

SECRET.

Ottawa, April 29, 1942

PROPOSED ANGLO-RUSSIAN TREATIES

2. The Prime Minister reported that the question had now been raised, informally, as to whether the Dominions should become parties to the proposed military and political treaties. However, no formal request had yet been made, and it was thought that no one Dominion should participate unless all four were agreed that it was desirable so to do. (Telegram No. 1104, Canadian High Commissioner, London, to External Affairs, April 22, 1942; Secretary's note, April 28, 1942 — C.W.C. document 153).

3. Mr. King expressed the opinion that Canada should not participate in a treaty with the U.S.S.R. which involved any settlement or guarantee of the prewar Russian frontiers. The United States were not prepared to do so, though they would not oppose the negotiations, or take exception to the treaties. The United Kingdom, feeling that arrangements of this kind with Russia were of vital importance, had decided to go ahead, in any event.

4. The Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs described the effect of the draft treaties with respect to the 1940 frontiers, the restoration of which, with the specific exception of Poland, would constitute a common principle of Anglo-Russian policy in the reconstruction of Europe. This would involve the absorption of the Baltic States and the reacquisition of Bessarabia. A factor in relation to Canadian policy was the number of immigrants in this country from the boundary lands affected.

5. The Minister of National Defence For Naval Services feared that the announcement of these provisions, in essence opposed to the principles of the Atlantic Charter, would create apprehension in democratic countries.

6. The War Committee, after further discussion, agreed that Canada should not participate in treaty relations with the Soviet government along the lines of the proposed Anglo-Russian treaties.