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ARMY HEADQUARTERS

Canada and the Higher Direction
of the Second World War

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Appendix "B" – Washington Report. (31 Mar. 1943).

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Canada and the Higher Direction
of the Second World War

1. The object of this paper is to provide an outline of the question of the relationship of Canada to the Allied organization for the conduct of the Second World War, 1939-45.

2. In general, this study is concerned only with the direction of the Allied war effort at the highest strategic level. It attempts to provide a brief account of the nature of the machinery which was created to carry out that direction, and of the manner in which the machinery was brought into being; and it describes in outline the nature of Canada's relation to the machinery, as it developed as the war proceeded. The nature and extent of Canadian contributions to the military effort, the considerations determining the employment of Canadian forces in the field, determining the employment of Canadian forces in the field, and the provision for control of such forces, are dealt with only to the extent that they are related to the main theme.

3. The paper is based upon records held in the Department of National Defence, supplemented by documents made available by the Privy Council Office and the Department of External Affairs.

4. The basic theme of this paper is a problem to which there is, probably, no completely satisfactory solution: that of the reconciliation of national sovereignty with military efficiency in a great war waged by a coalition. For a "middle power" the problem is especially difficult. A great power, simply because it is in a position

to make a very large military contribution, will have little difficulty in making its voice heard; a small country will make a very small contribution, if any, and probably will not expect to exert much influence; but a middle power, which makes a contribution to victory large enough to be valuable but materially less than those of the great powers, is likely to feel with some resentment that it is pouring out blood and treasure in accordance with plans over which it has no control.

5. To a considerable extent this was the case with Canada in the Second World War. The war effort of the Western Allies after 1941 was, essentially, directed by a purely Anglo-American committee in which the dominant members were the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. To take a concrete example, General Eisenhower commanded in North-West Europe a force which ultimately, in terms of army divisions, was composed as follows: United States, 61; United Kingdom, 13; French, 10; Canadian, 5; and Polish, 1.¹ The Force in the Italian theatre was even more heterogeneous, including New Zealand, South African and Brazilian formations as well. These mixed forces were employed in accordance with a grand strategy which was, to all intents and purposes, charted exclusively by the two most powerful members of the coalition.

6. The problem is not one which can safely be considered in a narrow spirit. For military efficiency, it is generally agreed, the largest possible concentration of power in the fewest possible hands is essential. Since the days of ancient Rome, nations have felt it necessary in time of war to allow their own leaders much larger domestic powers than are conceded to them in more normal circumstances.

In seasons of great period

'Tis good that one bear sway;

Then choose we a Dictator

Whom all men shall obey.

Similarly, it is doubtless necessary to make sacrifices of national sovereignty when war is being waged by a coalition. Such sacrifices are painful; but they are less painful than defeat. The directing authority of a coalition will normally be a committee; the larger the committee, and the more numerous the interests which it must reconcile within itself, the less effective its leadership is likely to be. It would be poor economy to safeguard national sovereignty temporarily by a sacrifice of military efficiency which may result in national sovereignty being extinguished totally and permanently by the enemy.

7. On the other hand, the fact must be faced that the great powers who are the dominant members of a coalition will often make decisions in accordance with the dictates of their own interests rather than those of the group as a whole; they will not take account of the interests of their junior partners as a major element in the situation; they may not even take time to consider what those interests are. In these circumstances; the position of a “middle power” is bound to be uncomfortable, and its policy is bound to be a succession of compromises. It must be prepared to make large concessions to the leadership of the great powers who are fighting on its side; but it must also raise its voice to assert its own interests, and must seek to force its associates to take account of those interests – but only to the extent that this can be done without injuring the common cause. Broadly speaking, it may be said, this was the line of policy pursued by the Government of Canada in 1939-45.

THE PRE-WAR BACKGROUND

The First World War: The Supreme War Council

8. The first occasion on which Canada sent military forces to take part in a war abroad was the South African War, 1899-1902.¹ That was a purely British war, with no coalition aspect; and Canada at this period was merely a “self-governing colony” with no formal control over her own foreign policy and no international status. In these circumstances, the South African War provided no precedents relevant to the present subject. The problem with which this study deals is the product of Canada’s twentieth-century development as an independent nation, combined with her involvement in wars waged by coalitions of allies. It began to take definite shape during the First World War, 1914-19.

9. Before 1914 Anglo-French military cooperation had not advanced to the point of planning for joint machinery for the higher direction of a war. Such Anglo-French machinery came into existence only as the war proceeded. As for Russia, she was separated from her Allies by the enemy powers and had to wage a separate land campaign.

10. Although Field-marshal Sir John French possessed the right of appeal against any orders issued by the French Commander-in-Chief with whom his British Expeditionary Force cooperated in the field, harmonious relations were soon established and General Joffre became a de facto Commander-in-Chief of the Anglo-French armies.³ A limited measure of co-ordination over operations on all the fronts came about as a result of the periodic inter-Allied military conferences held at General Joffre’s Headquarters, the first of which took place on 7 July 1915 with Sir John French and representatives of the Belgian, Italian, Russian and Serbian staffs present. The British and French Prime Ministers had already (6 July 1915) agreed that the Western Front should be considered the principal theatre of operations,⁴ and before the end of the year concluded that permanent machinery should be established to co-ordinate the war effort.⁵ During March 1916 the Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Belgium and Serbia (with representatives of Japan, Russian and Portugal) met in Paris and established committees to

¹ The men of the Canadian Voyageur Contingent which took part in the Nile Expedition of 1884-5 were not soldiers, but were civilians recruited in Canada by the United Kingdom Government (with the countenance and aid of the Government of Canada) and officered by Canadian militia officers who were appointed by the Governor General acting on behalf of the United Kingdom Government and were paid by that Government.²

supervise economic action and problems of transport, but took no action to set up a joint military organization.⁶
Until his removal towards the end of the year General Joffre's plans continued to be accepted.⁷

11. Mr. Lloyd George had perceived the lack of overall direction of the war as soon as he became head of a new British government on 7 December 1916 and took the view that such direction should be the responsibility of the political leaders and not be left to the generals.⁸ Not until the autumn of 1917, however, did he and the French Prime Minister reach agreement on the need for establishing a Supreme War Council to oversee the conduct of the war. The disaster which overtook the Italian Army at Caporette in October was the deciding factor in hastening its establishment, after concurrence had been sought from Italy and the United States. The first meeting of the Supreme War Council took place on 7 November at Rapallo, whither the British and French Prime Ministers had gone for a personal view of the Italian situation.⁹

12. Membership in the Supreme War Council was limited to the Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom, France and Italy (with one colleague apiece selected according to the subject to be discussed), and an American representative (usually Colonel E.M. House). According to the business under discussion representatives of the smaller Allies, including the Dominions, could be introduced on an equal footing with the other delegates. It was planned to hold monthly meetings at Versailles. This Council was purely an advisory body, preparing recommendations for decision by the respective governments, whose sovereignty remained unimpaired.¹⁰

13. A committee of Military Representatives was established, composed of officers from the United Kingdom, France, Italy and the United States, as

... a central body charged with the duty of continuously surveying the field of operations as a whole, and, by the light of information derived from all fronts and from all Governments and

Staffs, of coordinating the plans prepared by the different General Staffs, and, if necessary, of making proposals of their own for the better conduct of the war.¹¹

Its recommendations normally were embodied in Joint Notes to the Supreme War Council, with copies forwarded to the heads of the respective governments. Since Prime Minister Lloyd George neither trusted nor as yet felt strong enough to dismiss the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (Sir William Robertson) he insisted that Chiefs of Staff should not serve as Military Representatives.¹² In practice, however, although Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Wilson, the British Military Representative, might express views at variance with those of (General Weygand) was merely a mouthpiece for General Foch (Chief of the General Staff). The United States Military Representative, General Bliss, and the Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Force, General Pershing, “seemed determined to make their disinterestedness cancel their inexperience” and are said to have become the arbiters when the others disagreed.¹³

14. Naval warfare remained subordinate and apart from the main controversies and issues for, although there came to be a Naval Liaison Committee at Versailles, the Allied Naval Council was established in London and only once were its proceedings reported to the Supreme War Council. Since Japan and the United States were far away they were represented in London by Flag Officers, whereas the British and French members were the political and service heads of their respective navies. Naval representatives were not present in Versailles when the strategic policy for 1918 was decided and the Supreme War Council appears to have largely ignored the importance both of submarine warfare and the Allied blockade.¹⁴

15. There was also an Allied Transportation Council, an Allied Propaganda Committee, and Allied Blockade Council and economic organizations concerned with munitions, food, coordination of purchasing in the United Kingdom and the U.S., and maritime transport.¹⁵ It would appear, however, that there was very little attempt

to coordinate their functions with what was felt to be the main task of the Supreme War Council, the direction of the war on land.

16. The Military Representatives considered that there was no hop of obtaining victory in 1918 and persisted in this view, despite the fact that both Field-Marshal Haig and the War Office were certain from their more recent and accurate intelligence that enemy resistance on the Western Front would collapse if his spring offensive failed.¹⁶ During the days of crisis in March when it appeared that the Germans might effect a breakthrough there were no meetings of the Supreme War Council, or of the Military Council of permanent representatives, and the question of command ultimately was settled in response to a plea from Sir Douglas Haig to the British Government that “unless General Foch or some other determined general were given supreme command of the operations in France, there would be a disaster.”¹⁷ Thereupon the secretary of State for War, Lord Milner, proceeded to France and met with the French President and Prime Minister at Doullens on 26 March, the military leaders also being present. In accordance with the agreement reached General Foch was charged with coordinating the Allied armies on the Western Front. His powers were further defined and extended by another made at Beauvais on 3 April. Unity of command had now been achieved and the Supreme War Council ceased to control armies and operations. Subsequently General Foch was given the title of “General en Chef des Armées Alliées en France”.¹⁸

17. In May 1918 the Supreme War Council extended Foch’s authority to the Italian front. For the first time a meeting of the Council was attended by the First Sea Lord of the Admiralty and a senior French admiral, but only because the Channel ports and the Mediterranean were under discussion.¹⁹

Canada and the Imperial War Cabinet

18. Where did Canada fit into the picture? By 1914 autonomy in domestic affairs had been achieved in virtually all respects, but Canada had no direct diplomatic relations with other countries, no treaty-making power and no separate status, and was regarded as a colony by the outside world. “Foreign policy” was made in London.²⁰

19. The dispatch of large and increasing Canadian land forces overseas, beginning in the autumn of 1914, raised new problems in the field of imperial relations, and was ultimately to affect Canada’s international status also. Sir George Perley had been acting as High Commissioner and Canadian Resident Minister in London since the spring of 1914. Late in 1916 he was appointed Minister, Overseas Military Forces of Canada and “charged with the negotiations on the part of the Government of Canada as occasion might require with His Majesty’s Government in all matters connected with the government, command and disposition of the Overseas Forces of Canada and such arrangements as might be advisable for coordinating their operations and services with those of His Majesty’s troops and generally for utilizing the Overseas Forces of Canada in the most effective manner for the purposes of the war”.²¹ From first to last there never was any question but that tactically Canadian units and formations were fully under the control of the Commander-in-Chief of the British Armies in France, even though the Commander of the Canadian Corps might have a separate responsibility to the Canadian Government. In practice Lieutenant-General Sir Arthur Currie was however able as time passed to establish and increasingly autonomous position for his Canadian Corps.

