

Mr. FLEMING: Can we expect this legislation before parliament this year?

Hon. Mr. PEARSON: I think that the government wants to bring it down as quickly as possible. I hope it will be dealt with at this session.

Mr. COLDWELL: This year?

Hon. Mr. PEARSON: As Mr. Martin would say, this year!

Mr. QUELCH: I would like to ask a question regarding Iran? Is the United Nations taking any action at the present time under the United Action for Peace Resolution?

Hon. Mr. PEARSON: No, the question has not come before the United Nations; so far it has been considered as a domestic question.

Mr. QUELCH: Does it have to come before it especially? As soon as you recognize a danger spot have you not the right to send a representative in there to observe things?

Hon. Mr. PEARSON: Any one would have the right to bring any matter before the United Nations as a threat to peace and security, but no one has taken that step yet as regards Iran.

Mr. QUELCH: I noticed in the press that Britain has ordered a parachute brigade to a point within easy reach of Iran. Has Britain the right to send a parachute brigade there without authority from the United Nations?

Hon. Mr. PEARSON: I would not like to comment on that.

Mr. QUELCH: It came over the radio that the parachute brigade has been ordered to some island in the Near East.

Hon. Mr. PEARSON: I have no information from any source which suggests that the United Kingdom government is sending any troops to Iran for the protection of property or persons.

Mr. QUELCH: I did not say they were sending them to Iran, the news item said they were being sent to some point within easy distance of Iran.

Mr. FRASER: On the Suez Canal.

Hon. Mr. PEARSON: That might be a routine troop movement.

Mr. GREEN: Could the minister tell us anything about this conference which is to take place at Malta? I understand there is to be a commonwealth conference held there.

Hon. Mr. PEARSON: We are discussing it with other governments concerned at the present time. As the Prime Minister said the other day he will be making an announcement on that matter in a very short time. This meeting arises out of the recent Prime Ministers' meeting in London when certain defence questions—regional defence questions—of particular interest to some governments of the commonwealth were discussed. In that discussion at the Prime Ministers' meeting, not all of the members of the commonwealth participated because some were not as interested as others in this particular aspect of defence at that time. It was understood in London that these discussions might be followed up with discussions between the Defence Ministers of countries concerned and this meeting is the result of that decision.

Mr. COLDWELL: What countries felt they were concerned, do you remember, Mr. Pearson?

Hon. Mr. PEARSON: At the London meeting—I speak subject to correction—I think all the commonwealth Prime Ministers participated except those of India, Pakistan and Ceylon, but at that time our Prime Minister pointed out that as this was a regional defence discussion and as we had regional defence commitments in other areas, our interest in middle east, Mediterranean, defence would have to be considered in the light of the regional defence commitments we had in other places.