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Extrait du procès-verbal du Comité de guerre du Cabinet
Extract from Minutes of Cabinet War Committee

SECRET

Ottawa, May 5, 1943

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SOVIET-POLISH RELATIONS

13. THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS reported that the U.K. government had enquired informally whether Canada would be prepared to act as the Protecting Power for Polish interests in the U.S.S.R. if officially requested so to do by Poland.

The role of Protecting Power would admittedly be very delicate. The United Kingdom did not wish to assume the role for fear of impeding its efforts as an intermediary in the existing difficulties. The United States, likewise, felt that assumption of this position might react unfavourably upon the attitude of the U.S.S.R. to the United States. To employ a neutral would offer further propaganda opportunity to the Axis; moreover, the only two neutrals available, Sweden and Turkey, would not be suitable in view of their own position vis-à-vis the U.S.S.R.

14. THE PRIME MINISTER expressed the opinion that it would be unwise for Canada, a small nation, with but a newly established Legation in Russia, to involve herself in the most difficult political situation in Europe. Further, our own relations with the Soviet would suffer; yet we would have little prospect of success.

15. THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE, while agreeing as to the difficulties, felt that it would be unfortunate and capable of dangerous exploitation by the Axis if no one among the United Nations could be found to represent the interests of Poland.

16. THE WAR COMMITTEE, after further discussion, agreed that the U.K. government be informed that, while fully appreciating the importance of finding a suitable Protecting Power, if possible among the United Nations, the Canadian government did not find it possible to undertake the task.

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DEA/58-Bs

Le secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures
au haut commissaire en Grande-Bretagne
Secretary of State for External Affairs
to High Commissioner in Great Britain

TELEGRAM 713

Ottawa, May 5, 1943

IMMEDIATE. MOST SECRET. Your telegram No. 934 of May 4th.

Question of Canada assuming representation of Polish interests in the Soviet Union was considered this morning by the War Committee which decided that