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Hurry up and wait:

Robert Menzies, Mackenzie King,  
and the failed attempt to form an  
Imperial War Cabinet in 1941

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On 7 May 1941, Australian Prime Minister Robert Menzies wearily stepped from his aircraft at Ottawa's airport to meet his waiting Canadian counterpart, William Lyon Mackenzie King. Menzies was given little time to rest and recoup. He immediately inspected an honour guard of Australian air force trainees enrolled in the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP) in Canada, gave a series of press interviews, delivered stirring addresses to the Canadian Club and then Canada's Parliament, attended a Cabinet War Committee (CWC) meeting, and then supped with King's full Cabinet before retiring finally after midnight. Greatly pleased by the "terrific enthusiasm" his speeches had received, Menzies found everybody, even the Canadian press, "friendly & responsive," a stark contrast to the much tougher treatment he normally encountered in Australia – "a prophet and his own country!"<sup>1</sup>

Absent from Australia since late January, Menzies had come to Canada from a beleaguered Britain to obtain King's backing for the creation of an Imperial War Cabinet (IWC), with Dominion Prime Ministers as key members, to restrain the redoubtable Winston Churchill. Menzies' ambitious scheme has attracted little attention from British and Canadian scholars. Martin Gilbert's magisterial biography of Churchill mentions Menzies' presence in Britain only briefly and says nothing about the IWC. Canada's dean of military/foreign policy history, C.P. Stacey, devotes but a few pages to Menzies and the IWC in his studies of the Second World War. J.L. Granatstein's account of King's government from 1939-45 fails to mention the initiative, an omission repeated in John Hilliker's official history of Canada's Department of External Affairs. Hilliker broaches the topic in one paragraph in a short 1984 article on Australian-Canadian wartime relations, describing Menzies' visit to Ottawa as "a great success." Galen Roger Perras' more recent piece on Canada's failure to aid the Antipodes militarily in the Second World War also consigns the Menzies/IWC issue to one paragraph.<sup>2</sup>

The situation 'Down Under' is little better. Menzies' 1967 memoirs fail to mention either the IWC or King. Fortunately, Menzies' diary for his 1941 trip, *Dark and Hurrying Days*, replete with entertainingly harsh judgements about many of the people he had met, was published in 1993, though the account of his Ottawa sojourn is more notable for what is absent from its pages. Paul Hasluck's impressive study of Australia's war effort fails to mention that Menzies sought King's assistance. P.G. Edwards' account of Australian foreign policy from 1901 to 1949 says nothing about the matter. D.M. Horner's detailed monograph on Australian war strategy and Allied high command contains just a handful of IWC references and concludes simply that Menzies was "disappointed" when his efforts did not succeed. However, historian David Day argues at length that Menzies had sought nothing less than Churchill's job, a plot abetted by prominent Britons including Great War Prime Minister David Lloyd George. Within this broader context however, the Menzies-King meeting occupies four pages, and King's later efforts to block the IWC get short shrift. Not surprisingly, Menzies' biographer, A.W. Martin, disputes Day's use of "indirect evidence" to make his controversial case, but his sparse discussion of Menzies' meeting with King leaves much to be desired.<sup>3</sup>

The failure to properly discuss this issue is a mistake. A Menzies-King alliance, however unlikely, to force an IWC upon Churchill could have fundamentally altered the direction of the Empire's war. Prospects for success seemed good on the surface. Both Menzies and King, cognizant of the damage the First World War had wrought in their respective nations, had desperately supported Neville Chamberlain's German appeasement policy in the 1930s. Once war had arrived in September 1939, they had favoured making peace initiatives to Adolf Hitler. Further, Menzies and King possessed significant qualms about Churchill's ability to successfully lead the Empire to victory. But Menzies' 1941 initiative was doomed from the very start.



Churchill showed scant interest in ceding his stranglehold over the strategic reins of power. In Britain's senior Dominion, long renowned and even hated for his reluctance to be drawn into politically dangerous entangling imperial webs, King felt certain that Menzies' plan boded ill for Canadian autonomy and his own fervid desire to limit Canada's military liabilities. Thus, despite his own misgivings about Churchill, King acted with the British leader to kill Menzies' idea. Menzies was a man in a hurry, but King rarely hurried about anything. Long after the IWC scheme's collapse, King viewed Menzies' fall from power in Australia in August 1941 as immutable proof that Dominion leaders dabbled in imperial politics at their own risk.

