

the particular despatch of which I have just given the substance.

Receiving the despatch in the manner described, I immediately sent a communication to His Majesty's government somewhat along the following lines: That before it was possible to have the contents of the cable which had come from London communicated to myself or other members of the government the press of Canada carried despatches from Great Britain announcing an invitation by the British government to Canada to participate in resistance of Turkish forces by sending a contingent. I pointed out that a most embarrassing situation had arisen in consequence, that I was being asked by press representatives if any communication, and if so what communications, had been received from the British government. As the message from Great Britain had been marked secret and was in cipher, I was not at liberty to disclose its contents and I asked if the British government would cable immediately stating their wishes in the matter, and whether I was at liberty to disclose the contents of the communication in whole or in part, and if not, what communication the British government desired to have made public as coming from them. I concluded the despatch by saying that our parliament would certainly wish to have copies of all official correspondence in this matter brought down. I asked the British government clearly to indicate, as regards communications, which they might send, what, if any, should be regarded as not coming within the sphere of publicity. I felt that a request for the correspondence was a most natural and proper request, and would be made as soon as Parliament assembled, and it was my desire that if possible this document and others which might pass should be given the fullest publicity. For this reason I endeavoured at the very outset—as soon as I saw the despatch on the Sunday morning, the day following its receipt at Ottawa—to make it quite clear to the British government that as soon as parliament met the government would be confronted, as it has been this afternoon, with a request for publicity in the matter of all despatches, and that I would like the British government to give their consent to have all the correspondence brought down. I was also anxious to give at the time the fullest publicity to the despatch.

The reply I received to the part of the communication to which I have just referred, asking for permission to make the despatch public, was to the effect that it was not suitable for publication textually. The British government indicated that the substance of

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the despatch might be given in a general statement, but expressed the hope that the despatch itself would not be given publicly. I then gave the following statement to the press on Monday, September 18th at 6.30 p.m.

As already mentioned the only communication which our government has thus far received with respect to the situation in the Near East from the British Government is a cable despatch marked "secret," the contents of which, without the consent of the British government we do not feel at liberty to make public. It is the view of the government that public opinion in Canada would demand authorization on the part of Parliament as a necessary preliminary to the despatch of any contingent to participate in the conflict in the Near East. The government is in communication with members of the cabinet at present in Europe as Canada's representatives at the League of Nations, and with the British government, with a view to ascertaining whether the situation that exists in the Near East is one which would justify the summoning of a special session of Parliament.

I informed the British government that our cabinet would hold daily sittings, if necessary, that we would be pleased to receive the fullest information; in particular that we wished to be informed whether in their opinion it was desirable that the Canadian parliament should be called to consider this important matter. The reply which was received to this communication was to the effect that the British government saw no necessity for the summoning of parliament.

I should have made mention earlier in this general statement of the nature of the reply sent by the government in answer to the despatch which was received. It was to the effect that as respects the sending of any contingent, it was our view that parliament alone should authorize a step of the kind, and that we would be pleased to receive the fullest information in order to decide upon the advisability of summoning parliament.

Hon. members will recall that for some days there was considerable uncertainty as to the outcome of events, and during that time the government did not deem it advisable to press the British government further in the matter of the publicity to be given to the despatches, or for an explanation of the circumstances accounting for the issue of the circular press communication advising that Canada had been invited to send a contingent to the Near East before our government had received the despatch in question. However, when the crisis appeared to have passed, we did send a further communication to the British government, asking if it were possible to have an explanation, and mentioning again our desire to give publicity to the communications that were received. A change of government came about that time in Great Britain, and the government which succeeded