

Mr. SMITH (*Hastings-Frontenac*): I am unable to say what actual papers passed between the Department of National Defence which carried on these conversations with the Secretary of Defence for the United States without disclosing cabinet secrets.

The appointment of Air Marshal Slemon was the foundation of the joint defence arrangement; and as I stated on Tuesday—and I say it again—I said the sooner the better the notes should be drawn up and exchanged.

Speaking for myself, I like to explore a new field—so long as war does not catch up with us in the meantime. I like to work a thing out by induction rather than by deduction or by some hypothesis or some premise which has not yet been tested.

As I said on Tuesday, the joint commanders worked together in harness in putting forward recommendations with respect to the matters you are raising, and that is why I suppose I laid emphasis on the exchange of notes.

Mr. KNOWLES (*Winnipeg North Centre*): As a member from Winnipeg I still want to call you Doctor.

Mr. SMITH (*Hastings-Frontenac*): Please do not. I gave up the doctorates. All my doctorates are “phony”.

Mr. KNOWLES (*Winnipeg North Centre*): When you read this order in council it says that Air Marshal Slemon is appointed as Deputy Commander in Chief of Canadian-United States air defence command. Here is an appointment to an establishment for the legal basis of which we do not have any document.

The problem was also presented to us in your own words when you said that these military discussions—these discussions at the military level—were made possible by political decisions of the two countries, and that the Department of External Affairs was somehow involved in the making of those political decisions.

Can you tell us, sir, something more about the making of those political decisions, and how the Department of External Affairs became involved?

I recognize that we have a type of government where every member of the cabinet is responsible to all the other members for what goes on and for what you might say to us. Does not the Minister of National Defence speak for the government when he negotiates with the Secretary of State of the United States? But you yourself and Mr. Pearkes keep talking about these things as a larger, over-riding proposition that the governments approved of. What we are concerned about is to get just where the whole Canadian government comes into the picture and in particular where the civil authority of NATO is superior to the military authority.

Mr. SMITH (*Hastings-Frontenac*): In its decision the cabinet had the advice of the Secretary of State for External Affairs at that time. That was brought to bear on the political decision of the cabinet to authorize this principle, and to ask the Minister of National Defence to take it up further with his counterpart in the United States.

Mr. KNOWLES (*Winnipeg North Centre*): Right at that point we are agreed that we cannot ask for cabinet minutes for discussion as we go along; but would you say that the final decision was reached by the cabinet?

Mr. SMITH (*Hastings-Frontenac*): In principle, but not finally.

Mr. KNOWLES (*Winnipeg North Centre*): It was a decision in principle?

Mr. SMITH (*Hastings-Frontenac*): To establish it.

Mr. KNOWLES (*Winnipeg North Centre*): On the basis of which there were negotiations?

Mr. SMITH (*Hastings-Frontenac*): Yes.