Menzies' support for an IWC sprang from concerns about the war's direction from its earliest moments. As Day and E.M. Andrews point out, with Australia deeply scarred by its grim Great War sacrifices, Menzies had supported Chamberlain's September 1938 Munich deal with Hitler, and had resolutely opposed British plans to bring the aggressively anti-Nazi Churchill into Britain's cabinet in mid-1939, fearing, as Chamberlain put it, "if Winston got into the Government it would not be too long before it were at war."<sup>4</sup> Having failed to ratify the 1931 Statute of Westminster, as in 1914, Australia was a belligerent the moment Britain declared war on Germany on 3 September 1939. Menzies took no pleasure in announcing war had come, having told Chamberlain on 1 September, before news of Germany's attack upon Poland had arrived, Australia did not consider the issues dividing Germans and Poles as "intrinsically worth a war." On 11 September Menzies instructed S.M. Bruce, Australia's High Commissioner in London, to advise Britain to take any German peace feelers seriously. He then lobbied various officials, including King, about establishing clear imperial war aims that would not preclude a peaceful settlement. Despite the fact King also favoured peace talks with Germany (King naively

believed Hitler's aggression could be stopped by international mediation), such efforts came to naught when Hitler refused to be reined in.<sup>5</sup>

Menzies' concerns re-emerged in May 1940 as driving German forces cut brutal swathes through an astonishingly brittle French military, raising the dismal prospect of a badly battered Britain left alone in the fight except for its frightened Dominions. Having agreed to formal diplomatic relations with Canada in 1939 after years of false starts,<sup>6</sup> a despairing Menzies cabled King on 22 May 1940 to broach the idea of making public appeals for American intervention to salvage the crumbling Allied cause. Not unsympathetic to Menzies' suggestion (King had greeted the new year by noting America might have "already lost its one great opportunity and mission"<sup>7</sup> by failing to defend small neutral powers), King had little affection for Menzies himself. A 1938 attempt to exchange High Commissioners with Australia had collapsed, an Australian official had told O.D. Skelton, Canada's influential Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, because then-Attorney-General Menzies "was strongly Imperialistic and strongly opposed to separate dominion representation." Then in December 1939 King had felt Australia and Britain's Air Ministry had colluded to embarrass him because, during a particularly difficult moment in the BCATP negotiations, he had blurted out "this is not our war." Stacey is right – King probably meant it was not "exclusively" Canada's war as he fought British attempts to saddle him with the BCATP's costs – but King's enemies had assailed his apparent lack of commitment to Britain. Thus when Menzies had released BCATP details before its contentious financial wrinkles had been ironed out, King, possessing a long memory for slights, assumed the worst. So when Menzies' request arrived, certain he knew America far better than Menzies, King opposed a public appeal as it could damage "rather than assist the formation of public and Congressional opinion favourable to action," a view Churchill, who had just replaced Chamberlain, supported.<sup>8</sup>

Canada's refusal to back Menzies' appeal sparked a reaction. On 4 June 1940 William Glasgow, Australia's High Commissioner in Ottawa, warned that Canadians attached "far greater importance to the Statute of Westminster than does the average Australian" and would brook no infringement of their sovereignty. Further, "an able" King possessed the loyalty of his Cabinet and party but "lacks either the ability or the will to rouse the country and provide the lead it has been waiting for."<sup>9</sup> Injured Australian feelings were not assuaged either when King and President Franklin Roosevelt established a continental security pact in August assuring Canada's safety in the event Germany overwhelmed Britain. Canberra's mood darkened considerably when its attempts to gain a similar deal were rebuffed despite one Canadian official's failed efforts to convince Roosevelt to extend the deal to Britain, Australia, and New Zealand.<sup>10</sup>

Japan's occupation of French Indochina and its increased pressure on Anglo-Dutch possessions in the Far East (Australia's "near north"), gave Menzies more hard moments, especially as Britain, facing a possible German invasion, showed little concern for Australian security. On 15 August the British Chiefs of Staff, seeing no prospect for strategic improvement "in the *immediate* future," advocated abandoning the long standing promise to send a major fleet to Singapore, and suggested Australia despatch troops to Malaya. Indeed, four days earlier Churchill had told Menzies and New Zealand Prime Minister Peter Fraser the Royal Navy would not head for the Antipodes unless Britain had been expelled from the eastern Mediterranean or Japan attacked Singapore. Then in September Churchill "stopped" plans to send an Australian division to Malaya; he wanted it despatched to the Middle East.<sup>11</sup> When America refused in November 1940 to base even a token naval contingent at Singapore to deter a Japanese assault, Menzies acted. Viewing Singapore's defence position as 'alarming,' Menzies informed London on 8 November of his plans to visit Britain soon to discuss common security problems, although

