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FROM: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, OTTAWA
TO: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR CANADA IN THE UNITED KINGDOM,
LONDON

MOST SECRET

CYPHER

No. 517

Ottawa, May 10th, 1940.

Please convey the following immediately to Government of United Kingdom, Begins:

1. In light of today's critical developments our Cabinet War Committee, in special meeting, have been considering the most useful additional methods of Canadian assistance to Allied effort, and further means of immediate co-operation with Government of United Kingdom in the common cause.

2. The Government had already decided to make a Canadian Rifle Battalion available for service in the West Indies area, and have now authorized their despatch at the earliest possible moment to serve in substitution for United Kingdom unit. Chief of General Staff has communicated by telegram today, in this respect, with Canadian Military Headquarters, for information of War Office.

3. We are prepared to despatch immediately from Halifax to the West Indies two destroyers for duty in that area in co-operation with units of Royal Navy and United Kingdom Forces, if this is considered most effective use. Word of this has been sent by telegram today to the Commander in Chief America and West Indies Squadron, and repeated to Admiralty.

4. We have also had under consideration accelerating the departure of the Second Canadian Division overseas. We would be prepared to arrange Division's departure from Canada to take place June July instead of July August as previously

W.L.M. King Papers, Memoranda and Notes, 1940-1950,
MG 26 J 4, Volume 396, pages C278444-C279232

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