

(h) Canada recognizes the humanitarian purpose of and need for these Conventions, but account must be taken of the consequences of total war and a realistic viewpoint should temper the idealism of the revised texts.

Recommendation

The Secretary of State for External Affairs therefore recommends that the Canadian Delegation to the forthcoming Diplomatic Conference in Geneva be authorized to express views in accordance with the observations outlined in paragraph 5 above and indicated in detail in the attached briefs prepared by the Committee if, in the opinion of the Head of the Delegation, it seems desirable to do so in the light of developments at the Conference.⁹⁹

[L.B. PEARSON]

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Note de la direction de l'économie
Memorandum by Economic Division

[Ottawa], July 7, 1949

Memorandum for File:

1. Yesterday afternoon, Mr. Max Wershof in Geneva spoke to me in the absence of Mr. Reid and Mr. Holmes concerning developments at the General Conference for the Protection of War Victims. He stated that over the past few weeks he had been sending messages to the Department warning us of the possibility that the Soviet Delegation might attempt to divert discussion at the Conference to questions of aerial warfare and atomic bombing. He said that he had received no comments of any kind from the Department but that the situation which he feared had now arisen. The Soviet Delegation had introduced a resolution which was not seeking an amendment to the Treaty but which the Soviet Union wished the Conference to adopt.

2. The exact wording of this resolution will be teletyped to us this morning. Among other things, it states that it is the duty of all governments who have not ratified the Protocol of June 17, 1925, to ratify the said Pact in the near future and that it is similarly the duty of all governments to prohibit atomic weapons and other similar means for mass extermination of population.

3. Wershof pointed out that the Conference is discussing a Red Cross Convention for the protection of civilians in time of war and methods of regulating enemy aliens and there was never any intention that it should consider problems having to

⁹⁹ Le cabinet approuva la recommandation, le 31 mars 1949, sujet à reconsidérer l'article (b) ci-devant, qui inquiétait le premier ministre à l'effet que cela:

Cabinet approved the recommendation on March 31, 1949, subject to reconsideration of (b) above, which the Prime Minister worried:

might enable the establishment of agencies of a character which would result in evasion of obligations under the Conventions.