he waited until 25 November to inform Australia's multi-party Advisory War Council (AWC) of his intentions. No doubt Menzies' convictions only deepened after Bruce's account of a 19 December chat with Churchill reached him. Dominions Secretary Lord Cranborne was not normally a War Cabinet member, an exclusion Bruce protested as the Secretary "should be the best man in the Cabinet after the Prime Minister." Churchill disagreed; the Dominions Office was "only a Post-office," while the Dominions "would not tolerate dictation from the Dominions Secretary." Unable to dispute the latter statement, Bruce reminded Churchill that a first class Dominions Secretary could advise him about dangerous trends in Dominion opinion.<sup>12</sup>

Menzies began his exhausting journey on 24 January 1941, with stops in the Dutch East Indies, Singapore, India, the Middle East, and Africa, before arriving in London on 21 February. The Singapore stopover had confirmed Menzies' darker fears that the Empire's security was seriously endangered; Singapore was short of aircraft, its army garrison lacked vital materials, naval power was absent, and local commander Air Chief Marshall Sir Robert Brooke-Popham had struck Menzies as a man who favoured a heroic but futile last stand "rather than clear-cut planning, realism and science."<sup>13</sup> Menzies' qualms only deepened after arriving in Britain. Meeting Churchill on 22 February, he found the Briton "a tempestuous creature...oratorical even in conversation," with little inclination to heed other opinions. Attending his first War Cabinet meeting two days later, an astounded Menzies witnessed Churchill's small coterie of Ministers say almost nothing after their leader declared for a risky military expedition to Greece, an excursion in which Australian forces would play a prominent role. Menzies condemned Cranborne as a man whose "courtesy has ousted fibre," thought Minister of Air Production Lord Beaverbrook possessed "a mind of his own, though I suspect it is not a good mind," and dismissed Clement Attlee, the Labour Party chief, as better fitted to "be a Sunday School



Superintendent." By 14 April as German forces sliced through Britain's lines in North Africa and the Balkans, Menzies blasted a "deplorable" War Cabinet as filled with "dumb men most of whom disagree with Winston but none of whom dare to say so." The Chiefs of Staff "are without exception Yes Men," while Churchill was a "dictator" who "cannot be overruled, and his colleagues fear him."<sup>14</sup>

What could be done to counter Churchill's influence? Day avers Menzies, encouraged by Beaverbrook and Lloyd George, sought to unseat Churchill as Britain's head of government. This is a controversial notion, and as Martin notes, the evidence is indirect. What is clear is that Menzies settled upon recreating Lloyd George's Imperial War Cabinet that had directed the Empire's war effort in 1917-1919. Menzies had not devised the idea. In September 1939 Bruce had told Menzies the British War Cabinet had thought the time for an IWC "had not yet arrived." Daily meetings between the Dominions Secretary and Dominion High Commissioners could suffice, supplemented by having Dominion Ministers come to London for two to four weeks to coordinate planning with British officials.<sup>15</sup> Then on 22 April 1940 Chamberlain had suggested bringing the Dominion Prime Ministers to London for a conference. Menzies had wanted to attend, but South Africa's eminent Prime Minister, Jan Smuts, a member of the Great War IWC, had thought the meeting premature given the strategic uncertainty. Moreover, Smuts had worried about leaving South Africa, a justifiable concern as many adamantly nationalist Afrikaners opposed fighting in this latest Anglo-German war at Britain's side.<sup>16</sup>

King's Cabinet had split on the issue on 2 May, though one French-Canadian Minister, Raoul Dandurand, had pointedly reminded all that their former leader and King's political mentor, Wilfrid Laurier, had fought attendance at imperial conferences.<sup>17</sup> King needed no such reminders, having spent much of his political career expanding Canada's autonomy even at the



expense of imperial ties. At his first imperial conference in 1923, he and Skelton had strenuously resisted the centralization of imperial foreign and defence policies, going through documents line by line, excising unacceptable phrasing. For King, Canadian unity, sorely tested in the Great War by French Canadian opposition to conscription, and good relations with America ranked above possibly dangerous imperial commitments. When Maurice Hankey, Secretary to the Committee of Imperial Defence, had queried why King was abandoning former Prime Minister Robert Borden's strident wartime demands for a formal Canadian role in imperial decision-making, Skelton had been very clear; Borden's policy had been an betrayal of fifty years of constitutional evolution, an aberration King intended to quickly correct. Thus, when the 1923 conference's final statement on foreign policy goals had been issued, at King's insistence it said goals were "necessarily subject to the actions of the Governments and Parliaments of the Empire," while joint imperial defence had given way to an emphasis on local defence.<sup>18</sup>

