extend to other than Commonwealth nations. It is our understanding that the suggestion that the "military advisers" of the Commonwealth nations "will consult together to frame proposals and plans for submission to their respective governments", refers to the existing or similar arrangements for liaison and exchange of information and consultation. Any other interpretation of this proposal would, as Mr. St. Laurent indicated at the meeting, be completely unrealistic, especially in view of the consultation and planning which must be expected to take place in connection with the proposed North Atlantic Security Pact and possibly other similar regional arrangements capable of expansion to include all freedom-loving nations.

8. The other proposals, as we have said, generally describe existing machinery for consultation and cooperation. We see only danger ahead in any effort either to formalize or to change substantially procedures which are already working satisfactorily. This does not mean that such procedures must always remain the same. Arrangements are constantly developing to meet changing needs and circumstances and this has been the traditional pattern of development within the Commonwealth.

9. We believe that the system of responsible and representative government worked out over the years is the best system yet developed for the government of our people. Under that system, decisions on major questions of foreign policy and defence are not made by military officers or by individual ministers or by representatives in another country; they are made by the Cabinet which is responsible through Parliament to the people. We have always insisted on this principle.

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