20. During the summer of 1915 the Canadian Prime Minister had paid his first wartime visit to London and attended a meeting of the British Cabinet. This was a precedent and an honour, but Sir Robert Borden lost no time in expounding his view that the Dominions should have a voice in the formation of policy. Furthermore, he formed an unfavourable impression of the British conduct of the war and later wrote that “procrastination, indecision, inertia, doubt, hesitation and many other undesirable qualities” had made themselves “entirely too conspicuous”.²² Following his return to Canada on 4 September he received no information on war policy from the British Government and, despite repeated protests, the whole question of consultation was ignored.²³ The Australian Prime Minister (Mr. W.M. Hughes) similarly formed an unfavourable opinion of the higher direction

of the war effort when he visited London during the summer of 1916. After some agitation, however, Mr. Hughes and Sir George Foster (Minister of Trade and Commerce and acting Canadian Resident Minister in London during the absence of Sir George Perley) were made members of the British delegation to the Allied Economic Conference held in Paris during July, with the right to cast individual votes.²⁴

21. With the formation of the Lloyd George government on 7 December 1916 the attitude towards the Dominions changed. Lord Milner's suggestion that the principal colonies should be represented in the new five-man War Cabinet² created to deal with questions of policy²⁵ found acceptance with the Prime Minister who conceded that such a step would be advisable if the Dominions were to continue to supply men in large numbers. Therefore their Prime Ministers were invited to attend a special War Conference and "a series of special and continuous meetings of the War Cabinet in order to consider urgent questions affecting prosecution of War, the possible conditions on which in agreement with our Allies we could assent to its termination, and the problems which will then immediately arise".²⁶

22. This Imperial (War) Conference which met early in 1917 paved the way for the future recognition of the Dominions as autonomous nations; and subsequently the fourteen meetings of the "Imperial War Cabinet" (20 March – 2 May 1917) proved so satisfactory that it was agreed to continue them during at least part of each year. The "Imperial War Cabinet's" procedure was not that of a true cabinet; it has been described as follows:

The decision having been arrived at, the Prime Minister of the Dominion affected and his colleagues assenting, the position was telegraphed to the Acting Prime Minister of the Dominion, who summoned his fellow Ministers, laid the matter before them, and communicated the result of their deliberations to his Prime Minister. He, in turn, informed the Imperial Cabinet. If the

² This body met over 300 times during 1917, kept regular minutes and worked to an agenda. The First Sea Lord and the Chief of the Imperial General Staff were present for the discussion of naval and military questions and a very

Government of the Dominion – which, it is very necessary to note, always remained in the Dominion – authorized the proposed step, action was taken by virtue of that authority. Always the decision of the Imperial Cabinet, qua Imperial Cabinet, was only a recommendation requiring the Assent of the Government or Governments which had authority over the subject-matter covered by the decision before it could be translated into action.²⁷

23. Mr. Lloyd George insisted that General Smuts remain in London after the conclusion of these meetings, nominally as the representative of the Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa but in reality, as the British Prime Minister has since written in his War Memoirs, as “an active member of the British Cabinet for all the purposes of war direction.”²⁸ Members of the British ministry protested against such a step and the Colonial Secretary (not a member of the War Cabinet) argued that Smuts could not be given a voice in the settlement of questions affecting the other Dominions, but to no avail. General Smuts accompanied the British Prime Minister to the Rapallo Conference and in January 1918 the War Cabinet decided to send him to the Middle East to make a personal report.²⁹

24. When the Imperial War Cabinet held its second session in June 1918 the Australian Prime Minister took the lead in complaining about the lack of information that had been made available since the last meetings. In the end the Dominion’s Prime Ministers secured the right of direct communication (at their own discretion) with the British Prime Minister.³⁰ In a blunt speech to the Imperial War Cabinet on 13 June Sir Robert Borden attacked the conduct of the war, alleging “incompetence, disorganization and confusion at the Front”. The result was the appointment of a special sub-committee (Mr. Lloyd George and heads of Dominion delegations) which spent two months investigating the prosecution of the war.³¹

wide range of individuals could be introduced to meetings when five members, four of whom were free from heavy administrative and parliamentary duties, desired an answer to a specific technical problem.

25. Gains by the Dominions had been in Empire councils only, however, and bore little relationship to the “higher direction” of the war. Meetings of the Imperial War Cabinet were suspended so that the British Prime Minister could attend the seventh session of the Supreme War Council at Versailles 2-4 July, and too much should not be made of the fact that the Prime Ministers of Australia, Canada, Newfoundland and New Zealand attended its last meeting during the course of their week’s tour in France. Borden wrote in his diary:

... Then to Versailles to Council. L1. George made a speech introducing us. Then Clemenceau and then Orlando. I was to reply but Clemenceau cut into the business of the day.³²

They returned to London and to meetings of the Imperial War Cabinet, which continued until 26 July. Writing much later Lord Hankey, then secretary to the British War Cabinet and the Imperial War Cabinet and a secretary to the Supreme War Council, summarized the position as follows:

One result of the Imperial War Cabinet was that Mr. Lloyd George was able to represent the views of the whole Empire at meetings of the Supreme War Council.³³

26. Following his return from the conference of Prime Ministers held in Paris 5-9 October Mr. Lloyd George informed the members of the Imperial War Cabinet that armistice terms had been discussed.³⁴ Although the Prime Ministers of Canada and New Zealand had returned home the Imperial War Cabinet met three times during October and early November and the Australian Prime Minister claimed that he had been given to understand that there would be an opportunity to consider the preliminary Armistice terms before they were finally approved by the Supreme War Council.³⁵ However, on 4 November the Supreme War Council approved the Armistice terms. The British Empire delegation to the Peace Conference at Versailles was really the Imperial War Cabinet under another

name; in addition, however, the Dominions were accorded separate representation. After considerable negotiation they were enabled to sign the Treaty of Versailles separately and to have it ratified by their own parliaments.

27. The Imperial War Cabinet system did not outlast the war. The Chanak incident of 1922 was sufficient evidence that the British Government had not worked out a method whereby its foreign policy could be shared with the Dominions. Following the direction indicated by the Imperial Conferences of 1926 and 1930, the Statute of Westminster (1931) clarified and formalized the independent status of the Dominions. The later thirties witnessed, particularly in Canada, a movement away from rather than towards the idea of a common Commonwealth foreign policy. The Canadian policy as war approached was summed up in the words, "No commitments".

THE PERIOD OF THE FRENCH ALLIANCE AND THE SUPREME WAR COUNCIL, 1939-1940

Another Supreme War Council

28. In August 1939, with war imminent, the British and French Prime Ministers agreed to set up a new Supreme War Council immediately should it break out. They further agreed to appoint in advance of war permanent military representatives from the armed forces of each. The function of the latter was not clearly defined vis-à-vis the High Command but they seem to have been intended to serve as an inter-Allied planning staff.³⁶

29. Improved methods of travel made it possible for the two Prime Ministers and their ministerial colleagues, accompanied by their respective Chiefs of Staff and other experts, to hold frequent meetings of the Supreme War Council in London or Paris. A first meeting was held on 12 September 1939 in Paris, where Prime Minister Chamberlain and Admiral of the Fleet Lord Chatfield (Minister for the Coordination of Defence) met with Premier Daladier and General Gamelin. In the British House of Commons on 8 February 1940 Mr. Chamberlain

quoted Premier Daladier as saying that the Supreme War Council was conducting itself almost as though it were a cabinet; he was careful to emphasize, however, that neither government had relinquished any of its responsibilities to its own people.

30. On the economic side it had been more difficult to make a start and there was the necessity of putting each house in order before erecting a combined superstructure. A lead was given by the veteran international economic planner, M. Jean Monnet, but the result was merely his appointment on 29 November as chairman of an Anglo-French Coordinating Committee. Nine executive subcommittees were established to survey the requirements of two countries and make an inventory of their resources: these dealt with Food, Shipping, Armaments and Raw Materials, Oil, Air Production and Supply, Economic Warfare, Textiles and Hides, Timber, and Coal. The Anglo-French Coordinating Committee also supervised the activities of Allied purchasing missions abroad.³⁷

Canadian Participation, 1939-40

31. Canada entered into no formal alliance with France following the outbreak of war. Apart from purely local defensive measures, the Canadian war effort in these early days seems to have been envisaged as a planned and limited cooperation with the United Kingdom. The effort envisaged was a “moderate” one and no evidence has been found that Canada claimed a share in the higher direction of the war at this period.

32. A Canadian delegation, headed by the Minister of Mines and Resources (Hon. T.A. Crerar), went to the United Kingdom in the autumn of 1939. From October to December it met with British officials and delegates from the other Dominions to exchange information and views, and Mr. Crerar visited war factories and defence installations in both the United Kingdom and France. According to press dispatches he “learned a great deal

about Britain's closely guarded secrets and about the war strategy in general" and was told the "plans of Great Britain and France to defeat the land, sea and air forces of Germany".³⁸ The Canadian Prime Minister had been careful to point out beforehand that Mr. Crerar's delegation was not attending an Imperial War Cabinet or Conference, even though the possibility of assembling such bodies appears to have been considered by Mr. Chamberlain's Government.³⁹

33. The bonds between the United Kingdom and France had been tightened by the presence of Mr. Churchill at meetings of the Supreme War Council from 5 February onward⁴⁰ and his assumption of British leadership on 10 May resulted in a most determined effort to avoid disaster and keep France in the War. "From the beginning", Mr. Churchill has since written, "I kept in the closest contact with my old friends now at the head of the Governments of Canada and South Africa";⁴¹ but he does not indicate whether he sought their advice or opinion during the days when he made repeated Visits to France for meetings of the Supreme War Council. Quoting again from Their Finest Hour:

To lessen the shock of the impending French surrender, it was necessary at this time to send a message to the Dominion Prime Ministers showing them that our resolve to continue the struggle although alone was not based upon mere obstinacy or desperation, and to convince them by practical and technical reasons, of which they might well be unaware, of the real strength of our position...⁴²

Such a review of the situation was drafted and dispatched on 16 June. Mr. Churchill's last-minute offer of Franco-British union to stave off a French surrender was undertaken with the approval only of the British War Cabinet. when it failed, the British Commonwealth and Empire was left to continue the fight alone.⁴³

THE COMMONWEALTH STANDS ALONE, 1940-1941

Churchill at the Helm

34. The new British Government was headed by a Prime Minister who had had a long and distinguished career as soldier, war correspondent, military historian and cabinet minister, and who was prepared to take unlimited personal responsibility. The Ministry for the Coordination of Defence had lapsed in April and Prime Minister Churchill now created, and himself took charge of, a Ministry of Defence to control the general direction of the war, subject to the support of the War Cabinet and the House of Commons. As he himself has written:⁴⁴

... The key-change which occurred on my taking over was, of course, the supervision and direction of the Chiefs of Staff Committee by a Minister of Defence with undefined powers. As this Minister was also the Prime Minister, he had all the rights inherent in that office, including very wide powers of selection and removal of all professional and political personages. Thus for the first time the Chiefs of Staff Committee assumed its due and proper place in direct daily contact with the executive Head of the Government, and in accord with him had full control over the conduct of the war and the armed forces.⁴⁴