Such efforts have earned King the inestimable enmity of imperially minded contemporaries and historians. In 1923 Foreign Secretary Lord Curzon had found King "obstinate, tiresome and stupid, nervously afraid of being turned out of his own Parliament when he gets back." Australian politician and diplomat R.G. Casey, having witnessed King's assiduous work at the 1926 imperial conference, had commented in 1928 "surely no man can claim credit for having done so much as Mackenzie King to damage what remains in these autonomous days of the fabric of the British Empire. His efforts to make political capital out of his domestic nationalism are analogous to a vandal who pulls down a castle to build a cottage." British historian Correlli Barnett accuses King and an "Anglophobe" Skelton of seeking "to break up the 'white' empire as an effective alliance; not directly and deliberately, but as the by-product of achieving complete freedom of action" domestically. Canadian academic W.L. Morton more

bluntly maintains King's relentless pursuit of autonomy led to "the present condition of Canada, in which the country is so irradiated by the American presence that it sickens and threatens to dissolve in cancerous slime."<sup>19</sup>

Such vituperative criticism misses the point. Casey's 1928 critique also had blamed Canada for Britain's non-renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1921-22 "owing to her United States complex," though it had been Conservative Prime Minister Arthur Meighen who had opposed renewal.<sup>20</sup> King was not anti-British, but he never trusted incessant demands for imperial unity. Thus as war clouds had ominously gathered in the 1930s, King had declined to give London any encouragement to confront Germany, fearing confrontation might incite war rather than prevent it. In 1935 King had ordered his Anglophilic High Commissioner to Britain, Vincent Massey, not to be drawn into "imperial councils, commitments, or policies and to avoid becoming a member of any conference of Dominions." Canadians, King had thundered, should not become "subordinate or subject ourselves to any combined influence of Australia-New Zealand, Newfoundland etc in our policies."<sup>21</sup> At the 1937 imperial conference King had opposed imposing automatic sanctions on aggressors, had reminded participants the 1923 meeting had ruled Dominion focus should be local defence, and had refused to grant any automatic commitment if Britain found itself at war in Europe. But in private, knowing what generally pro-British Canadian public opinion would demand of him, King had told Chamberlain that Canada would assist Britain to resist attack. He also had agreed with his Cabinet during the 1938 Munich crisis that Canada had a "self-evident national duty" to fight with Britain. Then quoting Laurier from 1914, King had informed Canada's Parliament in January 1939 "if England is at war, we are at war and liable to attack," adding that Parliament would determine the extent of Canada's participation in such a conflict.<sup>22</sup>

Once war had come, King had hoped for a conflict of "limited liability," focussing on air power and war-related production, only to see Canadian opinion and his service advisers demand ground forces be despatched to Europe, an especially bitter pill for a downcast Skelton to swallow.<sup>23</sup> Military inactivity in Western Europe until spring 1940 lessened the urgency to deal with Chamberlain's conference call. By the time King had responded on 10 May, Germany's victorious west European offensive had begun, and confronting such a dire crisis, King could not justify any absence from Canada that might last "for some weeks, if not months." No doubt recalling that Borden's extended absences from Canada so he could sit on the IWC from 1917-1919 had engendered considerable criticism, King had maintained it went against his conviction and Canadian practice to decide important policy matters "without prior consultation with my colleagues." Lastly, drawing upon his beloved linchpin metaphor, King had felt he could better represent Commonwealth interests "as a whole" to America by remaining in Canada. Present means of communication, some of which had been "non-existent in the last war" (such as British and Dominion High Commissioners in Ottawa) were "most satisfactory." Only altered circumstances or special emergencies would prompt King to attend a Prime Ministers' conference.<sup>24</sup>

