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*L'ambassadeur aux États-Unis au secrétaire d'État  
aux Affaires extérieures*

*Ambassador in United States to Secretary of State  
for External Affairs*

DESPATCH 498

Washington, Feb. 28, 1944

Sir,

During the last few days, meetings have been held between Canadian officials here to discuss the Canadian aspect of relief questions as seen from the Washington end. Mr. Bateman, Mr. Pierce, Mr. Scott, Mr. Plumptre, Mr. Paterson, Mr. Allen and Mr. Pearson have participated in these meetings, and the observations below represent their collective view. It is hoped that they may be of some value to those considering this question in Ottawa.

*1. Problems faced by representatives of Canada in  
Washington in dealing with relief questions.*

The Combined Boards are now receiving from the U.S.-U.K. military authorities, and from UNRRA, programmes of relief supplies and requests for sources of procurement for such supplies. These questions are being considered by officials of the Boards and by the various commodity committees (farm implements, textiles, foot-wear and leather, etc.) established under those Boards.

Canadian representatives in Washington, on the Boards and their committees, have not yet received guidance from Ottawa on the Canadian Government's general policies and procedures regarding the provision of relief. Furthermore, there is no central Canadian authority on these questions whom Canadian officials here can consult when they are called upon to state whether Canada is prepared to meet a particular relief requirement which a Combined Board has recommended. Thus these officials are unable to participate as effectively as they would wish in this work and to protect and further Canada's interest in it. This difficulty is, of course, accentuated in the case of the Combined Civil Affairs Committee and the Combined Raw Materials Board on which Canada has no representation. It exists also, however, in the Combined Production and Resources Board and the Combined Food Board where the Canadian representatives are in a disadvantageous position in relief discussions in comparison with their colleagues from the United States and the United Kingdom.

An instance arose recently in which a Canadian representative on the Farm Implement Committee, (C.P.R.B.-C.F.B.), after securing in Washington the necessary information to determine a fair Canadian share of the proposed general relief programme, could only obtain approval of that programme in Ottawa by personal meetings with senior officials of several of the Departments concerned. Further, he is still unable to state whether Canada is willing for any part of its share in this programme to be utilized during the military