

however, not possible to give a more precise answer to this question than has already been given by implication. A very strong case would have to be made for submission to the Canadian Government. There would have to be indications that the United Kingdom and the United States were showing full awareness of the gravity of the situation and were prepared to meet it. It would also have to be shown that parallel action by Canada was necessary in order to secure the full co-operation of the United States.

I have etc.

W. L. MACKENZIE KING

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*Le ministre, l'ambassade aux États-Unis, au sous-secrétaire  
d'État aux Affaires extérieures*

*Minister, Embassy in United States, to Under-Secretary  
of State for External Affairs*

Washington, December 18, 1944

Dear Mr. Robertson,

I mentioned in my teletype WA-6986 of December 15th that the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mr. R. K. Law was arriving in Washington over the week-end to discuss with the United States authorities ways and means of getting relief supplies into Europe. Mr. Law has arrived and I saw him yesterday and again today at luncheon at my home. He is accompanied by Coulson of the Foreign Office, Stopford of the Treasury, and I think one other official. They are very concerned over their inability to convince the United States authorities that it is of vital importance, not only for the immediate conduct of the war, but for the successful organization of the peace, that relief supplies and raw materials be got into Europe with the least possible delay in order to restore the economy of the countries concerned and put people to useful work. They feel that not only is action of this kind essential for military operations, but that it is even more essential from the point of view of post-war political stability. I have no doubt that this feeling is inspired somewhat by their present difficulties in Belgium and in Italy and in Greece. As I have stated before, I think the British thesis on this matter is a pretty sound one but there are very considerable difficulties in the way of carrying it into effect. These difficulties are both political and technical. The technical difficulty is the lack of shipping and congestion at the European ports. I asked Law today whether, if additional shipping could be spared, it would in fact mean that relief supplies could be got in, because they would naturally have to take second priority to military supplies, which already overtax harbour and inland transportation facilities. Law admitted that this difficulty would have been insuperable a few weeks ago, but thought the situation was now such that, if ships could be diverted, the supplies could be got to those who needed them. The Americans, however, are reluctant to divert shipping for this purpose because it might be at the expense of Pacific operations, and this is a matter