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*Mémoire du troisième secrétaire*⁶¹
*Memorandum by Third Secretary*⁶¹

Ottawa, December 28, 1943

Sir Shuldham Redfern called on Mr. Robertson on the afternoon of December 27 to say that a letter had been received by the Governor General from Lascelles concerning the formal submission which was sent under date of November 10 for signature of the King, requesting approval for the policy of raising Canadian ministers to the rank of ambassador "in such cases as the Secretary of State for External Affairs recommends". According to Lascelles, the King has expressed concern with regard to this submission in connection with two points:

(a) It does not say to whom the Prime Minister must recommend an elevation of status in order that the legation may be changed to an embassy.

(b) There is also the possibility that it might be suggested that approval of this submission would be interpreted as a curtailment of the prerogative right to examine each and every recommendation for the elevation and approve it or not as the King saw fit. The thought is that in approving the submission the King would thereby commit himself in advance to giving automatic approval to all recommendations for change in legations to embassies. Lascelles pointed out that while there was no apprehension in this connection with regard to advice which might be tendered by Mr. King, there was some fear as to the possibility of advice received from a minister with less experience in foreign affairs than the Prime Minister. Lascelles suggested that the approval given by the King to four elevations in status⁶² is now sufficient to indicate approval of the policy without any formal approval of the general submission referred to.

Mr. Robertson recognized the points raised by Lascelles. He thought that the practice that had been followed in four cases now might be regarded as a "gloss" on the terms of the formal submission and said that, although it was not explicitly stated, nevertheless the intention was that recommendations in all cases should be made to the King. He agreed that the practice in four specific cases was now adequate to indicate approval of the general policy. The intention in preparing the general submission had been that it should be a prior document establishing the foundation for later specific recommendations. He thought that in actual practice there would be no harm done if the recommendation were signed by the King or, alternatively, if it were dropped. He outlined to

⁶¹R. G. Robertson.

⁶²L'élévation des ministres au Brésil, en Chine, en Union soviétique et aux États-Unis. L'échange d'ambassadeurs avec la Belgique fut approuvé aussi mais, malgré l'élévation du ministre de Belgique au rang d'ambassadeur, le rang du représentant du Canada auprès du gouvernement belge en exil ne changea pas.

⁶²The elevation of the Ministers in Brazil, China, the Soviet Union and the United States. The exchange of ambassadors with Belgium was also approved but, while the Minister of Belgium assumed the rank of Ambassador, the rank of the Canadian representative to the Belgian Government-in-exile was not changed.