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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 173

Washington, January 23, 1945

TOP SECRET.

Sir,

I have the honour to report on the discussions which have taken place between the representatives of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, headed by the Right Honourable Richard K. Law, Minister of State, and the United States Government over the period December 15, 1944—January 14, 1945 concerning the urgent necessity of increasing the volume of civilian supplies provided to liberated areas in Europe and, more particularly, of enabling the National Governments and Authorities of these liberated areas to institute immediately their own programmes for importing raw materials and other supplies required to start the restoration of their economies. This Embassy has now been informed in considerable detail concerning the circumstances which gave rise to the discussions, the objectives sought by the U.K. representatives, the nature of the discussions, and the results achieved.

2. The decision to send this U.K. delegation to Washington resulted primarily from three related but conflicting developments:

(a) General Eisenhower and his staff, in the light of their experience after turning over the Zone of the Interior to the French authorities, had encouraged the National Governments of Western Europe to prepare their own import programmes for those materials most urgently needed to put their industrial and agricultural capacity to work within the limits of the port capacity which could be made available to them. The Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces transmitted the appropriate recommendation to the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington as early as November 3, 1944. (The text of this telegram—SCAEF 122—was sent by this Embassy to the Department of External Affairs for information on December 2.)

(b) The U.S. and U.K. Governments at that time, and in the subsequent month went far in discussions with their Western Allies to commit themselves in the same direction.

(c) Ministers of H.M. Government in the U.K. learned with concern, therefore, that the President of the United States had, on November 22, expressed to Prime Minister Churchill the view that the import of supplies into these liberated countries must be limited, until after the German collapse, to those supplies for which the Combined Chiefs of Staff can obtain shipping in the light of shipping required to carry out current and projected operations. The President had added that, in his view, these possible operational shipping demands would permit them, until the collapse of Germany, to provide