

More recently it has been said that "so far as the Empire Air Training Scheme is concerned this was proposed by the British nearly two years ago but apparently discouraged by the King government until after the outbreak of war".

I assume that what is referred to are certain informal, exploratory conversations concerning facilities for the training of British pilots in Canada which took place, not two years ago, but in May and June of last year. The facts were clearly set forth in a statement I subsequently made to Parliament.

The conversations did not relate to a Joint Air Training Plan. Their purpose was to ascertain whether it would be agreeable to the Canadian Government to have United Kingdom schools for the advanced training of pilots of the Royal Air Force established in Canada, under the authority and direction of the Air Ministry of the United Kingdom. It was represented that it was becoming increasingly difficult to secure in the British Isles the open spaces needed for long distance flying and gunnery practice. What was contemplated was a British air training establishment in Canada, organized and controlled by the Air Ministry of the United Kingdom, in no way responsible to the Canadian Government, but responsible solely to the Government of the United Kingdom.

*The attitude of the Canadian government*

When the matter was broached, speaking on behalf of the Government, I immediately said I was sure the Canadian people would gladly have pilots of the Royal Air Force come to Canada for advanced training and would be prepared to provide the necessary facilities, but that I believed they would feel that the necessary establishments should, under terms to be agreed upon, be organized and controlled by the Royal Canadian Air Force, and that the responsibility for their administration should be that of the Government of Canada, rather than that of the Government of the United Kingdom. I added that I felt such a basis was indispensable to friendly and effective co-operation between the two Air Forces as well as between the two Governments.

Long ago, the constitutional principle was accepted that military establishments in Canadian territory should be owned, maintained and controlled by the Government of Canada, responsible