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Le secrétaire aux Dominions au secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures
Dominions Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs

London, March 24, 1941

TELEGRAM 47

MOST SECRET AND PERSONAL. Your telegram of March 2nd, No. 35. Following for Prime Minister from my Prime Minister, Begins. We have been weighing very carefully important questions raised in your messages No. 35 and No. 36 of March 2nd, and my immediately succeeding telegram sets out views of our advisers on these matters.

We think these views are sound. The position is bluntly that we have not all the equipment that would enable us to give complete protection on both sides of the Atlantic, and the question is therefore how can we make best use of material we have, having regard to what the enemy is trying to do and probabilities as to his future course of action. The issue of war will clearly depend on our being able to maintain traffic across the Atlantic. All our advice is that our present dispositions afford best means of achieving this. If we were to divert any substantial part of our forces from their present area of operations to cover wider areas where there is admittedly some risk of enemy action, we should only imperil the whole and play into his hands.

We are indeed most deeply appreciative of all that Canada has done, and in particular how you have stripped yourselves of protection on your Atlantic coasts to help us. As soon as we get more ships, or should dangers of enemy attack on western side of the Atlantic become greater, we shall not hesitate to consider re-dispositions at once. Ends.

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Le secrétaire aux Dominions au secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures
Dominions Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs

London, March 24, 1941

TELEGRAM 48

MOST SECRET. Your telegram of March 2nd, No. 35, and your telegram No. 36. Following for Prime Minister from my Prime Minister, Begins.

1. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have studied most carefully your views, and are in full sympathy with your anxieties and responsibilities regarding adequacy of Canadian defences. Military advisers have also examined your Chiefs of Staff analysis of Canadian home defence position. The following summarizes our assessment of the situation and our ability to assist.