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*Le haut commissariat de Grande-Bretagne au sous-secrétaire d'État  
aux Affaires extérieures*

*High Commission of Great Britain to Under-Secretary of State  
for External Affairs*

516 K/17

Ottawa, November 22, 1939

SECRET. IMPORTANT

Dear Dr. Skelton,

The High Commissioner has recently received from the Governor of Newfoundland a despatch from which it appears that the Commission of Government have been giving anxious consideration to the problem of the defence of Bell Island in Conception Bay.

A memorandum is enclosed setting forth the main points to which the Governor has drawn attention. It will be observed in particular, and you are naturally familiar with the fact, that the importance of the island rests mainly on the consideration that it is the seat of mining operations of the Dominion Steel and Coal Corporation. It is on that ground that the Commission of Government have reached the conclusion that the security of the island requires to be defended against possible enemy attack upon a scale which is beyond the scope of their own resources.

In these circumstances Sir Gerald Campbell would be grateful if you would convey to the appropriate quarter Sir Humphrey Walwyn's suggestion that the appropriate provision for the defence of the Island might be made available by the Canadian Government, and if he might be informed, at as early a date as convenient, of any views which it may be desired to express in reply.

Yours sincerely,

W. C. HANKINSON

[PIÈCE JOINTE/ENCLOSURE]

*Mémemorandum**Memorandum*

The Commission of Government of Newfoundland have recently had under consideration the matter of the defence of Bell Island in Conception Bay. As the Canadian Government are aware Bell Island is the seat of operations of the Dominion Steel and Coal Corporation which mines from the various submarine slopes the iron ore which heretofore has gone mainly to Germany and to Sydney, Nova Scotia. The company has also a very large establishment at Sydney where quantities of ore are smelted and their only supply is from Wabana Mines, Bell Island.

2. The shipments of ore to Germany have now of course ceased and the Commission of Government are informed by the Company that its shipments to Sydney are being substantially increased. During the coming year its