

44.

DEA/1-Fs

*Le ministre auprès des gouvernements alliés au sous-secrétaire d'État
aux Affaires extérieures*

*Minister to the Allied Governments to Under-Secretary of State
for External Affairs*

CONFIDENTIAL

London, August 3, 1943

My dear Norman [Robertson],

You will remember that on the 29th May I wrote to you with regard to Canadian representation in North Africa,[†] and gave certain reasons for which I hoped to be appointed there. As I have not heard from you in this connection, I feel that I should write again, more particularly as events are moving so quickly that there is no telling how soon the French Committee of National Liberation will be established in Metropolitan France.

I appreciate that it is difficult for the Canadian Government to give recognition to the French Committee before the United Kingdom and United States Governments do so, but as I assume that such recognition, in some form or another, will be forthcoming soon, this will mean that Canada, which so far has had neither representative nor observer in North Africa, will have to appoint a representative without any further delay, because I imagine that any such delay would expose the Government to serious criticism.

I know it will interest you to read the two leaders[†] which I enclose from *The Times* of Saturday, July 31st, and Monday, August 2nd., concerning the necessity for recognition of the French Committee at once. The whole of the United Kingdom press is clamouring similarly for recognition.

You know as well as I that there is no comparison between the importance for Canada of the work that can be done in North Africa and in London with the Allied Governments. Although I consider it a great honour to have been appointed to the Allied Governments, the task here is one largely of representation, whereas in North Africa the first chapter of the history of the Fourth Republic is being written. The union of the armed forces of France has now been achieved and there is talk of the setting up of a Consultative Assembly, composed of members of the French Parliament who have escaped from France since the armistice. The idea is that the Consultative Assembly should work in collaboration with the French Committee.

May I venture to suggest that it would be a mistake to appoint a Chargé d'Affaires or anyone below the rank of Minister because many countries, if not all, will appoint Ministers and it would be inappropriate, I submit, for Canada whose population is almost thirty percent French speaking, to be placed in a position of inferiority. Besides, I feel sure that the French Committee would expect this mark of appreciation and courtesy.

It is possible that you may consider the fact that I am accredited to other Governments as an obstacle to my appointment. Frankly I do not see in what way. The various Governments would understand perfectly if they were in-