

C 288117

December 26th, 1941.

FREE FRENCH OCCUPATION OF ST. PIERRE

The following reply to the enquiry of the United States Government as to the steps which the Canadian Government was prepared to take to restore the status quo of the islands was made to the United States Minister in Ottawa yesterday evening:

"Canada is in no way responsible for the Free French occupation of St. Pierre. We have kept in close touch with both the United Kingdom and the United States on this question and have always been ready to co-operate in carrying out an agreed policy. We declined to commit ourselves to any action or to take any action pending such agreement. In the circumstances, and until we have had an opportunity of considering action with the President and Mr. Churchill, the Canadian Government cannot take the steps requested to expel the Free French and restore the status quo in the islands."