

SECRET

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Memorandum of Interview with Sir William Strang,
United Kingdom Representative to the European Advisory
Commission, on 3rd July, 1944.

In accordance with the suggestion contained in telegram No. 1173 of the 17th June, from the Department of External Affairs, and on Mr. Massey's instructions, I called on Sir William Strang to discuss with him certain points arising out of the Draft Instrument of Surrender for Germany, as communicated to the Department of External Affairs under cover of Dominions Office despatch No. 7 of June 9th.

Sir William had already received a copy of telegram No. 106 of the 16th June from the Canadian Government to the Dominions Office on this subject, and also had a copy of the memorandum of 28th June which was left with the Foreign Secretary. He was therefore well acquainted with the background of the Canadian Government's views.

I developed the main arguments to Sir William along the lines indicated in telegram No. 1173 of 17th June. With regard to the preamble of the Draft Instrument, I emphasised the difficulty of the formula "acting by authority of their respective Governments and in the interests of the United Nations". I said that from our point of view it would be better to omit all reference to the United Nations than to retain this formula. I pointed out that in due course the Canadian Government would have to explain to the Parliament and people of Canada how it had come about that hostilities between Germany and Canada were terminated. It would be natural to ask whether a Canadian representative had signed the Armistice. The Government would, under the proposed arrangements, have to reply in the negative. It would then be asked who had signed on behalf of Canada. Again the Government would not be able to make any satisfactory reply. They would have to say that the Supreme Commanders had signed "in our interests", but this would not be a satisfactory answer to the Canadian people who had contributed so largely to the war effort, and whose army were participating in the assault on Germany. We had strong objections to the phrase "in the interests of the United Nations". Personally, I thought it sounded more like the way in which one referred to mandated territories without competence in foreign affairs than to sovereign states.

I added that as Sir William would realise, we were not speaking for ourselves alone, but we had in mind the position of the United Nations, particularly the European Allies, who had contributed so much and suffered so much in the war, and we felt it was necessary that they, too, should be associated with the Instrument of Surrender.

I said that the Canadian authorities fully appreciated that Sir William, as the United Kingdom representative on the European Advisory Commission, shared our general view in this matter, and had been doing his best to have a more acceptable formula adopted. We also understood the difficulty of obtaining the prior assent of the United Nations to the terms of the Armistice.

Sir William said that he was most sympathetic to the point of view I had expressed, and fully appreciated our

/anxieties.