

Diplomatic Service

After making that assertion, the paper states:

The Canadian people have the right to know if King George VI did express, in a communication to the Canadian government, a personal desire which would amount to an intrusion of the government of Great Britain in our foreign politics. The Canadian people also have the right to know if the king expressed this desire before the issuance of the new letters patent or only during the last weeks.

I feel I can say this much: There has been no communication whatsoever from His Majesty referring to the manner in which it would be agreeable to him to have letters of credence to Canadian ambassadors and ministers dealt with since May, 1947 and there has been no communication at any time which would amount to an intrusion by the government of Great Britain in our foreign politics.

Any suggestion that His Majesty may have been acting on advice of the United Kingdom ministers in the course of the correspondence with the Prime Minister of Canada about these letters patent is fantastic. I will merely recall, because it is too clear to require any comment, that the right to advise His Majesty in prerogative matters affecting Canada resides exclusively in the government of Canada.

The conference on the operation of dominion legislation held in London in 1929 to provide for the implementation of the declaration of the imperial conference of 1926, made the following declaration:

It is the right of the government of each dominion to advise the Crown in relation to all matters relating to its own affairs.

The report of this conference was approved by the imperial conference of 1930.

This was followed by the statute of Westminster, 1931, which refers to the declarations and resolutions set forth in the reports of these conferences and makes the legislative provisions required to ratify, confirm and establish such of these declarations and resolutions as it was necessary to deal with by legislation.

The new letters patent in increasing the powers of the governor general represent a very significant constitutional advance in line with the declarations of the conferences and the statute of Westminster. To suggest that there has been anything whatsoever which could be regarded as retrogressive in connection therewith or in connection with the practices thereunder is absolutely unwarranted.

What I have already said disposes also of the assertion in the article of the *Chicago Tribune* referred to by the hon. member. With regard to the references in that article to the appointment of Mr. Edmond Turcotte, I

[Mr. St. Laurent.]

need only say this: The correspondence relating to the new letters patent and to what was intended to be the practice thereunder took place several months before Mr. Turcotte's appointment. Moreover, Mr. Turcotte was not appointed ambassador or minister. He was appointed consul general, an appointment of a different character, which was made by order of His Excellency the Governor General in council on the 27th of October last.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

WELCOME TO MEMBERS ON RETURN TO HOUSE
AFTER ILLNESS

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have been pleased to observe that the leader of the C.C.F. party (Mr. Coldwell) is in his seat today. I think I may venture to say, on behalf of all parties in the house, that we much regretted the indisposition which caused his absence from the house during the past ten days, and we are pleased indeed to see him again in his seat.

Mr. JOHN BRACKEN (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to say that in this matter the Prime Minister speaks I think for all members of the house. I am glad to see the leader of the C.C.F. party back in his seat.

Mr. R. M. WARREN (Renfrew North): Mr. Speaker, I should like to draw attention to the fact that a friend of ours, the hon. member for Selkirk (Mr. Bryce), who has been absent from the house for some time on account of illness, is with us again today. On behalf of the back benchers I wish to welcome him back to his place in this house.

FUR SEALS

PROVISIONAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN CANADA AND
THE UNITED STATES

Hon. J. A. MacKINNON (Minister of Fisheries) moved the first reading of Bill No. 35 (from the senate) respecting the provisional fur seal agreement between Canada and the United States.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

WAR SERVICE GRANTS ACT

ABOLITION OF BOARD OF REVIEW

Hon. MILTON F. GREGG (Minister of Veterans Affairs) moved the first reading of Bill No. 47 (from the senate) to amend the War Service Grants Act, 1944.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.