35. The War Cabinet set up by Mr. Churchill was smaller than Mr. Chamberlain's; it had five members, of whom only two (including the Prime Minister and Minister of Defence) had departmental responsibilities. The three Service Ministers were omitted; but they were members of the War Cabinet Defence Committee³, which met with the Chiefs of Staff in attendance. This Committee met less frequently after 1941.⁴⁶

36. As his administration began to work more smoothly Mr. Churchill came to the conclusion that the daily meetings were necessary. Eventually, therefore, he instituted a "Monday Cabinet Parade" attended by

members of the War Cabinet, the Service Ministers, the Minister of Home Security, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretaries of State for the Dominions and India, the Minister of Information, the Chiefs of Staff and the official head of the Foreign Office. On other days the War Cabinet sat alone and all matters requiring decision were brought before it, together with their initiators. As time went on the number of “constant attendees” grew. For the convenient conduct of business it was generally necessary for the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the head of the Liberal party to be in attendance.⁴⁷ By the end of 1941 the number of War Cabinet members had increased to eight, five of whom were saddled with heavy departmental responsibilities; early in 1942 saddled with heavy departmental responsibilities; early in 1942 it was reduced to seven.⁴⁸ Quoting again from Mr. Churchill:

... The members of the War Cabinet had the fullest circulation of all papers affecting the war, and saw all important telegrams sent by me. As confidence grew, the War Cabinet intervened less actively in operational matters, though they watched them with close attention and full knowledge. They took almost the whole weight of Home and Party affairs off my shoulders, thus setting me free to concentrate upon the main theme. With regard to future operations of importance, I always consulted them in good time; but while they always consulted them in good time; but while they gave careful consideration to the issues involved, they frequently asked not to be informed of dates and details, and indeed on several occasions stopped me when I was about to unfold these to them.⁴⁹

It is clear that the direction of the war in the United Kingdom had come to centre more and more in the hands of one man.

³ There were both “ a Defence Committee (Operations) and a Defence Committee (Supply), both infinitely flexible bodies”.⁴⁵

Commonwealth War Organization

37. During the critical weeks of late spring and early summer 1940 the Canadian Government greatly enlarged and accelerated its war effort. After the French collapse, with the Commonwealth facing the enemy alone, Canada was the most important single effective ally the United Kingdom possessed, and her military and economic aid were presumably a larger element in British calculations than at any other period of the war.

38. Not until the “invasion season” was past did the British Government turn to the question of the organization of the war effort on an international basis. It now proposed to revive the Supreme War Council in London as a manifestation of Allied solidarity. The proposal was that it should include the Dominion High Commissioners as well as representatives of the Allied exile governments and a Free French observer. Prime Minister Mackenzie King told his colleagues of the Cabinet War Committee on 5 November that such a council would be a mere facade and a sign of weakness. Canada accordingly discouraged the idea and the British Government dropped it. It suggested however that a conference with the Allied and Dominion governments would be desirable.

39. The possibility of an Imperial War Conference had already been briefly discussed by the Cabinet War Committee on 1 October, when the Prime Minister explained that he felt that a Prime Minister’s place was at the seat of government. Subsequently, on 17 February 1941, Mr. King explained his viewpoint to the House of Commons.⁵⁰ Although meetings of an Imperial War Cabinet or other form of Empire War Council might become necessary at a later date, he felt that improved means and agencies of communication made it possible for high policy to be settled from a distance. There now were, he pointed out, “three sending and three receiving” channels for communications:

... (a) from prime minister to prime minister direct – those which relate to matters of high policy; (b) through the secretary of state for dominion affairs to the secretary of state for external affairs, and vice versa – matters more general and relating more particularly to information in detail on operations, and the progress of the war; (c) and finally, special communications supplementing those from the sources mentioned from the high commissioner to the prime minister, or to the secretary of state for external affairs and vice versa.

The British Government could approach the Canadian Government through the Dominions Office and Canada House, or through the Dominions Office and its own High Commissioner in Ottawa, who in turn could make contact with the Department of External Affairs or, if policy matters were not involved, deal directly with the Canadian officials concerned.

40. Mr. King made the further point that by remaining at home a Prime Minister always had his Cabinet available for immediate consultation. Speed counted in wartime and within a matter of hours each Dominion Government could reach a decision on any matter and dispatch its answer to London. Direct consultation might be necessary from time to time but generally in connection with matters involving detailed inquiry: Five cabinet ministers already had visited the United Kingdom since the outbreak of war. He added:

The possibility of immediate personal contact between the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of the United States, in critical situations affecting the relations between the United States and the British commonwealth, may easily be more important to the common cause than any service which a prime minister of Canada could render at the council table in London.

41. The Prime Minister proceeded to demolish arguments for appointing a resident Canadian cabinet minister in the United Kingdom, as had been done in the previous war. Canada House was well organized and well staffed and the High Commissioner, Mr. Vincent Massey, had had long experience in dealing with departments of the British Government; a newcomer “could not possibly discharge these functions so well”. Finally, any member of the Canadian Government resident in London would be faced with the awkward decision as to whether questions should be referred back to Ottawa or not: in one case his own authority would seem very limited, in the other there would be a danger of divided responsibility.

42. The Prime Minister had made a strong case for declining to participate in an Imperial War Cabinet. An academic critic suggested, however, that his policy was merely playing into the hands of the British Government, which was “quite ready to make the decisions and carry them out with generous Dominion assistance”.⁵¹

43. The Australian Prime Minister (Mr. R.G. Menzies) took a different view from Mr. King’s. After spending two months in the United Kingdom and meeting with the British War Cabinet, he felt dissatisfaction both with its organization and the wide powers exercised by Mr. Churchill. On his way home during May he submitted proposals for an Imperial War Cabinet to the Prime Ministers of Canada, New Zealand and South Africa. Mr. Churchill had expressed his own disagreement earlier. The answers now received from the other Prime Ministers were also in the negative; in particular, Mr. Mackenzie King “deployed formidable constitutional arguments against Canada’s being committed by her representative to the decisions of a council in London”.⁵² Mr. Menzies did manage, however, to arrange for a permanent Australian representative in London to for a permanent Australian representative in London to attend meetings of the British War Cabinet and Defence Committee when Australian matters were being discussed.⁵³

44. Mr. Churchill proposed on 11 May 1941 that an Imperial Conference should be held during July or August, for a period of about six weeks.⁵⁴ Mr. King told the War Committee on 24 June that he had replied that he did not consider that it would be wise for him to leave Canada at that time. However, at the meeting of 29 July he indicated that he would make a personal visit to the United Kingdom shortly, even though Mr. Churchill had conceded that a conference was not practicable. Mr. King subsequently became more friendly to the idea of a conference. At the Cabinet War Committee meeting of 13 August he suggested that the presence of the New Zealand Prime Minister in London and the possible return of Mr. Menzies from Australia, together with his own proposed visit, might provide a suitable occasion for such a meeting of Prime Ministers.⁴ This had been mentioned to the United Kingdom High Commissioner, who had passed the suggestion along to the British Government. The conference was not to take place, however, for the Australian Parliament refused to approve Prime Minister Menzies' proposed visit to London and his resignation resulted.

45. During his visit to Britain (20 August – 7 September) the Canadian Prime Minister did attend meetings of the British War Cabinet and discuss policy matters with Mr. Churchill. He described his proceedings to the War Committee on 10 September. He reported Mr. Churchill as being in agreement with his arguments against Dominion representation in the British War Cabinet and said that Churchill had used the same ones in communications with Mr. Fadden, the new Australian Prime Minister.

46. It is probably fair to assume that during this overseas visit Mr. King was given pretty full information on the war situation, at least in general terms. It is important to note, however, that Mr. Churchill had repeatedly thrown his great influence into the scale against keeping the Dominions fully informed. During December he sent two minutes to the Dominions Office complaining of the general distribution of strategic information.⁵⁵ The second one ran:

⁴ See below, para. 50.

No departure in principle is contemplated from the practice of keeping the Dominions informed fully of the progress of the war. Specially full information must necessarily be given in respect of theatres where Dominion troops are serving, but it is not necessary to circulate this to the other Dominions not affected. Anyhow, on the whole an effort should be made not to scatter so much deadly and secret information over this very large circle... There is a danger that the Dominions Office Staff get into the habit of running a kind of newspaper full of deadly secrets, which are circularized to the four principal Governments with whom they deal. The idea is that the more they circulate, the better they are serving the State. Many other departments fall into the same groove, loving to collect as much secret information as possible and feeling proud to circulate it conscientiously through all official circles. I am trying steadily to restrict and counteract these tendencies, which, if unchecked, would make the conduct of war impossible.

While therefore there is no change in principle, there should be considerable soft-peddling (sic) in practice.

I wish to be consulted before anything of a very secret nature, especially anything referring to operations or current movements, is sent out.

In March 1941 another memorandum to the Dominions Secretary complained of the Dominions being furnished with an alarming appreciation of the possibilities of invasion of the United Kingdom.⁵⁶ Another of the same sort was written a year later.⁵⁷ The limitations of the normal high-level liaison channels in London are made apparent in a memorandum⁵⁸ written by Mr. Churchill to the Secretary of the Cabinet on 27 February 1942 on the "Cabinet arrangements for the next week":

Monday, 5:30 p.m. at No. 10. General parade with the constant attendees, the Chiefs of Staff, and the Dominions and Indian representatives. Business: the general war situation, without reference to special secret matters such as forthcoming operations; and any other appropriate topics.

47. It seems apparent that Mr. Churchill exerted himself to ensure that no important strategic information went to the Dominions without his personal sanction. He preferred, indeed, to pass such information himself.

48. The question of the provision of strategic information in the later periods of the war is dealt with below (paras. 82 ff.).

Canada and the Anglo-American Relationship

49. Under the impulsion of common peril, Great Britain and the United States, in 1940-41, began to come closer together. In most respects this development was very satisfactory to Canada; but the tendency of the two great powers to exclude Canada from their councils was disturbing to the Canadian Government.

50. The first wartime conference between Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt was the famous "Atlantic Meeting" of 9-12 August 1941, when the United States was still neutral. Mr. King was surprised and troubled by the facts that his first word of the conference came in a message from Mr. Churchill after the latter had left England, and that Canada had not been consulted in the matter of the Anglo-American joint declaration (the "Atlantic Charter") which issued from the meeting. He told the Cabinet War Committee on 13 August that he had intimated to the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom that his colleagues and the Canadian public would think it

strange that the Canadian government had not been told of the meeting nor invited to participate. It was at this meeting of the Committee that the Prime Minister indicated that he now felt that a conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers might be useful. The Atlantic Meeting had doubtless contributed to changing his views.

51. This incident is revealing. The Canadian Prime Minister and his colleagues seem to have nourished the hope that Canada would be able to participate as a full partner, if a junior one, in Anglo-American wartime councils. They were to find that this viewpoint was unwelcome to the United Kingdom and United States governments and was quite unenforceable.

