

Canadian Regiments at Hong Kong

exact and precise information regarding the present standing of trained man-power in Canada?

The second fact made evident by the minister's statement is that the failure to provide universal carriers, which are fighting vehicles, and other transport at the port of embarkation at the proper time rests with the Canadian authorities. The direct responsibility for this failure must be determined and those responsible must be disciplined. The third fact revealed by the minister's statement is that the commander of the expedition, Brigadier Lawson, was disappointed at the lack of mechanical transports which he should have had. His cable from the boat leads to no other conclusion.

Having regard to all these factors, the country is entitled to know why the expedition was not recalled until such time as the transport and equipment could be provided to go along with the expedition. These are questions upon which the country is entitled to receive specific and factual information, and the only manner in which such information can be provided satisfactorily is by a searching public investigation by a committee of this house. I think the minister himself should welcome a public investigation. A departmental investigation will not satisfy public opinion. Therefore I invite him to set up a special committee of this house to investigate the factual and exact situation regarding what happened in connection with sending these men to Hong Kong.

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): Perhaps my hon. friend will allow me to say a word as there is some responsibility on the part of the government as a whole in a matter of this kind. As a matter of special privilege my hon. friend has asked for permission to make a statement. I took no exception to my hon. friend so doing, but I wish he had been careful to refrain from using words in his statement that I do not think were at all justified. He referred to the statement made yesterday by my colleague, the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Ralston), as a subtle statement. I am sure that any hon. members of the house who listened to the statement of the Minister of Defence regarded it as a very straightforward, honest and frank statement, and I would add that my hon. friend in his reply yesterday, unless I misunderstood him, more or less so designated it, but since that time he has evidently been receiving information from outside sources and to-day has presented us with the result of his further communications with

[Mr. R. B. Hanson.]

others. May I say to my hon. friend that the government will certainly grant, and grant immediately, a committee of investigation into this matter. We welcome the opportunity of so doing, and the committee will be granted just as soon as opportunity permits.

Mr. M. J. COLDWELL (Rosetown-Biggart): Mr. Speaker, we welcome the committee which the leader of the opposition (Mr. Hanson) has asked for and which the Prime Minister so readily granted, but may I ask that the order of reference be wide enough to permit the committee to inquire how the force was asked for, who decided it should go, and under what conditions it went. I suggest that there is something involved in that which should be looked into by a committee of this house.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I think my hon. friend and colleague (Mr. Ralston) in his statement yesterday made all these points clear, but I can assure my hon. friend that there will be no desire on the part of the government to limit the investigation in any essential particular.

Mr. POULIOT: Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege, and referring to page 4476 of *Hansard* of last session, the *Hansard* of yesterday, where I said that: "the Minister of National Defence should resign on account of the Hong Kong affair," the record is not complete because immediately after I had said that, the leader of the opposition (Mr. Hanson) shouted "Order" to prevent my saying anything further. That was, as always, a complete contradiction; he does not know what he wants.

On motion of Mr. Mackenzie King the house adjourned at 4.15 p.m.

Friday, January 23, 1942

The house met at three o'clock.

TAXATION

AGREEMENTS WITH PROVINCES RESPECTING
INCOME AND CORPORATION TAXES

On the orders of the day:

Hon. R. B. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, the last day of the last session, I asked the Minister of Finance (Mr. Ilesley) to table the agreements proposed to be entered into with the provinces respecting the vacating of certain fields of taxation. On that occasion he said he would like to