

and maintenance of troops includes also post discharge pay and deferred pay ninety two million dollars and transport seventeen millions. Will send you figure respecting probable total pensions in few days.

19. *Extract from Minutes of Forty-Seventh Meeting
of Imperial War Cabinet*¹

SECRET

December 30, 1918

RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA

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Sir Robert Borden said that he would regret if we entered on the Peace Conference with any feeling of antagonism towards President Wilson or the United States. He considered that the recent conversations had, on the whole, been as favourable as he had anticipated. Future good relations between ourselves and the United States were, as he had said before, the best asset we could bring home from the war. With regard to the two points on which there had been a pronounced difference, namely the Pacific Islands and indemnity, there was no reason to conclude that we had yet got the President's final point of view. He agreed that with regard to these we should maintain our position strongly. He wished, however, to make clear that if the future policy of the British Empire meant working in co-operation with some European nation as against the United States, that policy could not reckon on the approval or the support of Canada. Canada's view was that as an Empire we should keep clear, as far as possible, of European complications and alliances. This feeling had been immensely strengthened by the experience of the war, into which we had been drawn by old-standing pledges and more recent understandings, of which the Dominions had not even been aware. He was in no sense reproaching the Imperial Government with regard to the past, and admitted—in answer to a question by Mr. Lloyd George—that since the Imperial War Cabinet had been set up the Dominions had not been committed to any treaty binding upon them without their knowledge.

With regard to Russia, he did not see how the war could be regarded as terminated if we left the Peace Conference with five or six nations and Governments still fighting in Russia. There were only two alternatives: one was to go and forcibly intervene in Russia itself; the other, which he preferred, was to induce the Governments of the various States in Russia to send representatives to Paris for conference with the Allied and associate nations. These could then bring pressure, if necessary, upon them to restrain and control aggression, and to bring about conditions of stable government under the power and influence of the League of Nations.

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¹Canadian representatives present: Sir Robert L. Borden and Sir G. E. Foster.