52. Canada's own relationship with the United States had been entering a new phase, and not merely as the result of Mr. Churchill's urging Mr. King to apply any possible "pressure" upon the Americans in the direction of obtaining "practical help" from them.⁵⁹ After the French collapse the Canadian government was painfully aware of the importance of American help to the defence of Canada, and during June 1940 Mr. King was in close touch with President Roosevelt and was passing to him (he told the War Committee on 14 June) the substance of information received from the United Kingdom. As the result of arrangements made later that month, staff conversations took place in July between Canadian and U.S. officers; and in September Canadian naval and military attaches were sent to Washington, where an air attaché (concerned with aircraft procurement) was already serving.⁶⁰

53. In August came the Ogdensburg conference between Messrs. King and Roosevelt, and the agreement to institute a Canadian-American Permanent Joint Board on Defence. By the autumn a Joint Canadian-United States Basic Defence Plan No. 1 was in existence, covering the situation which would arise if the United Kingdom was overrun. In the spring of 1941 Joint Canadian-United States Basic Defence Plan No. 2 (ABC-22) was drafted, covering the situation which would arise if the U.S. entered the war. It may be noted here that there was considerable disagreement over the question of Canadian acceptance of U.S. "strategic direction" in these

contingencies. The Canadian military and political authorities were prepared to accept such direction if Plan No. 1 had to be placed in effect; but in spite of considerable American pressure they declined to accept it under Plan No. 2, and this remained merely on a basis of “cooperation” – which in the event proved adequate to all emergencies.⁶¹ These matters however are not directly germane to the present subject.

54. Canada, Australia and New Zealand were represented only by military observers in the Anglo-American staff conversations early in 1941 which produced the report known as ABC-1.⁶² This agreement (which incidentally was never formally ratified by either government) provided that in the event of the United States entering the war “the High Command(s) of the United States and United Kingdom” would “collaborate continuously in the formulation and execution of strategical policies and plans which shall govern the conduct of the war”. Annex II provided that the United States would take responsibility for the strategic direction of its own and British forces in the greater part of the Pacific Ocean Area and in the Western Atlantic except for “the waters and territories in which Canada assumes responsibility for the strategic direction of military forces, as may be defined in United States-Canada joint agreements”.

55. The Canadian authorities were likewise able to play only a limited part in the Anglo-American negotiations early in 1941 which produced an agreement concerning the U.S. leased bases in Newfoundland. Canada did, however, send observers to the meetings, and the Newfoundland Protocol signed by the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada at the same time as the main Anglo-American agreement recognized Canada’s special concern in the defence of Newfoundland.⁶³

56. The course of the discussions conducted during 1941 with a view to the establishment of a Canadian Joint Staff Mission in Washington is interesting. On the one side, the Canadian authorities declined to agree to United Kingdom proposals that separate British and Canadian missions should maintain a joint secretariat and speak to the Americans “with one voice”;⁶⁴ on the other, they encountered deep-seated reluctance on the part of

the United States to accept the proposal of a Canadian Mission at all. The argument was used that other Dominions and South American councils with the British Joint Staff Mission. After Pearl Harbor the status of Canadian military representation in Washington was somewhat improved in practice⁶⁵ (below, para. 71).

57. No attempt is made here to describe the arrangements made during 1941 to improve the coordination of Canadian, United Kingdom and United States activities in matters of production and supply.⁶⁶

58. Surveying the whole record, it is clear that there was little reason to expect that in the event of the United States becoming a belligerent Canada would be allowed any considerable share in forming the policies of the alliance. After the bombs of Pearl Harbor blow the United States into the war on 7 December 1941, a new organization was set up to control the war effort of the Western Allies. This organization, as might have been forecast, proved to be almost exclusively Anglo-American.

THE COMBINED CHIEFS OF STAFF, 1942-1945

The "ARCADIA" Conference and the Combined Organizations

59. The entrance of the United States into the war created a new situation which Mr. Churchill considered required personal conference with President Roosevelt. He therefore set out for Washington, accompanied by Lord Beaverbrook (Minister of Supply and a member of the War Cabinet) and senior service officers. the "ARCADIA" Conference, as it was called, began immediately after their arrival in Washington on 22 December 1941. From it emerged new machinery for the higher direction of the war.

60. There had already been discussions in Washington. The State Department had drafted a plan for a Supreme War Council representing the United Kingdom, the United States, China and Russia. Lord Halifax, the British Ambassador, made the comment that “the British Dominions probably would have to be given a status in the Supreme War Council similar to that given Britain”. Mr. Hull, the Secretary of State, replied that “if the Council should comprise a large number of representatives it would become unwieldy and ineffective”.⁶⁷ Both these eminent statesmen were talking in the air. Lord Halifax was obviously not in Mr. Churchill’s confidence, and the State Department’s role in United States war policy was far more narrowly restricted than that played by, for instance, the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa. The new machinery finally set up had no place for Russia or China, let alone the British Dominions.

61. For a time there was uncertainty as to the form which the Allied strategic organization would take: would it be regional or “global”? One regional authority, the ABDA⁵ Area under General Wavell, was set up while the debate continued (and Wavell’s appointment, though not the terms of his directive, was cleared with the governments of the Australasian Dominions and the Dutch government in London);⁶⁸ but ultimately it was “judged essential to impose upon a single body, the Combined Chiefs of Staff, undivided responsibility for advising the associated Governments on war policy in all areas”.⁶⁹

62. The Combined Chiefs of Staff consisted, in ordinary circumstances, of the service heads of the United States armed services – including the Air Force, which was still formally part of the Army – and of “three high officers representing and acting under the general instructions of”⁷⁰ the British Chiefs of Staff. In addition, there was Field-Marshal Sir John Dill, representing Mr. Churchill as Minister of Defence, and subsequently Admiral Leahy as Chief of Staff to President Roosevelt. The Combined Chiefs had their permanent headquarters in Washington throughout the war. Their most important decisions, however, were taken in a series of conferences, chiefly held elsewhere, which the British Chiefs of Staff usually attended in person and at which Mr. Roosevelt and

⁵ American-British-Dutch-Australian.

Mr. Churchill were normally present and exercised decisive influence. “Of the two hundred formal meetings held by the Combine Chiefs of Staff Committee during the war no fewer than eighty-nine were at these conferences.”⁷¹

63. The first meeting of the Combined Chiefs of Staff took place on 23 January 1942. In the following March an Anglo-American division of strategic responsibility was worked out on the basis of “a division of the world into three major strategic spheres”. The United States took the principal responsibility for operations in “the entire Pacific area including Australia and, for diplomatic rather than geographical reasons, China”. In this area the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff made minor strategic decisions and directed the conduct of all operations. On a parallel basis the British Chiefs of Staff took primary responsibility for “the Middle and Far East areas except China”. In addition to exercising general supervision over grand strategy in these two areas, the Combined Chiefs of Staff took direct responsibility for operations in the third area, “the Atlantic-European area”.⁷²

64. The Combined Chiefs of Staff was the most important combined organization to emerge from the “ARCADIA” conference, but not the only one. There were three others:

- a) The Munitions Assignment Board. This operated under the Combined Chiefs of Staff and was divided into a Washington committee and a London committee (the latter being subordinate in that, apart from allocating United Kingdom production to all concerned, it-reallocated, to the Dominions and European allies, what the Washington committee had assigned to it in bulk from U.S. production).
- b) The Combined Shipping Adjustment Board.
- c) The Combined Raw Materials Board.

Two more combined organizations were still required, and were set up in June 1942:

- d) The Combined Food Board.
- e) The Combined Production and Resources Board.⁷³

Except for the Munitions Assignment Board, all these Combined Boards were responsible directly to the British and U.S. governments, not to the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

65. It may be noted here that Canada ultimately became a member of two of the six combined organizations: the Combined Food Board and the Combined Production and Resources Board (see below, paras. 79-81). All the rest were purely Anglo-American bodies.

66. Passing mention may be made here of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. This was an organization in a different category. It was not set up until November 1943, and it was directed by a central Committee consisting of representatives of China the U.S.S.R., the United Kingdom and the United States.⁷⁴ Canada contended strongly against this principle of control by the great powers. It was explained to the Cabinet War Committee on 21 January 1943 that the United Kingdom supported Canada's stand, but that it was vigorously opposed by Russia, and that the United States and China inclined to the Russian position. In April Canada finally had to admit defeat. However, when the organization began work she was able to obtain rather larger powers for producing nations not represented on the Central Committee.⁷⁵

Canada and the Combined Organizations

67. Canada was not consulted in connection with the institution of the Combined Organizations during December 1941 and January 1942. However, Mr. Churchill visited Ottawa, met with the Cabinet War Committee on 29 December and described what was going on in Washington. When Mr. King argued that Canada should have a voice in making decisions, the British Prime Minister agreed that she should certainly be consulted where her interests were concerned. In matters of joint interest to Canada and the United Kingdom, Mr. Churchill considered it his own responsibility to see that the Canadian government were fully informed.

68. In general, this was the most that could be gained. With the exceptions already noted, Canada did not achieve membership in the combined organizations. What she did achieve was a sufficient degree of liaison to keep her government fairly well informed of developments and to enable it to make representations in the proper quarters on matters of basic interest to it. The question is reviewed in greater detail in the paragraphs that follow.

The Combined Chiefs of Staff

69. It appears that Canada never formally requested membership in the Combined Chiefs of Staff, through her dislike of the Great Power's monopoly was made clear informally to Mr. Churchill (above, para. 67), and to Sir John Dill when he visited Ottawa in January 1942.⁶ Mr. King told the War Committee on 4 February that he had informed Sir John that, while Canada realized the practical necessity of limiting representation on combined bodies and would not seek to complicate the situation by unreasonable requests, she had been in the war more than two years and her people would expect situation, the Prime Minister told his colleagues, was unsatisfactory, but at present there was no useful initiative that Canada could take.

⁶ It appears that Australia did make a request for membership, soon after the "Arcadia" conference, which was refused.⁷⁶

70. Positive action was limited for the present to the attempt to provide an effective liaison channel to the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington. On 11 March 1942 the Cabinet War Committee approved the appointment of Major-General M.A. Pope as representative of the War Committee in Washington, with the function of maintaining continuous contact with the Combined Chiefs of staff and representing the Committee before the Combined Chiefs when questions affecting Canada were under consideration. It was understood that a naval or air force officer named for the purpose would replace General Pope in this duty when the matters to be discussed with the Combined Chiefs were specifically of a naval or air force character.

71. Although the United States remained opposed to the creation of a Canadian Joint Staff Mission (above, para. 56), a compromise arrangement was effected during the spring of 1942. The U.S. was asked that naval and air representatives should join with General Pope to form a Canadian Joint Staff in Washington, and agreed. (The word "Mission" was never officially used.)⁷⁷ This Staff reported to the Chiefs of Staff in Ottawa and its senior member was the representative of the chiefs of Staff in Washington. The representative forming the C.J.S. were separate from the attachés of the three Canadian services, who were of junior rank. The new arrangement was approved by the War Committee on 4 June, and the Canadian Joint Staff made its first report on 30 July (Appendix "A"). This report serves to summarize the Canadian relationship to the Combined Chiefs of Staff at this period. It will be noted from it that although the Combined Chiefs were willing to allow "a Canadian representative (and in certain circumstances, representatives)" to appear before them when a question having a direct bearing on Canadian affairs was being discussed, such occasions rarely arose. The Canadian representatives' most constant activity was using the facilities given them to collect information for their superiors in Ottawa.

