

Minutes of the
War Committee of the Cabinet
January 2nd, 1941

SECRET

Ottawa, January 2nd, 1941.

CABINET WAR COMMITTEE

A meeting of the War Committee of the Cabinet was held in the Prime Minister's Office, in the East Block, on Thursday, January the 2nd, at 2.30 p.m.

There were present the following members:

The Prime Minister,
The Minister of Mines and Resources (Mr. Crerar),
The Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe),
The Associate Minister of National Defence
and Minister of National Defence for Air
(Mr. Power),
The Minister of Finance (Mr. Ilsley),
The Minister of Agriculture and Minister of
National War Services (Mr. Gardiner),
The Minister of National Defence for Naval
Services (Mr. Macdonald).

The Secretary (Mr. Heeney).

Joint Air Training Plan
Identification of Canadian pupils

1. The Minister of National Defence for Air reported that a reply had been received from the Minister of National Defence as to the interpretation of Paragraph 6 of the agreement, discussed at the last meeting of the Committee (December the 26th, 1940).

After reference to the Dominions Office and Air Ministry, Mr. Ralston had reported that Paragraph 6 contemplated that R.C.A.F. ground personnel, sent from Canada to the twenty-five R.C.A.F. squadrons, would be replaced by R.A.F. ground personnel, sent to Canada. Such replacement would, of course, be covered, as regards both parties to the agreement, by the stated condition, "so far as it may mutually be considered practicable".

(See Cypher telegram No. 2160 of December 31st, 1940, from the Canadian High Commissioner, London, to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa).

The Committee thereupon approved the agree-

A copy of Colonel Biggar's letter had been sent to the Associate Minister of National Defence and to the Acting Minister of Munitions and Supply.

(See letter of December 30th, 1940, from Colonel O. M. Biggar, to Mr. Heeney).

34. It was agreed that any action upon the recommendation of the Board, with respect to the appointment of "supply members" should be deferred until the return to Canada of the Minister of Munitions and Supply.

Japanese in British Columbia

35. The Prime Minister submitted to the meeting the Report of the Special Committee which had been appointed on October the 1st, 1940, to investigate the situation of persons of Japanese and Chinese racial origin, resident in British Columbia.

(See Report and Recommendations of the Special Committee on Orientals in British Columbia, December, 1940).

36. Mr. King stated that in his opinion the Report of the Special Committee was an excellent one, and with the exception of the 9th Recommendation, regarding revision of the immigration agreement with Japan, should be approved by the government.

At the request of the Committee, Mr. H. L. Keenleyside of the Department of External Affairs, a member of the Special Committee, entered the meeting.

37. The Committee then gave consideration to the recommendations contained in the Special Committee's Report.

38. Mr. Keenleyside in answer to enquiries, stated that representative Japanese who had appeared before the Committee, had not resented the suggestion of registration and had expressed the view that such a step would be desirable in the interests and for the protection of their own people.

The 9th Recommendation regarding the agreement with Japan on the subject of immigration, would not have been included in the Report had the Committee known that the Report might be tabled in Parliament, or otherwise made public. Certain other parts of the Report might

also require review and some slight revision, if this were the intention.

39. The Associate Minister of National Defence suggested that it might be well to omit any public reference to an intention to intern Japanese in the event of war. It was agreed that this should be done.

40. Upon the recommendation of the Prime Minister, it was agreed:

(a) that general approval be given to the recommendations of the Report;

(b) that the draft press release included in the Report be approved, with slight revision;

(c) that the Report be returned to the Special Committee with the request that it be revised so as to be suitable for tabling in Parliament; such matter as was regarded as confidential could be made the subject of a separate report.

41. Mr. King stated that it had been recommended by Mr. Keenleyside that Lt.Col. A. W. Sparling and Assistant Commissioner F. J. Mead, members of the Special Committee, should be appointed as the nucleus of the standing supervisory committee proposed in the 10th Recommendation of the Report. Assistant Commissioner Mead might supervise the recommended registration of Japanese.

Mr. Keenleyside had also suggested, for consideration as other members of the standing committee; Professor H. F. Angus, Lt.Col. McGregor McIntosh, M.L.A., and Mr. Fred J. Hume, Mayor of New Westminster, who was suggested as Chairman.

(See copy of letter of December 2nd, 1940, from Mr. H. L. Keenleyside, to the Prime Minister).

42. The Committee approved the above as the personnel of the standing committee recommended, subject to the concurrence of the Minister of Pensions and National Health.

The meeting adjourned at 5 p.m.

A. J. P. Hurry
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