King had little reason to worry as Churchill had no interest in an IWC. But the issue did not vanish. On 30 May, Casey, now Australia's Minister to America, had advised Menzies to get Bruce, who possessed "a sense of reality which is badly needed," appointed to Britain's War Cabinet. Menzies, Casey had asserted, should ride over any Canadian counter-arguments. By October 1940 Canada's High Commission had reported British newspapers were debating an IWC revival, with London press magnate Lord Kemsley seeking Menzies' opinion. Then Menzies had condemned an IWC as an unwieldy instrument which would take Prime Ministers

away from their home countries for too long.<sup>25</sup> But somehow a cranky King had mistakenly believed Menzies had pushed the notion. He had been no happier when Churchill had proposed forming a Supreme Allied War Council composed of representatives from all anti-German governments. Seeing that as an IWC "on a larger and more dangerous scale," King had told Massey on 6 December existing consultation systems plus occasional ministerial visits to Britain "would appear to be fully adequate."<sup>26</sup>

There the matter lay until its dramatic rebirth in April 1941. On 6 March Menzies had discussed an IWC with Lord Elibank, although Menzies commented, with some prescience, an enthusiastic Elibank "had an inadequate conception of the difficulties, eg Canada." Perhaps so, but on 2 April Elibank made a motion in the House of Lords demanding an IWC because existing methods of communication could not achieve the unity of purpose and decision needed to successfully prosecute the war. The motion, however, did not progress as Cranborne declared his government was perfectly satisfied with the current Dominion consultation system.<sup>27</sup> When he lunched with Lloyd George on 26 April, Menzies and the Welsh wizard realized they shared similar concerns regarding Churchill. In May 1940, as Chamberlain's sad premiership had ended, some had hoped for Lloyd George's return to Number 10 Downing Street. When Churchill instead had claimed that prize, Lloyd George had declined a place in Churchill's Cabinet and had predicted in July 1940 that while Britain presently was "hysterically infatuated" with Churchill, it would turn firmly against him after his first great blunder.<sup>28</sup>

Among the solutions Menzies and Lloyd George considered were daily rather than weekly War Cabinet meetings, freeing Cabinet members from extraneous departmental responsibilities, finding good men to provide sound advice to Churchill, and appointing someone from the Dominions to the War Cabinet "for the Dominions type of mind is essential." Then on 1



May, Maurice Hankey, marginalised by Churchill thanks to his close ties to a now-dead Chamberlain but renowned among Australians for his pro-Dominion attitude during the Great War, was buttonholed by Menzies on the street. Churchill was a dictator surrounded by yes-men Menzies charged; the solution was an IWC containing at least one Dominion member. Unhappy with his own declining influence, Hankey called Menzies the next day to encourage him to use his last meeting with Churchill to press Britain's leader to make better use of his advisers.<sup>29</sup> Whether one accepts Day's claim of Menzies-led plot against Churchill, clearly some degree of connivance was at work. Even before the Lloyd George meeting, as Day points out, Menzies' membership on a revived IWC had been mentioned prominently in newspapers in Britain, Australia, and America. If Day is correct, if Menzies intended to usurp the British premiership, Churchill seemed singularly unimpressed. Asked in the House of Commons on 29 April whether he would form a supreme War Cabinet with Menzies as a member, Churchill's terse answer left scant room for misunderstanding; "No, Sir."<sup>30</sup>

It is in this context then, that Menzies' arrival in Ottawa just one week later is significant. If Menzies could convince a reluctant King to back an IWC, and the *Sydney Daily Telegraph* had mentioned King, alongside Menzies, Smuts, Lloyd George, Churchill, and Fraser as likely IWC members, despite John Charmley's contention that "Churchill was no ingénue to be outmanoeuvred by a 'Colonial' and disgruntled Ministers," Churchill's surrender might have been forced by a united Dominion front. A precedent existed. In 1916 Australian Prime Minister William Hughes also had stopped in Ottawa to meet with Robert Borden about the war. Although Hughes had failed to convince Borden to put Canadian naval forces into the Pacific to counter Japan's growing power, they had agreed the Dominions needed more power in imperial decision-making, a decision which had contributed to Lloyd George's formation of the IWC in 1917.<sup>31</sup>



