

Minutes of the
War Committee of the Cabinet
September 30, 1942.

Secret

Ottawa, September 30th, 1942.

CABINET WAR COMMITTEE

A meeting of the War Committee of the Cabinet was held in the Privy Council Chamber on Wednesday, September 30th, at 3 p.m.

There were present the following members:

The Prime Minister (Mr. King), in the
Chair,
The Minister of National Defence for
Air (Mr. Power),
The Minister of Finance (Mr. Ilsley),
The Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Michaud),
The Minister of National Defence for Naval
Services (Mr. Macdonald),
The Minister of Justice (Mr. St. Laurent).

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

There was also present for the discussion
of paragraphs 24 and 25:

The Deputy Minister of Finance (Dr. Clark).

Requisitioning of small craft by Armed Services

1. The Secretary submitted recommendations received from the Minister of Fisheries and the Minister of Trade and Commerce (for the Canadian Shipping Board) regarding the effects on the fishing industry and coastal traffic of requisitions of small craft by the Armed Services.

A substantial number of fishing boats had been taken over on the Pacific Coast. This had been a principal factor in reducing estimated production of canned salmon and herring; further, there were insufficient small vessels to carry essential materials in the coastal trades.

reported as to the special qualifications of the individual in question, and suggested that the general problem might be dealt with by a special committee, or officer of National Selective Service, in order that special deferments might be granted to key individuals.

9. The War Committee, after discussion, agreed to refer the problem for consideration and report to the Director of National Selective Service.

Japanese labour on Blue River Highway

10. The Secretary reported an exchange of correspondence between the Minister of Mines and Resources, and the Minister of National Defence, the substance of which had been set out in an explanatory note circulated to members of the War Committee.

(Secretary's note, September 28, 1942 - C.W.C. document 299).

11. The War Committee noted the correspondence exchanged on this subject.

Arming of merchant ships

12. The Secretary submitted a request of Treasury Board for decision in principle upon a recommendation of the Minister of National Defence for Naval Services that all Canadian flag merchant ships of over 500 tons be armed with twelve-pounder guns.

Two hundred vessels were involved and the cost of providing guns, ammunition and accommodation for gun crews was estimated at \$4,924,000, of which \$1,577,200 would be expended in the current fiscal year. An explanatory note had been circulated.

(Secretary's note, September 24, 1942 - C.W.C. document 296).

13. The Minister of National Defence for Naval Services, in supporting the recommendation, stated that it was increasingly difficult to obtain crews; the provision of guns would be of assistance as a reasonable measure of protection. The only vessels involved were those operating in danger areas.

14. The War Committee, after discussion, approved, in principle, the Minister's recommendation, it being understood that no right to armament would be created in any ship owner but that allocation