

Enclosures.

7363.

Conference—893. 30.

CANADA.

The GOVERNOR-GENERAL to the SECRETARY OF STATE.

(Received 1st March, 1909.)

[Copy to War Office, 15th March, 1909.]

[Answered by No. 7363.]

(No. 66.)

MY LORD,—

Montreal, P.Q., 15th February, 1909.

With reference to my telegram of the 12th instant, giving a summary of the observations of my Responsible Advisers upon Your Lordship's despatch No. 30, of the 15th ultimo, on the subject of the creation of an Imperial General Staff for the service of the Empire as a whole, I have the honour to enclose copy of an approved minute of the Privy Council, upon which my telegram was based.

I have, &c.,
GREY.

CERTIFIED COPY of a REPORT of the Committee of the Privy Council, approved by His Excellency the Governor-General on the 10th February, 1909.

(P.C. 70 N.)

THE Committee of the Privy Council have had under consideration a despatch, dated 15th January, 1909, from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, forwarding a letter from the War Office, dated 15th December, 1908, enclosing and commending to the attention of Your Excellency's Government a memorandum prepared by the General Staff on the subject of the creation of an Imperial General Staff for the service of the Empire as a whole.

The Minister of Militia and Defence, to whom the said despatch and enclosures were referred, submits a report thereon (hereunto attached), in which he expresses the opinion that Your Excellency's Government may safely assent to the general principles proposed for adoption in the memorandum by the General Staff, and recommends that, as requested in the above-quoted Colonial Office letter, a cable message conveying that assent be addressed to the Colonial Office.

The Committee, concurring in the said report of the Minister of Militia and Defence, submit the following as the text of the cable message to be sent by Your Excellency to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies:—

"Your despatch, Canada, 30, of January 15th. My Ministers fully accept the principles set forth in memorandum by General Staff. Despatch will follow explaining precise position of Dominion Government."

The Committee further advise that Your Excellency may be pleased to transmit a copy of this minute and of the annexed report to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

All which is respectfully submitted for approval.

F. K. BENNETTS,
Assistant Clerk of the Privy Council.

DEPARTMENT OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE.

Ottawa, 9th February, 1909.

1. The undersigned has the honour to report, for the information of Your Excellency in Council, that he has had under his consideration Colonial Office letter (Canada, No. 30), dated 15th January, 1909, in which the Secretary of State for the Colonies forwards a letter from the War Office, dated 15th December, 1908, enclosing and commending to the attention of Your Excellency's Government a memorandum prepared by the General Staff, on the subject of the creation of an Imperial General Staff for the service of the Empire as a whole.

2. The undersigned, after full and careful consideration of the important question referred to him, is of the opinion that Your Excellency's Government may safely assent to the general principles proposed for adoption in the memorandum by the General Staff, and recommends that, as requested in the above-quoted Colonial Office letter, a cable message conveying that assent be addressed to the Colonial Office.

3. At the same time, he is of opinion that it is advisable that, simultaneously with a general acceptance of the principles laid down in the memorandum referred to, the position of Your Excellency's Government upon certain points therein which especially appear to require attention should be precisely defined, and he therefore recommends that the cable message in question should further state that a despatch explaining this position will follow by the first mail. He submits the following as the text of the message:—

"Your despatch, Canada, 30, of January 15th: My Ministers fully accept the principles set forth in memorandum by General Staff. Despatch will follow explaining precise position of Dominion Government."

4. With regard to the despatch itself, the Minister of Militia recommends that it should state that Your Excellency's Government is prepared to give full assent to the general principles laid down, both in the letter of the War Office and in the memorandum prepared by the General Staff, and they do it all the more cordially in that they observe that, in the body of the memorandum itself, the great principle of complete local control, by the responsible Minister concerned, of the officers of the local section of the Imperial General Staff is fully safeguarded.