72. For these facilities they were indebted in great part to the British Joint Staff Mission. That organization had made an attempt to "absorb" General Pope on his arrival in Washington in March, by offering him its vacant senior staff appointment (Major General, General Staff). When he declined, on the ground that it was not practicable to serve two masters,⁷⁸ the B.J.S.M. nevertheless continued to assist the Canadians in many ways.

Doubtless with U.S. concurrence, it made many documents available for perusal, in the manner described in Appendix "A"; and beginning in June 1943 Sir John Dill instituted a weekly off-the-record exchange of information with Dominion representatives, although it was not until 1945 that permission was obtained to report these talks by personal letter to individual Chiefs of Staff in Ottawa.⁷⁹

73. It is clear that the Canadian Joint Staff had closer contact with the British Joint Staff Mission than with the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff. Both the United Kingdom and the United States would have been glad to see the whole Commonwealth war effort coordinated in London, and to establish and maintain an independent position for Canada in Washington entailed some degree of constant struggle. However, Canadian Chiefs of Staff with the U.S. Joint Chiefs as well as with the Combined Chiefs of Staff;⁸⁰ and there was considerable business to be done through this channel in connection with the defence of the North American area. In August 1942 the Joint Chiefs designated their Joint Staff Planners, their Joint Intelligence Committee and the Army and Navy Bureaus of Public Relations to maintain liaison with the Canadian Joint Staff in such matters.⁸¹

74. As is explained in the report attached as Appendix "A", most of the work of the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington was done in subordinate committees. A list of these committees⁸² follows:

Combined Staff Planners

Combined Administrative Committee

Combined Intelligence Committee

Combined Military Transportation Committee

Combined Communications Board

Combined Meteorological Committee

Combined Shipbuilding Committee (Standardization of Design)

Combined Civil Affairs Committee

Combined Secretariat

Munitions Assignment Board.

Canada (and Australia and New Zealand) were represented on the Combined Communications Board. The Combined Meteorological Committee's Commonwealth membership comprised the members of an "informal" Commonwealth Joint Meteorological Committee, on which the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa were represented. On the Combined Shipbuilding Committee (Standardization of Design) Canada was the only Dominion represented. It should be noted that on this Committee there were six U.S. members while British and Canadian members together also totaled six. Similarly on the Combined Communications Board there were six U.S. members, and six from the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand together. Thus the matter was in effect kept on a Commonwealth basis and it cannot be said that Canada enjoyed independent representation. The problem was raised by the Canadian Joint Staff, Washington, with Ottawa, but the question was never fought out.⁸³ Liaison was maintained as required with the other committees on which Canada was not represented.

75. An informative general discussion by General Pope of the Canadian relationship to the Combined Chiefs of Staff, dated 31 March 1943, is attached as Appendix "B".

The Other Combined Organizations

76. Of the other combined organizations, the most important was the Munitions Assignment Board, which as noted above (para. 64) was responsible to the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

77. The Canadian Government made a determined but unsuccessful effort to obtain membership in this Board. The Prime Minister told the Cabinet War Committee on 29 April 1942 that during a recent visit to Washington he had obtained President Roosevelt's concurrence in full Canadian representation on the Washington Munitions Assignment Board, and that the United Kingdom was prepared to accept this arrangement and had agreed to Canadian production being pooled in Washington. This turned out to be premature. It seems likely that the proposal was opposed by Mr. Harry Hopkins, Chairman of the Washington Munitions Assignment Board; whether it was referred to the Combined Chiefs of Staff does not appear, but it was not the sort of scheme they were likely to agree to. Subsequently a formal request was made by Canada, and after some delay a discouraging reply was received from Hopkins. On 19 August 1942 the War Committee was told that a further proposal had been received offering membership when Canadian production and Canadian North American requirements from U.S. production were under discussion. This offer was repeatedly discussed by the War Committee but appears never to have been accepted.

78. As a result, it may be noted, Canadian war production was never fully and formally pooled. It was assigned by informal arrangements which developed into a Canadian Munitions Assignment Committee on which sat United Kingdom and United States representatives. The procedure was thus described in May 1943:

The Canadian procedure to assign Canadian production is... that the CANADIAN ASSIGNMENTS COMMITTEE (ARMY) sits monthly in Ottawa and receives representatives from the U.K. and U.S.A. to argue the strategic factors and obtain assignments. The Canadian representative on the Committee is the M.G.O. (Master General of the Ordnance), who bid son behalf of the Cdn Army both at home and Overseas. The essential difference between this

procedure and that agreed to by the U.K. and U.S.A. is that disagreements are referred to the Canadian Chiefs of Staff and the Canadian Government and not to the Combined Chiefs of Staff.⁸⁴

The requirements of the Canadian Army Overseas (other than items of “continuing Canadian supply” obtained direct from Canada) were bid for at the London Munitions Assignment Board by Canadian Military Headquarters, London; Canada’s requirements from United States production were bid for by National defence Headquarters at the Washington Munitions Assignment Board or its appropriate sub-committee. It appears that Canada avoided consolidating her bids in Washington with those of the rest of the Commonwealth; but there was close coordination with the British Army Staff, Washington, which evidently came to much the same thing.⁸⁵

79. Of the four civilian Combined Boards, Canada, as already noted (above, para. 65), became a full member of the Combined Production and Resources Board (7 November 1942) and of the Combined Food Board (October 1943).⁸⁶ It appears that there was an element of attempted bargaining in her admission to the C.P.R.B., for the War Committee was told on 16 September 1942 that Sir Robert Sinclair, the United Kingdom representative on the Board, had said in Ottawa that day that the United Kingdom and United States governments would be agreeable to Canadian membership if questions regarding the Canadian relationship to the other Boards were satisfactorily settled.

80. Canada pressed for membership in the Combined Food Board for a long period before her desire was realized (the War Committee agreed on 7 April 1943 that this pressure should continue). Thanks to the liberality of U.S. records policy and the pertinacity of an American Ph.D. student, the circumstances in which her membership was granted are known. In the summer of 1943 the United States proposed to the British Government that the Board be expanded by including, not merely Canada but also Australia and New Zealand. The United Kingdom however “preferred to have Australia and New Zealand continue to participate only in the London Food

Council". The United States then proposed to the British Government that President Roosevelt should communicate with Mr. King in the following terms:

Canada's contribution to war effort is source of admiration to us all. The strength which Canadian effort in whole field of production had contributed to U.N. is already reflected in Canada's participation as member of Com. Prod. and Res. Bd. The importance of Canada as supplier of food makes it desirable that she participate fully with U. Kingdom and U.S. in consultations and decisions which are made in this vital field as well. Mr. Churchill and I would accordingly be gratified if you would name a representative to Comb. Food Bd.

The British Prime Minister however proposed the following amended version:

Canada's contribution to war effort in whole field of production and strength which she has thus lent to cause of U.N. is source of admiration to us all. The importance of Canadian food supplies and close inter-connection of all North American food problems makes it appropriate and desirable that she should be directly represented as member of Comb. Food Bd. sitting Wash. Mr. Churchill and I would accordingly be gratified if you would name representative to Combined Fd. Board.

The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, A.A. Berle, observed that the reference to "inter-connection" was probably for the benefit of Australia and New Zealand and suggested that the revised draft "cuts down recognition of Canada's right to be consulted. We do not agree; but it is not worth a fuss".⁸⁷ The War Committee of the Canadian Cabinet was told on 27 October that the invitation had been received and accepted.

81. Canada never became a member of either the Combined Shipping Adjustment Board or the Combined Raw Materials Board.

The Provision of Strategic Information

82. It has been made clear that Canada was almost entirely excluded from the Allied organization for the higher direction of the war, and that the Canadian Government, however reluctantly, accepted this situation. Another aspect of the matter is the degree of information on the progress of the war, and particularly on the plans of the Combined Chiefs of Staff for future operations, which was made available to Canada. This boils down, in the main, to the question of information received concerning the great strategic conferences (above, para. 62).

83. The fact that Canada was not a member of the Combined Chiefs of Staff led naturally to the Canadian Government's having no part in these conferences.⁷ This applied event to those held on Canadian soil at Quebec. Before the first Quebec conference (August 1943) there was some discussion of the possibility of Canada's taking part. The decision was emphatically negative. Mr. Churchill indicates in his memoirs that he and President Roosevelt were at one on the question. However, Mr. King told the Cabinet War Committee on 10 August that Mr. Churchill was willing, not only for the Canadian Prime Minister to take part in discussions with the President and himself, but for the Canadian Chiefs of Staff to attend plenary sessions with the Combined Chiefs of Staff; Churchill had suggested this to Roosevelt, but the President had opposed the suggestion on the ground that it would cause difficulties with others of the United Nations. It appears that Mr. King had made a request for the Canadian Chiefs of Staff to participate, which was abandoned after he had a discussion with the U.S. Ambassador late in July.⁸⁸

⁷ It is relevant to recall that the United Kingdom made serious difficulties after the war when a request was made for access to the conference records for Canadian official historians. A fairly complete version of the records was finally made available in 1950.

84. During the Quebec conference Mr. Churchill had separate formal meetings with members of the Canadian Government, including one on 11 August dignified by the title of a joint meeting of the United Kingdom War Cabinet and the War Committee of the Canadian Cabinet (Mr. Churchill was accompanied by Sir John Anderson, Lord President of the Council). On 31 August the British Prime Minister and several of his assistants and advisers met with the Cabinet War Committee and the Canadian Chiefs of Staff, and Mr. Churchill discussed the decisions of the conference. It is perhaps significant that there is no record of parallel formal contacts between Canadian authorities and Mr. Roosevelt or his advisers.

85. Mr. Churchill, as has been explained (above, para. 47), had constituted himself before Pearl Harbor the main channel through which strategic information reached the Dominions. After Pearl Harbor he maintained this position, though now the information he forwarded was frequently Anglo-American rather than merely British. It came to be accepted procedure for him to send to the Dominion Prime Ministers after each major conference a message or messages summarizing the discussions and decisions. These messages varied in their degree of frankness. Attached as Appendix "C", as examples, are the two messages sent after the Casablanca Conference early in 1943. These were sent about a week after the conference ended. It is notable that while they give a very accurate general summary of the decisions, they do not mention the decision which had been taken to invade Sicily that summer. They merely forecast "further amphibious offensive operations on a large scale".

86. This personal method of communicating information, unfortunately, did not always work. It broke down, by accident or design, during the important Anglo-American discussions of 1942. After the conversations held in London with Mr. Hopkins and General Marshall in April a full and accurate summary was circulated⁸⁹ (though not until three weeks after the meeting); but the later discussions in London in July, when the fundamental decisions were taken not to attempt a landing in France in 1942 but to invade French North Africa, were not, it appears, reported to Canada at all.

