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Le gouverneur de Terre-Neuve au secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures
Governor of Newfoundland to Secretary of State for External Affairs

SECRET

St. John's, December 27, 1939

Sir,

With reference to your Secret despatch of 20th November, 1939, concerning control of navigational aids in war time, I annex copies of telegrams exchanged with the Commander-in-Chief, America and West Indies Station, on this subject.¹

2. The Government of Newfoundland is prepared to consent to the proposal that the scheme which has recently been put into operation in Canada be extended to include the main navigational aids on the Newfoundland coast which are under the control of this Government (Department of Public Works). This consent is given on the understanding that the discontinuance of the lights in question will be requested only in the event of an emergency and that due regard will be paid to the dangers to Newfoundland shipping which may result.

3. In this connection it is observed that a message received from the Naval Commander-in-Chief on the 7th September last indicated that navigational aids should not be extinguished or removed in ordinary commercial routes or in commercial harbours except as specially ordered or in an emergency.

4. There are one hundred and one main navigational lights and other aids on the coasts of Newfoundland. Thirty-eight of these, however, are located on islands which at times are inaccessible. A list showing the main navigational aids and the available method of communication in each case is annexed. Two copies of Newfoundland, Canadian and French Lights and Fog Alarms on the Coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador are also enclosed.¹

5. Officials of the Department of Public Works will set up an organization for the extinguishing of all main navigational lights and the discontinuance of fog alarms at the shortest possible notice, having regard to the situation of the light or fog alarm and the available means of communication. It is requested that a list of the navigational aids which it is considered necessary to bring within the proposed scheme should be furnished to this Government as early as possible in order that these preparations may be completed. It is hoped that the number of lights, etc., included in this will be kept to the absolute minimum essential for defence purposes.

6. When the scheme comes into operation requests that lights should be extinguished should be communicated to the Department of Public Works by the Commanding Officer Atlantic Coast through the Naval Control Officer at St. John's.

I have etc.

HUMPHREY WALWYN

¹ Non reproduits.

¹ Not printed.