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W.M.(43) 142ND CONCLUSIONS, MINUTE 3

Confidential Annex

(10th October, 1943 - 5.30 p.m.)

ANGLO-SOVIET
AMERICAN
CONFERENCE

THE PRIME MINISTER said that Mr. Hull had met Mr. Eden at Cairo and that it was hoped they would both arrive in Moscow that night.

(Previous
Reference:
W.M.(43) 137th
Conclusions,
Minute 4).

Mediterranean
Commission

THE PRIME MINISTER said that the Russians had now demanded that the Mediterranean Commission should be given administrative powers over the Control Commission in Italy. This was entirely contrary to what we had said at the time when proposals for the establishment of a Commission had first been made. It was clearly out of the question for us, having regard to the interests of our troops fighting in Italy, to agree that the powers of control should be removed from the person of the Commander-in-Chief.

(Previous
Reference:
W.M.(43) 123rd
Conclusions,
Minute 3).

The State Department viewed with favour requests which had been received from the Chinese and Brazilian Governments to be represented on the Mediterranean Commission. This suggestion however would clearly make the Commission an ineffective body.

Russian Convoys

THE PRIME MINISTER said that the War Cabinet had seen the answer received from Premier Stalin in reply to his telegram (T. 1464/3) announcing our intention to send four convoys to North Russia and asking for better treatment for our personnel in North Russia. This answer (T. 1625/3) was couched in an unhelpful and grudging tone and he (the Prime Minister) had been sorely tempted to send a reply to the effect that, if the Russians would not mitigate the ill-treatment of our personnel in North Russia, we should not send the convoys. But it was clearly right that we should send the convoys, in the interests of the war effort, if we could possibly manage to do so, and he had accordingly asked the Foreign Secretary to handle the matter in Moscow. In the meantime, he had seen the newly appointed Russian Ambassador, Mr. Gusev, and had handed back to him Premier Stalin's telegram, saying that he was not prepared to receive it and that Mr. Eden would deal with the matter orally in Moscow. (See T. 1660/3 from the Prime Minister to the Foreign Secretary).

(Previous
Reference:
W.M.(43) 48th
Conclusions,
Minute 2).

In further discussion, the Prime Minister said that he thought it would be a great advantage if the Russians delivered their messages in Russian and let us arrange for their translation. He felt sure that the translations made were often very crude and that the tone of the original was often lost in the process of translation.

Office of the War Cabinet, S.W.1.