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FROM: THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, OTTAWA.

TO: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR CANADA IN GREAT BRITAIN, LONDON

TELEGRAM

No. _____

CYPHER

IMPORTANT

*Army/General/NE
C2 C+M/R*

OTTAWA, 6th December, 1940.

Following from Prime Minister for Colonel Ralston. Begins.

Recent press despatches and other indications give the impression that some proposal to transfer Canadian forces from United Kingdom to the Near East may be raised shortly or may already have been under discussion. You will recall when this question was discussed briefly the general view was adverse to the transfer of Canadian forces from the United Kingdom or France to the Near East. If any such proposal is now made, we should of course wish to have an opportunity for full consideration of the question by the Cabinet War Committee on your return or if need be before your return if the matter were being urgently pressed. In either case we should wish to be furnished with full information as to the strategical situation and proposed dispositions, together with a statement of any considerations and new developments which may be held to warrant either maintaining or altering the general policy to which I have referred. There may be strong arguments for as well as against such a change in policy. We must, however, never lose sight of possible reactions in Canada to any disposition of our troops, which will give rise to a question concerning additional numbers to be raised, at a time when the United States is being told that it is not men for the army that are required but assistance in the air and at sea, ships, munitions, equipment and the like. We should also know definitely what may be expected of us and what we are in a position to do in these various services. It is pretty