Menzies' diary is not particularly unhelpful at this point. After devoting dozens of pages to his British sojourn, including a quixotic side-trip to Ireland intended to smooth roiling Anglo-Irish relations, Menzies' terse account of his Canadian visit totals less than two pages. Menzies attended Canada's CWC on 7 May and a breakfast meeting the next day with Glasgow and British High Commissioner Malcolm Macdonald. But the diary contains no details of his discussions beyond relaying King's self-congratulatory assertion that his efforts had kept Canada united and America onside via his friendship with Roosevelt. Accepting the former claim, Menzies opined while King "could not have been more pleasant and co-operative," he was "not a war leader, possesses no burning zeal for the cause, and is a politician who possible prefers to lead from behind." The IWC is not mentioned, a subject that also had been absent from his address to Canada's Parliament. However, Menzies claimed that unnamed sources (likely Macdonald) had told him that King had "not really wanted me to come to Canada."<sup>32</sup>

On the other hand, King's diary, an extraordinary document chronicling his life from undergraduate days at the University of Toronto until his death in July 1950, says a great deal about Menzies and the IWC. King and Menzies had not met until May 1941 even though the Australian had visited Ottawa in August 1935, a visit that had left Menzies unenthusiastic about Canada.<sup>33</sup> Menzies' sources had been correct; King had not looked forward to the Australian's arrival. Initially he had decided not to meet Menzies at the airport, but had changed his mind after hearing Menzies was looking forward to meeting him. By day's end, King admitted Menzies, "a fine looking fellow, splendid presence, great vigour, [with] a wonderful gift for speaking," had taken "this city more or less by storm." And while Menzies exhibited "many of the qualities of a great leader," a self-righteous King believed his guest was "thinking pretty much of Menzies

most of the time, and likes very much the environments of high society, palaces, etc., which will cost him, perhaps, dearly in the end.”<sup>34</sup>

Menzies’ IWC advocacy had left King quite unmoved despite the Canadian’s long distrust of Churchill. In 1922, blaming Churchill for a clumsy failed attempt to embroil Canada in a dangerous Anglo-Turkish dispute, King had remarked it was “a serious business having matters in the hands of a man like Churchill”; in King’s opinion, Britain would have been better off without Churchill and Lloyd George. Seventeen years later, with the Empire at war again in Europe, King had blamed Lloyd George and Churchill for the new conflict. When Churchill had ascended to the premiership in 1940, King had greeted the news ruefully as Chamberlain, possessing better judgement than Churchill, would “have been a safer guide in the long run than Churchill.”<sup>35</sup> Still, there is little doubt Canada’s Prime Minister, who absolutely dominated his wartime Cabinet, did not welcome the precedent of undermining a British Prime Minister’s powers and prerogatives. Further, one Canadian Minister, recently returned from Britain, had remarked in January that Churchill “had given up any thought of having an Imperial War Council.”<sup>36</sup> Describing Menzies as “quite outspoken,” King and Ministers listened while the Australian characterized Churchill, surrounded by “yes men,” as running “the whole show” in London, adding he had been “practically the only one” to venture questions at the War Cabinet table. Perhaps seeking to appeal to King’s patriotism, Menzies asserted the Canadian-born Beaverbrook, “the one man doing things,” had stopped attending War Cabinet meetings because they never accomplished anything, before pulling out his one big gun; an “equally critical” Lloyd George wanted a Dominion point of view in the War Cabinet.<sup>37</sup>

King dismantled Menzies’ argument at some length. Certain Menzies’ reasons for an IWC differed greatly from British advocates, King agreed Dominion opinions had long been ignored in

London. However, he doubted recreating the IWC would solve that problem, and worried about Dominion Prime Ministers being absent too long from their own countries. When Menzies countered that occasional meetings might serve the purpose, King felt certain the minute Dominion leaders departed Britain the "whole situation would slip back into the position it was before," with the Dominions incurring "responsibility without power." Favouring the current system involving individual Ministers going to Britain to consult with their opposite members, which Menzies viewed as ineffective, King rejected assertions an IWC was needed to decide strategic questions. Lacking military expertise, King feared being seen as an imposter if he made such decisions without immediate advice from Canada's Chiefs of Staff, which meant absenting them from Ottawa "where they were most needed." Thus, King plumped for leaving the current system of intra-imperial consultation intact. If a time came when "great decisions" had to be made, then Dominion leaders could finally proceed forthwith to London; but to constantly move back and forth to Britain would amount to little influence "at the right time."<sup>38</sup>