87. It is possible that this was an oversight resulting from the other personal preoccupations of Mr. Churchill, who left England for North Africa and Russia not many days after the conference terminated. However, it is of interest that the G.O.C.-in-C. First Canadian Army complained that the War Office gave him no information of the change of plans for many weeks. On 3 August General McNaughton, accompanied by the Chief of the Canadian General Staff (General Stuart) called on the Acting Chief of the Imperial General Staff (General Nye) and discussed the strategical situation. No hint of the recent decisions was given to them, and on 17 September General McNaughton complained to the C.I.G.S. (General Brooke) that he had first heard of them through a casual reference in a conversation (evidently then very recent) with the C.-in-C. Home Forces. The simultaneous breakdown of the high political channel (Prime Minister to Prime Minister) may be significant; but both Churchill and Brooke were out of England at the time when they might have been expected to be passing on the information concerned.

88. It is worth noting that General McNaughton frequently complained of the difficulty of obtaining information concerning Allied strategic planning, for his own and his Government's purposes. At one point, in June 1942, it appeared that a solution was in sight. General Paget, C.-in-C. Home Forces, told him that a committee was being set up to plan future operations and that it would include the Commanding General, U.S. Forces in the United Kingdom, and General McNaughton. The latter then signaled to Ottawa, describing this as "a very useful and forward step through which I hope for the first time to be in a position to keep you informed of plans for future operations on the continent of Europe".⁹⁰ This prospect was not realized. Paget had apparently "spoken out of turn"; and the group called the "Combined Commanders", which was the chief body concerned 1942 and the early part of 1943 with planning for the cross-Channel attack, contained no Canadian representative.

89. General McNaughton never succeeded in achieving a full solution of this problem of information. The matter remained on a basis of personal liaison. The C.I.G.S. went so far as to suggest that McNaughton might

attend all meetings of the British Chiefs of Staff, but his other duties rendered this procedure impracticable.⁸ He was invited to visit the Cabinet Offices Information Room whenever he was in London.⁹¹

90. Another channel through which information on the progress of the war reached the Canadian Government was that by way of the Dominions Office and the Canadian High Commissioner in London. The Dominion High Commissioners had regular conferences with the Secretary of State for the Dominions. We have seen, however, that Mr. Churchill repeatedly discouraged the circulation of important military information by the Dominions Office (above, para. 46); and there is no indication that much useful intelligence on strategic planning arrived by this route.

The Canadian Joint Staff Mission, London, and Relations with Supreme Commanders

91. As D Day for the invasion of North-West Europe approached, the Canadian Government considered its own position with respect to operations in that theatre, where the bulk of its army and air forces were to be engaged. On 1 March 1944 the matter was laid before the Cabinet War Committee by the Prime Minister, who spoke both of the question of consultation and concurrence in the appointment of high commanders, and that of Canadian participation in planning. On the former matter he pointed out that although Australia and New Zealand had been consulted and had actually participated in the designation of General MacArthur as Supreme Allied Commander in the South-West Pacific, and their forces had been placed under his command by formal directives of the two governments, Canada had not even been officially informed of the appointment of the Allied Commander in European theatres,⁹ although substantial Canadian forces were serving under them.

⁸ Such high-level liaison duties could more conveniently have been carried out by the head of a static headquarters; but during the Canadian force's long static period in England functions of this sort had tended to pass to the Army Commander.

⁹ The appointments of General Eisenhower as Supreme Commander in North-West Europe, of General Montgomery as Commander of the British Group of Armies serving under him, and of General Maitland Wilson as Supreme Commander in the Mediterranean, were announced on 24 December 1943. The appointment of General Eisenhower was, essentially, made by President Roosevelt and concurred in by Mr. Churchill.⁹²

92. On the question of planning, the basic plans for the invasion had been completed long before this date, without Canadian participation (although General McNaughton had been kept informed through 1943 by the expedient of placing a personal liaison officer, Major-General G.R. Turner, at the headquarters of General Morgan, the chief planner). It was pointed out at this meeting of the War Committee that Canada could scarcely have expected to take part in this planning, but that it would be the responsibility of the Canadian Army Commander to see that the detailed plans now made for the role of his Army were proper and adequate. Subsequently, on 3 May, the Committee was informed that general Crerar had formally expressed confidence in General Montgomery and in the plan, and had (in answer to a specific inquiry from the Minister of National Defence) reported himself satisfied that his Army's prospective tasks were "feasible operations of war".⁹³

93. On the question of relations with the Supreme Commanders, Mr. King suggested on 1 March that it might be well to set up in London a Canadian Joint Staff, composed of the three former Chiefs of Staff¹⁰ now serving there, in order to provide for improved and continuous consultation between Canadian military authorities and the United Nations high command. On 8 March the War Committee agreed that messages should be sent to Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt requesting that U.N. Commanders-in-Chief be informed that their authority over Canadian forces under their command derived from the Government of Canada, and mentioning the project of a Joint Staff Mission to act as an appropriate channel of communication between the Canadian Chiefs of Staff and the Supreme Commands in Britain and the Mediterranean. A separate communication to Mr. Churchill expressed the desire that the proposed mission should form a link between Canadian authorities and the British Chiefs of Staff so as to ensure the receipt of advance information as to plans involving the use of Canadian forces.

94. President Roosevelt replied first. The War Committee was told on 8 April that he had stated, on the recommendation of the U.S. Chiefs of Staff, that if the Mission were established the channel of communication between the Canadian Chiefs of Staff and the Supreme Commands must be through the Combined Chiefs of Staff,

and not directly through the Mission. Moreover, if, from other than a military point of view, any announcement were to be made regarding command, it should be made clear that the authority was derived from the governments concerned, not directly but through the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

95. Mr. Churchill's reply, placed before the War Committee on 19 April, was rather less austere in tone. It welcomed the proposal for a Canadian Joint Staff Mission in London, and although pointing out that matters of high policy could be dealt with only through the Combined Chiefs of Staff indicated that the Mission could have direct contact with the Supreme Commands on day-to-day liaison matters. Mr. Churchill also suggested that any announcement made in the matter of command should be made on behalf of Canada alone, not on behalf of all participating countries as suggested by Roosevelt.

96. With the two replies before it, the War Committee on 19 April approved the constitution forthwith of the Joint Staff Mission, London, which held its first meeting with the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff the following month. Five such meetings were held before the end of hostilities, and in addition there were "off-the-record" conversations for information. The members of the Mission were permitted to read the final report of the Combined Chiefs of Staff on the second Quebec conference.⁹⁴

97. The proposal for liaison by the Mission with the Supreme Commanders encountered another obstacle, this time a Canadian one. General Crerar agreed that a link between the Canadian and British Chiefs of Staff was desirable, but argued that since he was Commander of the Canadian Army operating under SHAEF, Canadian liaison with the Supreme Commander (normally to be conducted through 21 Army Group) was his own responsibility. Nevertheless, the formal instructions for the Canadian Joint Staff Mission, approved by the War Committee on 8 January 1945, assigned the Mission this liaison task. The members of the Mission discussed the matter with the High Commissioner in London on 16 January and it was agreed to recommend that on this point the

¹⁰ Admiral Nelles, General Stuart, and Air Marshal Breadner.

instructions should be altered. The Chiefs of Staff concurred, but action for the amendment of the instructions was not completed before the end of hostilities.⁹⁵

98. The question of the authority of the Supreme Commanders was dealt with in communications sent to Mr. Churchill on 6 June 1944 and to President Roosevelt on 16 June. In these the Canadian Prime Minister agreed that no public announcement should be made concerning the authority of the Supreme Commanders over Canadian forces; it was requested however that these Commanders should be “formally notified that they exercise command over the Canadian Armed Forces in these theatres with the full authority of the Canadian Government”. The telegram to Mr. Roosevelt should be quoted at some length:

5. We have noted that the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff regard it as necessary that the appropriate channel of communications between Canadian Chiefs of Staff and the Supreme Commands must be through the Combined Chiefs of Staff and not directly through the Canadian Mission to the Supreme Commands. We have no desire to disturb, in any way, the establish(ed) chain of Command whereby the Supreme Commanders receive their instructions from the Combined Chiefs of Staff. At the same time there can, we believe, be no objection to the Canadian Mission having regular contact on liaison matters with Supreme Commands, so long as matters of high policy are dealt with through our contacts with the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington. I may say that our view, in this respect, is shared by the United Kingdom Government.

6. We note that your Joint Chiefs of Staff regard the Supreme Commanders as deriving their authority from the “Governments concerned” through the Combined Chiefs of Staff, and not directly from the Governments.

I feel bound to point out that while we have recognized that the higher direction of the war should be exercised by the Combined Chiefs of Staff, under Mr. Churchill and yourself, the relationship

of the Canadian Government and Armed Forces, to the Combined Chiefs of Staff has never been defined with any degree of precision, nor, specifically, has the Canadian Government ever been requested to recognize the Combined Chiefs of Staff as the source of authority of the Supreme Allied Commanders.

In drawing attention to this state of affairs, which is somewhat unsatisfactory from the Canadian point of view, I need hardly say that we have no desire to upset existing arrangements, particularly at this critical time.

7. We trust that the establishment of the Canadian Mission in London will result in improved collaboration in all matters affecting the disposition and use of Canadian Forces. In this belief we have gone forward with its establishment.

8. It is assumed that matters of high policy will continue to be dealt with between Governments through whatever channels are most appropriate to the questions in hand, while our Staff Missions in London and Washington will provide ready and constant means of consultation and communication on military matters.⁹⁶

99. It does not appear that these propositions were questioned – at any rate, overtly. The British representatives in the Combined Chiefs of staff proposed that the communication requested by Canada should be sent to the Supreme Commanders; and on 6 July 1944 the Government of Canada was informed by the Dominions Office that the Combined Chiefs had issued instructions to Generals Eisenhower and Wilson “to the effect that they exercise command over the Canadian armed forces in their respective operational theatres with the full authority of the Canadian Government”.⁹⁷ Whether the recipients made any comment is not recorded in Canadian files. At any rate, a theoretical point had been gained, and the position of Canada with respect to the higher direction of the war had been clarified in some degree.

CONCLUSION

100. Extended comment on the foregoing seems unnecessary. It is clear that the Government of Canada was accorded no share of any importance in the higher direction of the Second World War. It did not like this situation, but found it impossible in practice to do anything about it except to voice certain very mild protests which were accompanied by assurances that Canada had no desire to upset the existing arrangements. Those arrangements meant that Canadian forces served under a command organization which was set up without the participation of their government and under commanders who were appointed without consultation with it and indeed without its even being advised. Yet those arrangements were militarily efficient, and they won the war, for Canada as for the greater Allies. And this, after all, was what mattered most.

101. At Quebec on 11 August 1943 Mr. King told Mr. Churchill that the Canadian Government fully recognized that the higher direction of the war could not be exercised by all the United Nations, and was satisfied, in this respect, that authority should rest with Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt and their Combined Chiefs of Staff. This assurance was repeated, as we have seen, to President Roosevelt in June 1944. All Mr. King found it possible to claim was a greater degree of information and consultation, and (as he put it to Mr. Churchill at Quebec) a more decisive voice for Canada in certain fields in which she was playing major roles. It cannot plausibly be argued that he ought to have done more.

