

better handled from the beginning, they would have encountered a more sympathetic and co-operative attitude in London and in other places.

Yours sincerely,

L. B. PEARSON

1284.

DEA/186s

*L'ambassadeur aux États-Unis au secrétaire d'État
aux Affaires extérieures*

*Ambassador in United States to Secretary of State
for External Affairs*

TELETYPE WA-7227

Washington, December 29, 1944

SECRET. Following for Robertson, Begins: Your despatch No. 1819 of December 18th and our earlier teletypes on the subject of Richard Law's discussions in Washington. We have told the appropriate United Kingdom officials informally of the proposal in your despatch, indicating at the same time the conditions which you attached to any action along these lines by the Canadian Government. Although Law's party have been experiencing considerable amount of difficulty in getting discussions started with the proper United States authorities, they have now succeeded in persuading Mr. Hopkins, Mr. Stettinius and the other interested Departments to participate in a general survey of shipping requirements. When the survey of shipping requirements is eventually compared with the estimates of shipping availability, it is the intention of the Law Mission that the necessary scaling down of the shipping requirements figures shall be done methodically through the whole range of requirements for moving civilian supplies. The Law Mission will argue that such civilian requirements should not be regarded necessarily as the marginal element in the requirements estimate but should be considered alongside the military requirements and that necessary cuts should be made in both categories of requirements in accordance with best available judgement as to the relative importance of the particular requirements.

2. As indicated in Mr. Pearson's letter of December 18th, Mr. Law's initial conversation with Hopkins was most unsatisfactory but subsequent conversations, for which the way had been prepared by an excellent statement of the British case in a letter from Law to Hopkins, were considerably more productive as indicated by the willingness of Hopkins and other United States officials to participate in the general survey which Law regards as the essential preliminary to the discussions of basic policy.

3. The subject of the physical availability of supplies necessary to meet these civilian requirements is not expected to arise until a later stage in the discussions. In the meantime, the United Kingdom representatives expressed their gratification at the attitude of the Canadian Government and also expressed the view that this Canadian attitude would be most helpful when the discussions reach the stage at which supply questions arise.