24.

Le ministre de la Défense nationale au Premier ministre

Minister of National Defence to Prime Minister

SECRET

[Ottawa,] January 9, 1939

My dear Prime Minister,

I beg to forward herewith a copy of a memorandum from the Joint Staff Committee, dealing with the defence of Newfoundland from a Canadian aspect.

You will observe that in the last paragraph a question of policy emerges which probably more concerns external relations than my own department.

I would therefore be very grateful for your advice and instructions in regard to this question.

Yours sincerely,

IAN A. MACKENZIE

[PIÈCE JOINTE/ENCLOSURE]

DND HQS 7410

Mémorandum du Comité interforce d'état-major
au ministre de la Défense nationale

Memorandum from Joint Staff Committee
to Minister of National Defence

SECRET

[Ottawa,] December 27, 1938

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9. *Conclusions drawn from British Reply.* It is suggested that the conclusions which can reasonably be drawn from the British reply are:

(a) That in the early days of an emergency there will be no United Kingdom forces for the reconnaissance and supervision of the waters off Newfoundland and the Labrador coast.

(b) That although trade protection units of the Royal Navy may be expected to arrive at Halifax at an early stage of an emergency, it will be necessary to rely mainly on Canadian forces for the direct protection of our coasts and the St. Lawrence trade. (It seems reasonable to infer that the primary tasks of the Royal Navy units mentioned will be to police the great North Atlantic trade route which passes to the south and east of the Nova Scotia peninsula. In so doing they will, it is true, provide an element of "cover" to Newfoundland.)

(c) That the naval and air reconnaissance of Newfoundland and Labrador waters required for the direct defence of the Canadian sea-board and the Gulf of St. Lawrence trade in the early days of an emergency will have to be done by Canadian Forces.

(d) That without the use of Newfoundland harbours and air bases this essential reconnaissance cannot efficiently be carried out.