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*Note du sous-secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures  
pour le secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures*

*Memorandum from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs  
to Secretary of State for External Affairs*

Ottawa, May 16, 1949

UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ROAD AND MOTOR  
TRANSPORTATION,  
GENEVA, AUGUST 23 TO SEPTEMBER 17, 1949

You will recall that on April 29 last you concurred in a recommendation of the Deputy Minister of Transport that the Canadian delegation to the above-mentioned Conference should be composed as follows:

The Minister of Transport, or his nominee, as Head;  
Representatives of the Canadian Good Roads Association, the Engineering Institute of Canada and the Royal Automobile Club of Canada, as advisers;  
An officer of the Department of Transport, possibly as Secretary.

2. The original decision to send a delegation to this Conference was taken on the strength of a letter dated January 29 from the Deputy Minister of Transport, who said he was convinced Canada should attend the Geneva meetings. On April 7 Mr. Lessard wrote that he had discussed the proposed composition of the delegation with his Minister, who asked him to inform this Department that the Department of Transport would be prepared to nominate one of its officers to head the delegation mentioned in paragraph one above.

3. On Saturday, May 14, Mr. Lessard informed the United Nations Division by telephone that he had been discussing this Conference further with the Minister of Transport and that Mr. Chevrier now had some doubts about the wisdom of sending a five-man delegation to Geneva, especially since the Department of Transport is only indirectly interested in the subject matter of the Conference. In view of this, Mr. Lessard agreed that you might wish to review the whole question of the nature of Canadian participation.

4. While the Road and Motor Transport Conference is under United Nations sponsorship, I do not think we should incur the expense of sending a delegation from Canada if the Department of Transport is not particularly interested. As you know, this Conference deals with matters under the sole jurisdiction of the Provinces and it is unlikely that Canada could ever ratify any Convention adopted at the meetings, since such ratification would be subject to the approval of all ten Provinces.

5. In view of the above, I recommend that the present plan to send a five-man delegation from Canada to the Road and Motor Transport Conference be abandoned and that Canadian participation in the Conference be limited to an observer or two from our European Missions. Without being empowered to enter into any