

made by the government of the United Kingdom, the Canadian government would of course be prepared to discuss them with that government and to make its position known to the Canadian people and to parliament.

Possibly hon. members have noticed that this matter has been brought up in the British parliament at Westminster where replies have been made to questions asked. In the Ottawa papers of June 30 there appeared a dispatch from London dated June 29 setting forth a reply that Sir Thomas Inskip, Minister for National Coordination, made to a question asked by Sir Percy Hurd, Conservative. Sir Percy Hurd asked what arrangements were being made to enlist Canadian cooperation in the government's rearmament plan. Sir Thomas Inskip replied:

His Majesty's government in Canada, in common with His Majesty's governments in other dominions, have been kept informed in regard to the rearmament program of this country. The possibility of placing orders in Canada is under examination, and orders have been placed in certain cases in which suitable terms, including times of delivery, can be arranged.

I think that dispatch indicates upon what the British government wishes to give in the way of information on matters which have been the subject of confidential communication between the two governments.

May I say a word with respect to the idea of having the Imperial air force set up flying schools in Canada to train their pilots; in short, a military station put down in Canada, owned, maintained and operated by the imperial government for imperial purposes. I must say that long ago Canadian governments finally settled the constitutional principle that in Canadian territory there could be no military establishments unless they were owned, maintained and controlled by the Canadian government responsible to the Canadian parliament and people. In the end the imperial naval stations and army garrisons were withdrawn and Canadian authority took over. A reversal of that principle and that historical process at this date is something the Canadian people would not for a moment entertain. Such domestic ownership, maintenance and control of all military stations and personnel is one of the really indispensable hall marks of national sovereign self government and an indispensable basis for friendly and effective cooperation between the governments of Canada and those of other parts of the British commonwealth of nations, including the government of the United Kingdom. Outside its homeland a state may have military stations and quarter military personnel in countries which it "owns," in its colonies or "possessions," or in its mandated territories

according to the trust deed, or in countries over which it has assumed or been yielded, by some arrangement, what amounts to a protectorate. But no country pretending to sovereign self control could permit such a state of affairs or its implications and consequences. I need only add that what I have said has, of course, to be sharply distinguished from the case of actual war where a country may have to permit its partners, associates or allies to maintain, operate and control military establishments and forces within its territory, forced to do so by the actual strategic or tactical necessities and for the purposes, but only for the purposes, of the actual joint war.

Mr. MacNEIL: In the light of the statement just made by the Prime Minister, I wonder if he would clarify our position with regard to the naval bases at Halifax and Esquimalt? I hold in my hand copy of sessional paper No. 285, tabled last year. At that time the following question was asked:

What are the obligations, if any, of the government to the government of the United Kingdom in respect of the naval bases at Halifax and Esquimalt?

The answer given was as follows:

The naval bases at Halifax and Esquimalt were taken over on conditions that the dominion government would maintain them in a state of efficiency, would provide storing accommodation for coal and other fuel for the admiralty, and dock yard facilities for his majesty's ships visiting Canadian waters.

I am not asking this question out of mischievous curiosity. As the Prime Minister is aware, this matter has been discussed at length in articles appearing in important publications. It has been stated that this commits Canada to a state of belligerency, without reference to parliament, in the event that Great Britain should be involved in a war. Is the Prime Minister prepared to make a statement with regard to our obligations in connection with the defence of these bases should the United Kingdom become involved in a war?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I can only repeat what I have said time and again, namely, that there are no commitments of any kind on the part of this government with respect to any war in which the United Kingdom may be engaged. What may be done will be done as a result of the action of this parliament.

Mr. BENNETT: The question I was about to ask has been answered by the Prime Minister. I would be derelict in my duty if I did not say at once that I wholly and entirely and utterly disagree with that statement. When