

HHW/ET

4th September, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRIME MINISTER:

W. W. Combined War Boards
See memo C243627

I mentioned to you on the telephone this morning that Colonel Ralston and Mr. Howe had agreed to recommend the rejection of General Burns' proposal for a limited Canadian membership on the Munitions Assignments Board. Colonel Ralston has sent me the attached draft letter. This would be the basis of a reply from General Pope to General Burns, that being the channel through which the offer was made.

I have doubts whether Mr. Ralston and Mr. Howe have reached the right conclusion. The Canadian representatives in Washington, except those from Munitions and Supply, seem to agree that the Burns proposal was satisfactory. The internal controversy here over who should table War Supplies orders seems to me to have affected consideration of the main question.

The matter was discussed briefly in War Committee this morning, but it was agreed to postpone a final decision until next week's meeting. I asked Colonel Ralston whether the last paragraph of his draft was intended to cancel our original and formal request in both London and Washington for full Canadian membership on the Board. He said that this was the case. I should think it undesirable to withdraw the request and consider that we, at most, should merely reject the proposed compromise. If the draft is accepted as it stands, we should presumably instruct Mr. McCarthy to withdraw his formal note to the State Department of last May, and issue similar instructions to Mr. Massey.

I find steadily growing concern over the long range effects on the Canadian war effort of the failure to give Canada a responsible voice in the Combined organizations. Malcolm MacDonald came in the other day to express privately his conviction that something ought to be done. I had several talks with Clark, Heeney, Robertson and others to the same effect. I hope to send you in the next day or two, for your consideration, a draft telegram to Mr. Churchill, setting forth the whole position. I think that if the Canadian public knew how our reasonable requests for participation in the work of certain of the Boards had been received, there would be a considerable outcry.

*See collection
W. W. Combined War Boards*

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H. H. WRONG