102. The basic reasons for this situation are obvious; they were clearly stated by General Pope (Appendix "B"). Canada made a large contribution to the Allied war effort, but her military power was too far inferior to that of the senior partners to enable her to claim to sit in council with them. Had she been able to put in the field ten divisions instead of five, while making at the same time a proportionate contribution at sea and in the air, she would not have been welcomed at the table but could probably have insisted successfully upon being given a place there. As it was, the difficulty was not only the predominant military strength of the United States and the

United Kingdom, and the natural monopolistic tendencies of great powers; it consisted also in the fact that there were too many other “middle powers” with claims almost as good as Canada’s. The United Kingdom could not forget the other Dominions – notably Australia, which was playing a large part in the war and pursuing a more assertive policy than Canada; the United States could not, or at any rate would not, forget its protégés in South America – particularly Brazil, whose modest war effort American writers tend to exaggerate. It is worth recalling that in 1946 the United States attempted to obtain for Brazil a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council – President Roosevelt and Secretary Hull, it is recorded, “believing that Brazil’s size, population, and resources, along with her prospect of a great future and the outstanding assistance she had rendered her sister United Nations”.¹¹, warranted such a distinction.⁹⁸

103. It is worth noting that throughout the war the Canadian Government sought to insist upon Canada’s being treated as an independent power with national rights in no way dependent upon her membership in the Commonwealth; it was quite unwilling to recognize or utilize Commonwealth procedures or machinery which might have temporary practical advantages but would compromise the country’s status. On the other hand, both the United Kingdom and the United States favoured traditional Commonwealth channels: the former for obvious reasons, the latter partly perhaps through lack of understanding of recent constitutional developments within the Commonwealth, but probably rather more from the fact that recognition of the primacy of the United Kingdom was a convenient device for keeping real authority in the hands of the two great powers. Mr. Churchill would probably have argued that in the great strategic conferences he was acting for the Commonwealth as a whole; and as we have seen it was his usual but not invariable practice to send the Dominion Prime Ministers a more or less complete summary of the decisions of these conferences. This procedure was doubtless adopted with American concurrence. It is worth noting also that Canadian munitions assignment bids in Washington were coordinated with those of the rest of the Commonwealth, though formal pooling was avoided; and that in cases where the Dominions were represented on sub-committees of the Combined Chiefs of Staff the total Commonwealth membership was the same as that for the United States – doubt – less a concession to American views. Finally, it may be remarked that the

¹¹ Brazil’s war effort was very small by comparison with Canada’s, but she was the only South American belligerent to make any effort at all. And it is worth remembering that she had one asset Canada could not claim: a population of forty millions.

Canadian Government usually chose in practice to approach the Allied command organization through the British Prime Minister alone rather than through him and the President jointly; and that the Canadian viewpoint usually got a more sympathetic hearing in London than in Washington.

Historical Section,

Army Headquarters,

5 Mar 1952.

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Canadian Services Representation in Washington

(Report by Canadian Joint Staff, 30 Jul 42)

1. Pursuant to the instructions of the Chiefs of Staff we beg to submit hereunder a report by the Canadian Joint Staff, on the Representation of the Canadian Services in Washington.

2. In order to make an comprehensive survey of the nature of the representation required by the Canadian Services in Washington with respect to the Combined Chiefs of Staff, it is we suggest desirable first to describe how that body applies itself (in accordance with the decisions reached by the heads of the Governments of the United States and the United Kingdom) to its task of directing the conduct of the war as a whole.

3. The Combined Chiefs of Staff have been given offices in the Public Health Building on Constitution Avenue, immediately opposite the War and Navy Departments. In this building are housed the more important elements (from the operational aspect) of the British Joint Staff Mission. The buildings in Washington. The Mission is composed of the British Admiralty Delegation, the British Army Staff and the British Air Staff.

4. The British Joint Staff Mission is presided over by Field Marshal Sir John Dill who represents the British Chiefs of Staff in their corporate capacity. The Commander or head of each of the three British Service Staffs represents his respective Chief of Staff.

5. On the United States side only the Secretariat and officers of certain full-time sub-committees are permanently located in the Combined Chiefs of Staff offices. The United States Chiefs of Staff and their principal assistants, all of whom hold appointments in the War and Navy Departments respectively, as a rule repair to the Public Health Building only for the purpose of attending joint or combined meetings.

6. Broadly speaking the Combined Chiefs of Staff control major strategy. They are responsible for the broad programme of war requirements based on strategic policy and the allocation of resources as between theatres. The British Chiefs of Staff in London and the United States Chiefs of Staff in Washington each control minor strategy and operations inside the theatres of war lying within their own spheres of strategic responsibility. It will thus be seen that the Combined Chiefs of Staff are a strategical body as opposed to one concerned with the actual conduct of operations.

7. The Combined Chiefs of Staff meet each Thursday for the consideration of such items as have been included in the Agenda. Their deliberations cover a wide range of subjects as will be seen from the list given hereunder taken from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th July, 1942.

- a) Strategic Policy and Deployment of United States and British Forces. Dominion Air Forces.
- b) Shipping Implications of Proposed Air Force Deployment.
- c) Requisition of Material for Southwest Pacific Area.
- d) July Assignments for China.
- e) Combined Communications Board.

f) Form of Agreement between the United Kingdom and the United States Regarding the Defence of Fiji and Tonga.

g) Steel Plate.

8. As will be readily understood the Combined Chiefs of Staff when sitting in committee do not consider the matter laid before them in any great detail. On the contrary, both sides usually take the line they have respectively decided upon in Joint Chiefs of Staff meeting and, as a general rule, they either accept the proposal made or ask for postponement of the question so as to enable them to give the matter further study. Now and then amendments to a paper are made in committee, but not often.

9. From the foregoing it follows that the bulk if not all the actual work of the United Kingdom-United States staff organization in Washington is done in subordinate committees. Generally speaking, in their collective capacity the Combined Chiefs of Staff issue directives to these bodies and formally assume responsibility for and accept the conclusions they reach. The more important of the committees are:

- a) Combined Staff Planners.
- b) Combined Transportation Committee.
- c) Combined Munitions Assignment Board.
- d) Combined Communications Board.
- e) Combined Intelligence Committee.

10. The number of questions dealt with by the Combined Chiefs of Staff which directly affect Canada are few. Indeed, during the last four and half months the only items coming under this head have been the Arnold-Portal-Towers Memorandum of Agreement with its implications on the Canadian figures in the strategic deployment table and the North Atlantic Ferry Project. And in respect of the latter item its effect on Canada, so far as its discussion by the Combined Chiefs of Staff was concerned, could well be held to be indirect. In these circumstances, the prospect of Canadian officers being appointed to full or perhaps even associate membership of the above-mentioned committees (with the exception of the Combined Communications Board) is not encouraging. In this connection our information is that of recent weeks China, which constitutes a very important theatre, has exerted a good deal of pressure to obtain a greater share in the Combined Chiefs of Staff organization, but without success.

11. On the other hand, the Combined Chiefs of Staff are prepared to permit a Canadian representative (and in certain circumstances, representatives) to appear before them to express a Canadian view when the question they are considering has a direct bearing on Canadian affairs. And in recent weeks a precedent has been established whereby Canadian and other Dominion representatives have sat in both with the Combined Staff Planners, and the United States Joint Planners for the consideration of the strength of Dominion Air Forces.

12. In the light of the foregoing, it follows that possibly the only effective way of safeguarding Canadian interests is by keeping as close contact as possible with the work of the Combined Chiefs of Staff organization, particularly in the early stages. And this we are endeavouring to do. We have been provided with offices in the Public Health Building, and arrangements have been made with the British side of the Secretariat whereby a docket of papers are made available to us for perusal each day. A number of these are situation reports from the various theatres, most of which, by one means or another, regularly find their way either to the Department of External Affairs, or to the Service Departments. Others reflect discussions being conducted by the British Joint Staff Mission with the Chiefs of Staff in London. This category of message is not circulated to the United States

side. The remainder and not least in importance, are Combined Chiefs of Staff papers which obviously are common to both sides.

13. From our daily reading of these papers, we are able to keep in pretty close touch with what is going on, though by this statement it is not to be inferred that we are shown all effort is made by the British side of the Secretariat to put us in possession of all the information to which we can reasonably hold ourselves to be entitled. (The recent Arnold-Towers-Portal Memorandum of Agreement constituted a glaring exception to the general rule but these negotiations were separately negotiated). Thus, as occasionally happens, a paper comes before us some point in which has a bearing on the Canadian position. The point is then taken up either with the British or United States members of the Secretariat, or with the subordinate committee dealing with the question, further information is elicited and the necessary representations made while the paper in question is yet in an early stage. Concurrently we endeavour to keep our Chiefs of Staff as well informed as to what is going on, particularly in respect of matters having a direct Canadian concern, as we possibly can.

14. It is not in the least our desire to convey the impression that all is as well as it can be in respect of Canadian representation to the Combined Chiefs of Staff. We have, however, endeavoured to point out that we have been afforded a number of facilities and courtesies in the discharge of our duties; that these duties can best be discharged by establishing friendly contact with every link of the organization useful to our purposes and by gradually building up that measure of confidence in the minds of both British and United States officers without which we could accomplish little. This with our direct representation to the Combined Chiefs of Staff in formal sessions and the development of the precedent already established of being invited to state our views to the subordinate committees will, we think, as time goes on, provide Canada with an effective measure of Service representation in Washington.

15. Apart from the foregoing there is another aspect to our work, namely direct contact with the United States Service Departments in the day-to-day matter of North American defence. The Services of the two countries are carrying out the tasks assigned to them in Defence Plan known as A.B.C.-22. Questions under this head constantly arise and these are taken up direct with the appropriate officers of the War and Navy Departments. In addition, there are other duties either common to all three Services or special to one. Under this head fall such matters as munitions assignment, technical information, intelligence, operational or otherwise, dispositions of our own or allied taken care of now, or will be as time goes on. The needs in the way of staffs for the discharge of these duties vary with each Service and consequently we propose separately to report on this aspect to our respective Chiefs of Staff.

16. We trust, however, that in the foregoing report we have succeeded in giving a reasonably full picture of the question of the representation of the Canadian Services in Washington, of how we have endeavoured to carry on to date and how, with the approval of the Canadian Chiefs of Staff, we propose to carry on in future. We would add that while we work closely with the British Joint Staff Mission, we enjoy free contact with our United States colleagues and that the separate nature of our identity as a Canadian Joint Staff is well maintained.

(War Diary, Maj.-Gen. M.A. Pope, July 1942).

WASHINGTON REPORT (31 Mar. 1943)

(Extract from paper by Maj.-Gen. M.A. Pope)

INTRODUCTORY

1. To the members of a Dominions' Military Mission the task of making an informed appreciation of the general war situation at any particular time, is by no means an easy one. Full and accurate information is hard to come by if, indeed, it is not impossible to do so. Subject always to the decisions of the President and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, the general direction of the war has been entrusted to the Combined Chiefs of Staff, that is to say, to the Joint United States Chiefs of Staff and to the Representatives of the British Chiefs of Staff. This responsibility the Combined Chiefs of Staff have never shown much desire to share with the military representatives of the lesser United Nations.

