

Minutes of the
War Committee of the Cabinet
July 5th 1944

TOP SECRET

Ottawa, July 5th, 1944.

CABINET WAR COMMITTEE

A meeting of the War Committee of the Cabinet was held in the Privy Council Chamber on Wednesday, July 5th, 1944, at 3 p.m.

Present:

The Minister of Mines and Resources
(Mr. Crerar), in the Chair,
The Minister of National Defence
(Mr. Ralston),
The Minister of Munitions and Supply
(Mr. Howe).

The Under-Secretary of State for
External Affairs (Mr. Robertson),
The Secretary to the Cabinet (Mr. Heeney).

Mr. J. A. Chapdelaine, Privy Council Office.

Operational Reports

1. The Secretary mentioned particular features of recent operational reports received through the Chiefs of Staff Committee.

2. The War Committee noted the Secretary's report.

Relation of Canadian Forces to Supreme Allied Commands

3. The Secretary, referring to the discussion at the meeting of June 21st, reported that the Combined Chiefs of Staff had now instructed the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force, (General Eisenhower) and the Supreme Allied Commander, Mediterranean, (General Wilson), in the sense suggested by the government.

Affairs reported that, following the meeting of June 14th, a communication had been sent to the U.K. government in the sense agreed by the War Committee.

The U.K. government had now replied expressing some appreciation of the Canadian viewpoint but indicating serious doubt as to the possibility of securing agreement on the part of the U.S. and Soviet governments. The U.K. representative on the European Advisory Commission had been informed of the objections taken by Canada to the form of signature and to the procedure proposed in settling the terms of surrender.

(Telegrams, No. 106 External Affairs to Dominions Office and No. 1173 External Affairs, to Canadian High Commissioner, London, June 16, and telegram No. 97, Dominions Office to External Affairs, June 28, 1944).

6. Mr. Robertson said that it was not clear that the U.K. government had fully appreciated the serious nature of the objections taken by Canada.

It was, therefore, proposed to return to the subject, instructing the High Commissioner to take it up again in London, urging the importance of the considerations which had lead to the government's conclusions. The matter would not be taken up with the U.S. and Soviet governments until further word had been received from the United Kingdom.

7. The War Committee, after discussion, noted the Under-Secretary's report and agreed that the government should continue to press strongly, in the sense agreed at the meeting of June 14th.

Army; enlistment of Canadian-born Japanese

8. The Minister of National Defence reported that a request had been received from the Australian government to enlist certain Canadian-born Japanese in the Canadian Army, for attachment to Australian forces for service as translators and interpreters.

The Army Staff were not in favour of

enlisting such personnel and suggested, alternatively, that Australia be permitted to enlist them direct into the Australian Army. White personnel from the Army Japanese language school could be made available for attachment to Australian forces and Australian personnel might make use of the Army school.

A request had also been received from British Security Co-ordination for the services of Canadian-born Japanese with the Indian Army for psychological warfare work. It had been proposed that they be enlisted into the Canadian Army, discharged on arrival in India and re-enlisted into the Indian Army.

An explanatory memorandum had been circulated.

(Departmental memorandum July 3, 1944 - C.W.C. document 816).

9. The Minister of Mines and Resources and the Minister of Munitions and Supply saw no reason why limited numbers of Canadian-born Japanese should not be enlisted in the Canadian Army.

10. The War Committee, after discussion, agreed that the subject raised an important question of principle which should be considered by the full Cabinet, it being understood that, pending such consideration, the Minister of National Defence would report as to whether or not there was objection, on purely military grounds, to the enlistment of Canadian-born Japanese in the Canadian Army.

Special Commissioner for Defence Projects
in Northwest Canada; 13th report

11. The Secretary reported that the Special Commissioner's 13th report had been submitted and that copies would be circulated to departments concerned. Thereafter the report would be put before the War Committee for appropriate action.

(Special Commissioner's 13th report,
June 30, 1944).

12. The War Committee noted the Secretary's