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such attempts we must utilize to the best advantage possible the men and equipment we have and are able to obtain.

It goes without saying that in any attempted attack on the North American continent, the joint United States-Canadian plans for defence would come into immediate operation. What I have said is, I trust, a sufficient indication that the security of our Canadian coasts is not only not being neglected but is being constantly increased and strengthened. I can assure the house that, keeping in mind strategic conditions elsewhere, the government is endeavouring, practically and vigorously, to strengthen Canada's defences by sea, land and air to meet any situation which is likely to arise.

Something has been said during the course of the present debate about the possibility of Canada sending a force to Australia. In connection with the utilization of the Canadian army there has been one principle which the government has invariably held to, and that is that our troops should serve where and in whatever way they can do the most good to the common cause.

We consulted with those with whom we are associated in the war effort as to how best we could help, and we undertook a programme accordingly, which I announced in January. We had full consultation with our military advisers, and in view of the obligations to which we had committed ourselves overseas, and having regard to the other factors involved, it did not appear to be in the interests of the combined war effort that Canada should undertake at this time the sending of an expeditionary force to Australia. There was the further important circumstance that such dispositions were properly the subject of consideration, not by Canada alone but by the combined chiefs of staff committee of the united nations. It goes without saying that we are most anxious to cooperate with our sister dominion in every practicable way at this time of danger, and we have examined and have communicated with Australia, respecting other forms of assistance.

What I have said does not mean that Canada, as far as the army is concerned, withdraws one iota from the attitude we have taken, namely, that Canada wants its troops to be used in whatever way and in whatever theatre it is considered they can make the most useful contribution. That has been and will continue to be our position. In addition to other statements on the subject, I, myself, have personally made that purpose abundantly clear to the United Kingdom government.

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

Mr. GREEN: May I ask the Prime Minister a question with regard to the latter part of his statement? He did not say anything about the Pacific council for which Australia has been pressing so strongly. Is the Prime Minister in a position to state whether Canada will ask that such a Pacific council be set up, and will ask for representation on that council?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: The subject to which my hon. friend has just referred is a part of a larger subject, which is, the most effective kind of cooperation that can be arranged between the united nations, and in particular, between the governments of the United Kingdom and the United States.

As the house is well aware, the foundation of that cooperative effort was laid at the time of the visit of Mr. Churchill to Washington. Since then, very careful consideration has been given to what is likely in the long run to be best in the way of boards or councils on which the different parts of the empire, the United States, and the other united nations may be represented. There are advantages and disadvantages with respect to having all these boards or councils located in the United Kingdom; advantages and disadvantages in having them all located in the United States. What the countries concerned have been seeking to do is to weigh carefully, in the light of all considerations which should be taken into account, the best arrangement for furthering a common, cooperative effort.

In regard to the Pacific council, it was felt for some time that, having regard to strategic considerations in particular, the area which was immediately concerned was the southern Pacific and the far east, and that the nations which should be called into consultation in reference to matters likely to arise there, should be the nations that were more immediately concerned with that particular area.

May I say this, in a general way, that sometimes an individual achieves most, not by asserting himself too much, but by effacing himself, by taking into account the difficulties which others have and which have to be met, and by seeking as far as possible not to emphasize and increase those difficulties, but rather to minimize and lessen them and, as far as it is possible, overcome them. In that regard it is much the same with a nation as with an individual. One of the difficulties which presents itself respecting the appointment of a board or council which relates to any part of the British commonwealth is, that the commonwealth is composed of several self-governing nations and, where one part seeks representation on a particular board or council, unless it is possible to give the

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best of reasons why every other part of the commonwealth should not be similarly represented, a difficulty immediately presents itself.

I give that as an illustration of the kind of thing which has presented itself to the Prime Minister of Britain and his colleagues in deciding upon representation of certain nations of the commonwealth in Britain and the kind of thing of which we here have had to take account in considering whether we should be represented on a board or council in Washington rather than in London. Hon. members will see at once that, the minute Washington is preferred to London in the matter of representation on some board or council that has to do with war strategy and war policy, a question arises in the public mind, as to why Washington was chosen in preference to London.

Up to the present, and may I say, right along, we have taken the position as a government that, where we saw that Canada's interests were likely to be prejudiced in any particular, we have made strong protest and strong representations as to why we should be given representation which up to that time we had not had. But where we have had reason to believe that our position was such that it in no way was being prejudiced or impaired, we have sought, as I have said, not to raise or press matters which were likely to make a difficult situation more difficult, but rather to watch the situation and at the right moment gain the representation we wished.

That is, I think, pretty much the situation with regard to the matter of Canada's representation on a council at Washington at the present time, that the final arrangements in respect to that council have not yet been made as between Britain and the United States; but both know that Canada expects to have full representation, and we have no reason to believe that we shall not have the needed representation at the moment that it may be best to bring it into being.

Mr. GREEN: I raise the point because the Australian minister who is now visiting in the United States is reported as having expressed the wish that Canada should have representation on that council; and for a Pacific coast Canadian it is of vital importance that we should be on that council. The situation has changed so much now, with the Malay States and Java gone, that I think Canada comes fairly into the Pacific picture and should be represented on that council.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Yes. But may I say to my hon. friend that I hope it will not be assumed, because we are not actually

represented on any council, that we are not kept very fully informed with respect to all that is taking place and that Canada's interests in every particular are not being closely watched. We have our liaison officers at Washington; we have there the representatives of the different departments; we have our minister. We have similar representation in London. We are, I can say, kept informed day by day as to any matters of vital concern. The matter of the formal representation, in the long run, is something which relates only to the question of the right moment.

Mr. GREEN: Is it not a fact that Australia and New Zealand, in addition to Great Britain, are already represented on the Pacific council?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: At the moment I cannot answer my hon. friend's question, because I am not sure whether both countries are being represented. I know that both expect to be represented, and they may be.

Hon. R. B. HANSON (Leader of the Opposition): The position in relation to the Pacific council as explained by the Prime Minister may be described as one of watchful waiting. I gather that so far Canada has not been asked to become a member of this council; and with that, I think, at the moment we shall have to be content. But there is no doubt that a large body of public opinion, especially in western Canada and of British Columbia—which opinion the hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Green) has presented in this house—thinks Canada as a Pacific power should be represented on that council. Whether or not that is possible at the moment, I do not know, and I do not propose to explore the position any further this afternoon.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: May I say to my hon. friend that I hardly think the expression "watchful waiting" describes it, because our position has been strongly presented to the United Kingdom and the United States governments. They both are informed of our attitude and of our desires. Governments do not all move as rapidly as some people would like, and it is just a matter of the right moment of adjustment.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Have we asked to be represented on the Pacific council, or how far has Canada gone? I will make that inquiry.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I will say we have, yes.