

are spending money on. I told Mr. King my impression was that the field we were guarding was about the most complete and expensive in the world and had cost the United Kingdom forty million dollars. Mr. King said if that were the case, we could hardly ask that they turn it over to us.

He thought we should have a report as to what the British had done in Newfoundland, what we had done, and then consider the advisability of acquiring ownership of areas in which we were spending money. An effort would be made after the war to have us take over Newfoundland. That would be a contingency that would have to be considered very carefully, but in the meantime we should have a definite understanding as to where we stand.

CWC

92.

Procès-verbal d'une réunion du Comité de guerre du Cabinet
Minutes of a Meeting of Cabinet War Committee

Ottawa, September 5, 1940

SECRET

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ATLANTIC DEFENCE—NEWFOUNDLAND

26. THE PRIME MINISTER read to the meeting a report prepared by the Associate Minister of National Defence following his visit to Newfoundland. (See Minutes of meeting of the Associate Minister of National Defence and Canadian officers, with representatives of Newfoundland, held at St. John's, Newfoundland, on August the 20th, 1940¹).

27. Commenting on his report, Mr. Power stated that Canadian troops were now in possession of the air base at Gander Lake, and in occupation at Botwood. Action taken by Canada, so far, for the defence of Newfoundland had been on an emergency basis, and no attempt had been made to make arrangements with the Newfoundland Government for the determination of Canadian rights by lease or otherwise. This matter, however, should now receive consideration. Newfoundland could not be expected to make any substantial financial contribution to defence expenditures. Its contribution would rather be in the way of materials and services.

28. MR. KING stated that in view of our present and probable future commitments in the island, it had been agreed at the last meeting that serious consideration should be given to the settlement of mutual rights and obligations. The United States were proposing a definite lease of territory with certain jurisdictional rights. Canada should arrange to secure terms which would be of permanent value for strategical purposes in the future. The defence of Newfoundland would always be a primary Canadian interest.

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¹ Voir le document 171.¹ See Document 171.