

Q 288126

J.W.P.  
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Re: ST. PIERRE

Although the people of Canada were no less surprised than the government at the news of Admiral Muselier's action at St. Pierre, there can be no doubt of the spontaneous enthusiasm with which it was greeted. The growing collaboration of the authorities at Vichy with the German government had been paralleled by a growing uneasiness in Canada as to the use to which the French islands in the gulf of St. Lawrence might be put. They were regarded as a potential menace to our security. In view of the relief felt by the public on learning that the islands were now in the hands of the Free French who have sacrificed everything to remain loyal to the alliance of freemen, it would be clearly impossible to explain in terms which could be understood why the islands should be handed back to the control of a government which is openly pledged to collaboration with the enemy. It might be added that the great majority of Canadians would regard the very suggestion of such action as unneighbourly. Its execution would be disturbing to the morale of the country and seriously so in certain sections.