

D 29284

It is not possible at this stage to forecast the character and requirements of the conflict. We know the present alignment of nations and can in some measure conceive the economic and strategic factors inherent in the present situation. We cannot, however, be certain as to what other countries may enter the conflict on one side of the struggle or the other, and the consequent re-adjustment both of tasks to be met and of contributions to that end. We have vivid in our memories the experience of the last war, from which we have much to learn both as to heroic endeavour to be emulated and mistakes to be avoided. It is clear, however, that in many vital respects the conditions of the present struggle differ very greatly from those of the last, and that we cannot simply assume that the methods and objectives of 1914 are applicable to 1939. We must frame our policy in the light of our knowledge of the present situation and the best information we can obtain as to the probable course of future developments. To this end, as I have already indicated, we have been and shall of course remain in close consultation with the Government of the United Kingdom, so that the assistance Canada is to render, if it is to have the greatest effectiveness, shall not be unplanned and irresponsible.