Day correctly asserts Menzies had failed to impress King. Convinced Menzies "was too much the dictator to be a persuasive leader of the mass of the people," King believed Menzies would find upon his return to Australia he had lost much ground to his political foes. Moreover, he suspected Menzies "would rather be on the War Cabinet in London than Prime Minister of Australia."<sup>39</sup> Most importantly, having long balanced Canada's racial divide, King likely had noticed, as America's Minister in Ottawa reported, while Canada's English-language newspapers had lauded Menzies, the French press was "far less conspicuous and less enthusiastic in tone," perhaps because "French Canada differs with the English majority about the formation of an Imperial War Cabinet."<sup>40</sup>

Despite King's firm opposition, the IWC issue remained alive as a string of disastrous British battlefield defeats in Greece and North Africa compelled Churchill to demonstrate that the deteriorating strategic situation was somehow redeemable. King unwittingly supplied the idea. Cabling Churchill on 10 May to describe his audience with Menzies, King noted any Prime Ministers' meeting should "be confined to some occasion when some practical question might necessitate joint consideration." Cranborne, who had been seeking to convene an imperial conference for nearly a year, while realizing King had not committed himself, seized upon the telegram to push for such a meeting in August or September. However, Cranborne warned Churchill on 12 May that Menzies probably would manipulate such a conference to publicly push for the IWC. If that prospect worried Churchill, his 12 May wire to King revealed nothing. Delighted Menzies' Ottawa visit had been "so successful" and praising King's efforts at keeping Canada united, Winston suggested holding a four to six week-long imperial conference in July or August.<sup>41</sup>

Doubting circumstances would permit a speedy conference convocation, a disgruntled King opined that Churchill was seeking only to "satisfy public sentiment for the appearances of a complete Empire advisory body." King would go if he must but "would not welcome" the opportunity. More importantly, if such a trip threatened to incite cleavages in his Cabinet or the country, he would stay home. Malcolm Macdonald's version of events, written on 14 May, is somewhat different. According to the High Commissioner, while King remained "resolutely opposed" to the IWC, Menzies' appeal had moved him to consider attending a two or three week imperial conference. On one issue, Macdonald and King were of one mind; King's prolonged absence from Canada would injure national unity given ongoing English-French racial tensions and constant Conservative attacks on the government's military policies.<sup>42</sup>



Getting this conference off the ground, an initiative Stacey terms “a sop to Menzies from Churchill,”<sup>43</sup> proved impossible. On 26 May King told Churchill an imperial conference would be generally regarded as expressing a lack of confidence in some or all Commonwealth’s governments rather than as evidence of imperial unity. Professing a need to stay home, King hoped no such meeting would occur “until it is quite clear that the good resulting therefrom will outweigh the possible risks involved.” Four days later Churchill formally proposed the conference to Cranborne. But as Cranborne had noted on 30 May, King was “wobbly” about attending, while a draft memorandum he submitted to Churchill on 3 June posited even a keen Menzies might be unable to return to Britain so soon after his last trip. But when Cranborne suggested moving the conference to later in the year, the War Cabinet disagreed. Preferring to stage the event in late July or August, it authorized Churchill to personally contact King and Smuts about coming to London; if that was impossible, then pre-existing plans to have Dominion Prime Ministers arrive in succeeding solo visits should continue unabated.<sup>44</sup> Churchill’s appeal, emphasizing his need to consult with the combined minds of Dominion leaders on strategic problems facing the Empire, went out to King on 11 June. King’s response, sent to Massey 3 days later and passed to Churchill on 16 June, was negative. Unwilling to travel to London, King would send two defence ministers to consult with the Britain’s War Cabinet. After telling the Dominions Office it did not “seem possible to have much of a conference,” on 21 June Churchill informed Menzies that any imperial conference plans would “have to be dropped for the present.”<sup>45</sup>

Churchill certainly was not disappointed by this turn of events. His private secretary, John Colville, whose positive postwar assessment of the Menzies-Churchill wartime relationship is most interesting, records his boss pithily commenting “you can easily turn the War Cabinet into a



museum of Imperial celebrities, but then you have to have another body to manage the war.”<sup>46</sup> Across the Atlantic, King also felt no remorse. Certain his judgement in the matter had been correct (and he was supported by Ernest Lapointe, his influential Quebec lieutenant, who had scathingly attacked the first IWC in 1919<sup>47</sup>), King resented Churchill’s public assertion the conference had to be cancelled because neither King nor Smuts could attend. While the CWC approved King’s decision not to go to Britain on 24 June, while travelling in western Canada, increasingly convinced his domestic enemies would employ the IWC issue to assert Canada and Britain had serious differences regarding the war’s direction, King hinted at a willingness to go to London. But on 4 July he promised two senior Ministers, C.G. Power and Ian Mackenzie, to correct any false impressions that his opposition had killed the conference, while pledging to stay in Canada to safeguard national unity.<sup>48</sup>

