

unification. I warned the Minister the present course toward full unification was simply not being accepted by the Navy and that if he forced a loss of identity on the Navy it would lead to disaster. The meeting was inconclusive and he said he would ask me to come to Ottawa for further discussions within the week. However, the meeting did not take place until 12th July, that is almost three weeks later. In the meanwhile he had announced that the Highland Regiments would be permitted to retain their traditional dress so I had high hopes that when we met on the 12th July I could persuade the Minister to take the same logical step for the Navy. It seemed obvious that the identity of the Navy must appear to him as important for the Navy as the dress of Highland regiments is to them I was soon to be disappointed because he would not compromise or alter his views. He asked me to resign. I refused and for two very good reasons both of which I have stated publicly. Firstly, I could see no reason why I should resign my commission over a difference of opinion on undefined policy, a policy which had not been ratified by legislation in the parliament, and secondly, if an officer or man resigns or asks to be retired he has to accept a substantial reduction in pension. Since my difference with the Minister was only in the matter of identity and as there are, to my certain knowledge, a large number of officers with the same vested rights, who have the same difference with the Minister, I would not establish a precedent which could adversely affect my officers and men. The Minister then told me I would be retired, that he would arrange my pension and give me the date when he returned from Paris, and when a relief could be posted.

I reported the Minister's decision to the Chief of the Defence Staff and the Chief of Personnel that same afternoon 12th July. That evening I got in touch with your Chairman and asked him if he would arrange for me to see the Prime Minister. By this time I had ascertained that neither the Chief of the Defence Staff nor the Chief of Personnel intended to take this step. I told your Chairman about my compulsory retirement and the early retirements of three other Admirals. Mr. Deachman of your Committee also knew of the retirements for he and Mr. Groos called on Admiral Welland to get confirmation of what I had told them. I also told Mr. Groos the personnel section of my brief to his Committee had been censored. I thought these matters were so serious that the Prime Minister should know about them at once. Mr. Groos arranged an informal meeting with the Prime Minister for the early evening of 13th July. That is, the next evening. I had my opportunity to tell the Prime Minister of the retirements. Your Chairman asked me not to say anything about the censorship to the Prime Minister. I presumed because he intended to deal with the matter himself. The Prime Minister told me that he fully supported the Minister's policy on integration but that he didn't know to what depth he intended to carry unification. He reminded me he had visited the Ship's Company of HMCS *Saskatchewan* on the West Coast, and had promised them the Government would not interfere with naval traditions.

He said he would have a talk with the Minister and asked Mr. Groos to be present when he did. I must emphasize that the meeting with the Prime Minister was informal and that I'm deeply grateful that he saw me. I had no reason to expect the Prime Minister to take any specific action as a result of our conversations. I felt I could not live with my conscience if I did not take every step possible to make known the seriousness of the situation.