

—consult with General McNaughton, who is the commander of the Canadian corps and whose troops are acting in combination with the United Kingdom forces under Sir Allan Brooke, in connection with any operation in which the Canadian corps would be committed. I can say that that is done in practice. I can say that it is done on grounds of policy. I can say that it is done also because of the obvious military desirability of a commanding officer in chief consulting with the senior commanding officers of large bodies of troops under his command in connection with any tactical plans which are being made. That is the situation so far as the United Kingdom is concerned.

With regard to the troops going out of England, may I read a paragraph which I have under my hand and which sets out the situation more briefly and succinctly than perhaps I could state it.

As respects any question concerning the employment of the Canadian forces on the continent of Europe or elsewhere, the position is clear, namely, that the decision would rest entirely with the Canadian government. It was in accordance with this principle that the decision was reached last spring to employ Canadian troops in France. Since the change in the situation resulting from the German invasion of France and the low countries, no suggestion of any kind has been made to Canadian military authorities or to the Canadian government that its forces should serve beyond the United Kingdom, except in one instance when the British government requested and the Canadian government approved the dispatch of small detachments of Canadian troops to carry out special work at Gibraltar, of which the house has general information.

To sum up, the appropriate Canadian service authority has detailed the Canadian corps to serve in combination with the troops of the United Kingdom.

Second, the appropriate Canadian service authority can detail for service within the United Kingdom, but not for service outside, Canadian forces to act in combination. As I have said, General McNaughton has done that in respect of the corps, and General Montague, senior combatant officer at Canadian military headquarters, would have power to detail troops under his command.

Third, the appropriate Canadian service authority cannot authorize the embarkation of Canadian forces from the United Kingdom without the authority of the Minister of National Defence.

Fourth—and this comes by reason of the third clause in the order in council, P.C. 1066—embarkation for the purpose of proceeding to the continent of Europe automatically brings about serving in combination