

RF 283306

FROM: THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES TO FRANCE, BELGIUM AND THE NETHERLANDS,  
LONDON

TO: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, OTTAWA

MOST IMMEDIATE

MOST SECRET

London, 25th December, 1940.

CYPHER

No. 8

No. 8. Most Secret. Following for the Prime Minister,

Begins:

Summary of report on my visit to Vichy.

1. Marshal Petain still alert and hoping for a British victory.
2. Present atmosphere of tension between France and Great Britain should be maintained as smoke screen, behind which secret collaboration between France and the Commonwealth might be possible.
3. French military authorities preparing, in occupied and unoccupied France, for any eventuality. They are also organizing the defence of Colonies and will apply for our support in material and men at a later stage.
4. Petain and Admiral Darlan stated no danger of their fleet falling into German or Italian hands. Large number of ships now out of German reach in African ports. Few units in Toulon could leave in very short order or be scuttled there in few moments.
5. Petain and Darlan also declare that they are in a position to defend French naval bases, which in case of risk would be handed over to us before the Germans could take hold of them.
6. It is general conviction in French official circles, and this opinion is also that of the public at large, that General