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Immediate

8th April, 1941.

MOST SECRET

My dear Prime Minister,

I have just been informed by telegraph by the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs that a telegram in the following terms has been addressed to the Governor of Newfoundland:-

"The Prime Minister has received a message from President Roosevelt, stating that he was concerned at the possibility of raids by surface naval vessels against Newfoundland which might, in addition to local damage, adversely affect the construction of the United States bases. He was therefore proposing to send United States forces to St. John's on a transport leaving New York on the 16th April, arriving at St. John's on the 20th April. The forces consist of a half battery of 8 inch guns, to be mounted at St. John's, one squadron of three medium and three heavy bomber aeroplanes, 57 officers and 575 men. The United States Government propose to discuss the despatch of these forces to Newfoundland informally with the Canadian authorities and to consult with their officers at St. John's as to the mounting of the 8 inch guns there. It is added that the aeroplanes will occupy the quarters constructed for their use by the Canadian Government.

"The Prime Minister considers that the action proposed is to be welcomed as affording valuable security to the island and has informed President Roosevelt that he agrees."

Lord Cranborne adds that the United Kingdom Government recognise that the Canadian Government have assumed certain responsibilities with regard to the defence of Newfoundland. At the same time it is clearly of the highest importance that the Canadian military authorities in Newfoundland should work in close consultation with the Newfoundland Government with regard to the arrangements which are now contemplated, and I have been asked to invite the Canadian Government urgently to take the necessary steps to ensure this.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) MALCOLM MACDONALD

The Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, M.P.,
Secretary of State for External Affairs,
Ottawa.

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