

These were transferred to or enlisted direct by the British authorities in the Royal Air Force.

I might, perhaps, say just a word as to the repatriation of these young men. Those that were seconded from us to the Royal Air Force came back to us and were repatriated with our forces. The young men enlisted in Canada in the Royal Air Force, and also a certain number who were transferred outright to the British authorities, did not come back to our forces, and they are the young men who, it has been stated in the press, have not been able to get steamer accommodation to return to Canada. It is the responsibility of the Imperial Government to repatriate these officers. However, we did all we could to get steamer accommodation for them, but when 50,000 of our own troops are being returned monthly, it is impossible to accommodate everybody and somebody has to wait. We have been able to transport 1,000 of them to Canada recently, but I should not like to say that that does not mean that some of our troops have been held back a little.

Mr. POWER: By whom were these officers paid?

Sir EDWARD KEMP: Officers who were enlisted in Canada by the British authorities and officers transferred outright by us were paid by the British, but officers, seconded by us to the British were paid by Canada.

Mr. POWER: Does that include flying pay?

Sir EDWARD KEMP: It includes everything.

Mr. POWER: We pay the full pay?

Sir EDWARD KEMP: We pay the full pay if they are seconded by us. We finally succeeded in getting the British Minister of Air to furnish us with the following information regarding Canadians in the Royal Air Force:

1. The Royal Air Force agreed to furnish the minister with a nominal roll of Canadians in the Royal Air Force, and to advise him from time to time of all accretions to and deductions from it.
2. All Canadians in the Royal Air Force were to be permitted to wear a Canadian badge either on their shoulder straps or on their sleeve.
3. It was agreed to give Canadians representation on the Royal Air Force Headquarters and Staff.
4. A monthly statement of the exploits of Canadian airmen was to be furnished to the minister, with a view to its dissemination to the Canadian public.
5. It was agreed in principle that Canada should have a Flying Corps of her own, which, while distinct in its organization and administration, would form part of the Royal Air Force for the purpose of operations in the field.

I should now like to take up for a moment the matter of the Canadian Air Force. It was found there was a great desire on the part of the people of this country and of some of the officers themselves in our forces overseas that we should have a distinct air force and it was felt that we should eventually have a nucleus for an air force, more particularly in view of the future development of this branch of the service, not only in a military, but in a commercial sense. We negotiated on this point with the British authorities, and it was very difficult to work out a plan whereby, if we organized a Canadian force, it could operate in connection with the Royal

5 p.m. Air Force at the front. After a good deal of negotiation, however, it was arranged that we were to have an air force of our own, but the men did not have time to become thoroughly trained organized and equipped before the 11th of November. There are, in England two squadrons of the Canadian Air Force, these squadrons being formed in accordance with this memorandum:

1. That the formation of two Canadian Air Squadrons should be proceeded with forthwith.
2. That these squadrons should be organized in England by the Overseas Military Forces of Canada in conjunction with the Royal Air Force.
3. That the type of Unit and equipment should be decided by the Air Council.

The fourth item is quite a long memorandum which I shall not attempt to read, but it deals with the way in which we should get the personnel. I feel very strongly upon the desirability of, at any rate for a time, retaining intact these two flying squadrons in the service of Canada. Canadians have shown themselves adaptable for this particular branch of the service; to use a commonplace expression, they have taken to it as a duck takes to water. They have made a great record in France, and it would be a pity if we did not do what other nations are doing in connection with a Flying Branch of the Military service, not only with respect to military operations which might be considered a secondary matter, but with respect to commercial air flying in the future. In view of all these considerations and also the pride our Canadians have taken in flying, and their splendid deeds, it would be a great pity if, when these men return to Canada, they should be just demobilized and sent to the four corners of the country, without our having a nucleus for a flying corps. I hope this matter will be taken into careful consideration and that something will be done in this regard.