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From THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DOMINION AFFAIRS

To THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, CANADA

MOST SECRET AND PERSONAL

CYPHER

UNNUMBERED

LONDON, September 18th, 1939

Unnumbered. Most Secret and Personal. Following for your Prime Minister, Begins:

BRITISH AIR ACTION

1. On September 14th War Cabinet considered question of air action against Germany in the light of Polish need for assistance.

2. Relevant factors were :

(a) Lack of proof up to September 12th of German departure from undertaking to restrict air action to military objectives;

(b) Difficulty of our doing effective damage to Germany without departing from our strict orders (given even before Roosevelt appeal) to bombard only purely military objectives from air or sea, by attacking objectives which while legitimate would involve loss of civilian life;

(c) Such action would not relieve present pressure on Poland, whose ultimate fate must depend on our ability to defeat Germany;

(d) Importance of not frittering away our limited forces on uneconomic tasks;

(e) French need of time to complete mobilization reserves unharried by German retaliation on communications or mobilization centres;

(f) Until French concentration is complete and expected extension of land operations on Western Front provides opportunity for our air force it is to our advantage not to start intensive operations. The blockade has begun and every week of unexpected freedom from enemy air attacks increases our reserves of aircraft