2. The reason for this is not far to seek. It is but a truism to say that, in the last analysis, the measure of a country's influence in international affairs is but a function of its military strength. And the United Kingdom, no less than the United States, is never unconscious of the predominant strength of its armed forces when compared to those of the Dominions, China, Holland and the other nations. Actually, from time to time the military representatives of these latter Powers are invited to sit with Combined Chiefs of Staff. On these infrequent occasions, the situation in the several theatres of operations is broadly described. Again, when an item of business particularly affects one or other of these countries, its military representatives are permitted to join in the discussion. But this is largely a formality and consists of little else than of affording the representatives of the country in question an recommendation that has previously been worked out, usually with their collaboration, in subordinate committee. Subject to these exceptions, the Combined Chiefs of Staff keep the direction of the war entirely within their own hands. The recent conference on anti-submarine operations in the North Atlantic was a meeting of Service Headquarters, outside the orbit of the Combined Chiefs of staff as such.

3. There is another reason for the non-inclusion of the military representatives of the lesser United Nations in the deliberations of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. While the political heads of the United Kingdom and the United States never weary of reiterating their complete accord as to the objects they are determined to achieve, there can be no doubt that their respective military advisers are not of one mind as to the sequence of the steps to be taken, nor as to the relative weight of the operations to be put in hand. The United States Navy has for generations had its eyes glued to the Pacific. It is adamant in its refusal to divert from that ocean any appreciable measure of naval force. In no less degree the United States Army has a burning desire to annihilate the Japanese. They, however, appear loyally to have accepted the decision that the defeat of Germany must be given first priority. With this latter view the British entirely agree, first priority. With this latter view the British entirely agree, but not with the timing proposed by their United States colleagues.

4. The greater bulk of the British Empire is composed of lands fringing the Indian Ocean, the main arterial highroad to which passes through the Mediterranean. The British therefore have a great and instinctive concern for the security of their positions all the way from Gibraltar to Singapore. They did not need to be reminded, during the Summer of 1942, that the loss of the Middle East might well lengthen the course of the war by as much as from 5 to 10 years. The Americans, on the other hand, did not seem to be unduly perturbed until the loss of Egypt appeared imminent and when this threat had lessened, even if only to a moderate degree, they transferred their attention elsewhere. To them the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean do not commend themselves as areas of primary importance.

5. In the light of the foregoing it will be apparent that agreement between the "Big Two" is not always easy to obtain. Differing as they do in their views as to the relative values of the several theatres of operations, either actual or potential, it naturally follows that it is only by the exercise of pressure from the top that they manage to achieve unanimity in respect of questions of major importance. If an over-all unity of command is not a matter of practical politics the next best thing, namely, joint direction by the two leading Powers, is the only

alternative. The possible psychological advantage that would accrue from the inclusion of the representatives of the lesser nations would be more than outweighed by the retardatory effect of such a step on the pace of the central machinery of direction. Decisions would be made more difficult and, as has been intimated, these are difficult enough to reach as it is. A due sense of proportion, it is felt, will show that the general participation of Dominions' representatives and of the other United Nations in the work of the Combined Chiefs of Staff is hardly a tenable proposition.

6. In these circumstances, the role of the members of the Dominions' Military Missions is somewhat delicate. They do not directly contribute to solution of major problems decided by the Combined Chiefs of Staff. They have no place at the periodic conferences, such as Casablanca, where the important decisions are really taken. They are not advised as to these decisions. They are not officially informed as to operations planned or set in motion. On the other hand, however, they have access to the daily situation reports. They see the minutes and a fair number of the reports produced by the working committees. Consequently, if they are not apprised of future events, they are nevertheless in a position to keep fairly well abreast of the current situation.

7. The work of the Combined Chiefs of Staff, however, is not all carried out in formal committee. Much work is conducted more or less off the record. The Dominions' Military Missions have been provided with desks in the offices of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. It is there that they meet daily to read the papers made available to them and, of greater importance, to exchange information not only amongst themselves but also with their British and United States colleagues. Thus it is, that Australia and New Zealand, being under United States strategic direction, their representatives have established close and useful contacts with the staffs of the United States Army and Navy, respectively. So far as Canada is concerned, her military representatives enjoy a not unenviable position. Her armed forces at sea and abroad serve, in the words of the Visiting Forces Act, in combination with the corresponding forces of the United Kingdom. This makes an effective point of liaison with the British Joint Staff Mission. On the other hand, a mutual responsibility for joint continental defence has enabled them to establish close relationships with both the War and Navy Departments.

8. Much useful work, therefore, is possible by means of informal discussion. If we are precluded from asking direct questions it is not necessary for us to remain completely in the dark. Security is never absolute and what with a phrase here and a word there, together with what we are officially told, not only can the general picture of the moment be built up but also an intelligent forecast can be made of things that are to come. It is with such a background that the following observations on the probable trend of events in the major theatres of operations are submitted...

(Sgd) Maurice Pope

Major-General

(War Diary, Maj.-Gen. M.A. Pope, March 1943).

INFORMATION FURNISHED THE CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER ON THE CASABLANCA CONFERENCE

January 1943

(Prime-Minister-to-Prime-Minister telegrams)

Office of the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom,

Earnscliffe, Ottawa.

30th January, 1943.

IMMEDIATE

MOST SECRET AND PERSONAL

My dear Prime Minister,

In a telegram from the Dominions Office I have been asked to give you the enclosed most secret and personal message from Mr. Churchill, who is now at Cairo.

With this message I include also one from the Deputy Prime Minister summarising the principal conclusions reached at Casablanca.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) PATRICK DUFF

The Right Honourable W.L. Mackenzie King, M.P.,

Secretary of State for External Affairs,

Ottawa.

Message from the Prime Minister

1. I have asked the Deputy Minister to send you an account of the principal conclusions reached at our thorough and comprehensive conference with the Americans at Casablanca. We have sought to make the best distribution of our forces possible both in time and place. It is most important that exact targets and dates should not be known until nearer the time, but I hope that the account enclosed will show you not only the full scope of the proposed activities, but to a very considerable extent their emphasis and priority. You should note the very definite assurances which I have given in the name of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland about continuing the war at full blast against Japan in the event of a German collapse until unconditional surrender is forced upon the enemy. I earnestly hope you will feel that we have acted wisely in holding this conference and that its general conclusions commend themselves to you.

2. I agreed with President Roosevelt that while he took the lead in China and North Africa the British Government should play the hand with Turkey. Accordingly, with the approval of my colleagues I proposed a meeting with either the Turkish President or Prime Minister, and also between the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and marshal Chakmak, in Cyprus. We were all rather doubtful about whether the Turks would not be shy. It is therefore most gratifying that they have responded with the utmost alacrity. The Turkish President would even have received me officially in (Angora). However – it is thought better at this stage that I should meet him at some out of the way spot within the frontiers of Turkey: and I start with a powerful delegation almost immediately. The object assigned to this conference is to promote “the general strength of Turkey”. I have not wished to press them into war immediately. They must first be kitted up. But the time will come in the summer when they may feel able to take an even more forthright view than it is evident that they are now adopting. You will see how vital it is to the whole

Mediterranean combination that this additional voice should be thrown in when the climax is reached and also how important that we should be able to plaster Ploesti oilfield with our bombs.

3. In the matter of command the Americans have been most generous and broadminded, as you will see from my account.

4. Without wishing to indulge in any complacency I cannot help feeling that things are quite definitely better than when I was last in Cairo, when enemy was less than 70 miles away. If we should succeed in retaining the initiative on all theatres, as does not seem impossible, and if we can sincerely feel we have brought every possible division of soldiers or fighting unit of our forces into closest and most continuous contact with the enemy from now on, we might well regard the world situation as by no means devoid of favourable features. Without the cohesion and unity of advance of the British Empire and Commonwealth of Nations through periods of desperate peril and forlorn outlook, the freedom and decencies of civilised mankind might well have sunk for ever into the abyss.

MOST SECRET AND PERSONAL – Z.10.

Message from the Deputy Prime Minister summarising the principal conclusions reached at Casablanca

1. I am now in a position to give you at the request of the Prime Minister a summary of the important decisions which have been taken at Casablanca.

2. Defeat of the U-boats must remain the first charge on resources of the United Nations. This will be achieved by:

- a) Intensified bombing of U-boat Trans-Atlantic bases and constructional yards,
- b) Allocating as much new construction as possible both United States and British, or vessels released by new construction, to convoy protection,
- c) Providing auxiliary escort carriers for working with Atlantic convoys as soon as possible,
- d) Providing long-distance shore-based air cover as a matter of urgency over the Atlantic and West African convoy routes.

3. The Soviet forces must be sustained by the greatest volume of supplies that can be transported to Russia without prohibitive cost in shipping. Provided the anticipated losses are not excessive, the full United States and British commitment to Russia will be met by the end of 1943.

4. Operations in the Mediterranean with the object of forcing Italy out of the war and imposing greatest possible dispersal of German forces will include:

- a) clearance of Axis forces out of North Africa at the earliest possible moment,
- b) in due course further amphibious offensive operations on a large scale,
- c) bomber offensive from North Africa.

5. Meanwhile, operations will be carried on from the United Kingdom so as to make the best use of United States and British forces as follows:

- a) heavy bomber offensive directed against German U-boat construction yards, aircraft industry, transportation, oil plants and other targets in enemy war industry. Further targets of great importance which must be attacked when conditions are suitable include Berlin and U-boat operating bases on the Biscay coast. For such operations United States heavy bombardment units in the United Kingdom will operate under the strategic direction of the British Chief of Air Staff,
- b) maximum building up of United States forces in the United Kingdom in order to be ready for the first favourable opportunity to reenter the continent of Europe,
- c) amphibious operations ranging from raids to invasion according to the strength and state of morale of the German forces.

For the planning of these operations a combined staff under a British Chief of Staff will be set up forthwith. A British supreme commander will be appointed in due course.

6. The Prime Minister gave the fullest possible assurance to the President that after the defeat of Germany, Great Britain would pursue the war against Japan with the maximum available resources by land, sea and air. Prime Minister has repeated this assurance to Generalissimo Chiang-Kai-Shek.

Operations in the Pacific theatre will continue with the object of maintaining the pressure on Japan, retaining the initiative and attaining a position of readiness for a full scale offensive by the United nations as soon as Germany is defeated. These operations will meanwhile be kept within such limits as will not prejudice the capacity of the United Nations to take advantage of any favourable opportunity for decisively defeating Germany in 1943. Subject to this reservation they will include limited offensives in Burma preparatory to the reconquest of that country, the building up of United States air forces in China and the continuance of United States operations in South-West Pacific to greatest possible extent.

7. Important agreements have been reached on command:
- a) for operations in the Central Mediterranean theatre General Eisenhower will be in supreme command with commanders under him
 - (1) Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham as naval Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean;
 - (2) General Alexander as Deputy Commander-in-chief with primary task to command Allied forces on Tunisian front and subsequently to plan further offensive operations in this theatre;
 - (3) Air Chief Marshal Tedder as Air Commander-in-Chief of whole Mediterranean theatre.
 - b) (1) West African coast from Cape Bogador (Rio d'Oro) southwards will be under the command of British naval and air officers for naval operations and air operations in collaboration with naval forces.
 - (2) Subject to (1) above the coast from Cape Bogador to the western boundary of Sierra Leone will be a French sub-area, and all forces operating therein will be under French command.
6. A separate message is being sent regarding discussions between General de Gaulle and General Giraud.
7. I need not impress on you the vital necessity of treating the foregoing with utmost secrecy.

(Records of Department of External Affairs).