If King seemed momentarily indecisive, Menzies felt no such hesitation. Having arrived back in Australia on 24 May, Menzies had briefed the AWC regarding his concerns about Churchill. Describing the War Cabinet’s workings in some detail, Menzies had painted a picture of Churchill as a great and able man unfortunately surrounded by mediocre yes-men unwilling to stand up to Churchill when he was wrong. When the imperial conference scheme came apart, Australians thought they knew where the blame lay. Cranborne had warned Bruce in mid-June that King’s continued opposition was threatening to scuttle the conference, which had prompted Bruce to lobby Cranborne to carry on with the meeting regardless of King’s attitude. Thus, on 3 July Menzies made a direct appeal to King (he sent a separate message to Smuts) to reconsider his objections to a conference and an IWC because Churchill was overburdened, the War Cabinet gave inadequate consideration to long range planning, and the Dominions were not being effectively consulted. Desperate to achieve progress, Menzies said he would “take any political

risk at home" (his fragile coalition government was teetering) to make "essential" changes in London.<sup>49</sup>

King was not inclined to take many risks (on 31 May America's Minister in Ottawa, J. Pierrepont Moffat, had said "things move very slowly in Mr. King's mind, and as a rule he responds better to suggestions along general lines than to suggestions for specific action"<sup>50</sup>). Away from Ottawa until mid-July, King met with Malcolm Macdonald on 14 July. Equally unhappy that Churchill had blamed King for the imperial conference's collapse, the two men agreed rising Canadian criticism meant King should visit London for a few weeks but not as part of a broader prime ministerial gathering. Canada's Department of External Affairs also weighed in on the IWC. In April 1940 while serving at Canada's High Commission in London, Lester Pearson, complaining about Canada's lack of foreknowledge regarding Allied plans, had recommended that a Canadian official should attend British War Cabinet meetings. But on 18 July 1941 Pearson, now in Ottawa and physically within easy reach of the Prime Minister, rejected an IWC as air mail, telegraphs, telephones, ministerial visits, and consultations with High Commissioners ensured intra-imperial consultation. Most importantly, any Canadian IWC member would almost certainly need to refer matters of vital policy back to Ottawa, thus slowing the decision-making process. Norman Robertson, having succeeded Skelton after the latter's sudden death in January 1941, was tasked to draft King's response to Menzies' 3 July telegram, and also condemned an IWC. Certain Churchill "would have very grave misgivings" about Menzies' suggestions to appoint "a political commissar from overseas" to monitor British governmental workings, Robertson also believed Washington DC, not London, was "bound to become the strategic as well as geographic centre of our resistance to the Axis Powers."<sup>51</sup>

Again Menzies was to be frustrated. Smuts cabled on 10 July to say that while an imperial conference seemed a good idea, he could not travel to London until year's end. But the South African opposed installing permanent Dominion representatives in Britain's War Cabinet, averring War Cabinet membership was Churchill's purview alone. King's lengthy response on 2 August said an "imposing" IWC would sacrifice "reality to appearances," would not improve existing consultative machinery, and would almost certainly prejudice Dominion war efforts if their Prime Ministers were in London too long. And while Churchill's burdens were "far too great," they did not "differ in kind from that of the Prime Ministers in each of the Dominions," who were responsible to their own Parliaments and peoples. Only Britain's government and people could relieve Churchill of his burdens.<sup>52</sup>

After such protestations, Menzies must have found it particularly galling when King proceeded to Britain in late August. Stacey patronizingly claims King made his decision to travel to London after discovering on his western Canadian tour that not everyone shared Quebec's anti-imperial views. In fact, King made the choice after finding out on 6 August that Roosevelt and Churchill had just met secretly off Newfoundland's fog-shrouded coasts to approve the Atlantic Charter. Liberal Senator (and renowned bagman) Norman Lambert confided to a journalist that King's rage upon learning of this covert encounter after the fact had been "unbounded." Fearful his self-proclaimed role as an Anglo-American linchpin would suffer when news of his exclusion came out, King opted to head to London despite a pronounced fear of flying. To his War Cabinet, King justified his trip as a means to publicize Canada's unappreciated war effort in Britain. But when King met with Malcolm Macdonald on 12 August, he made his displeasure quite clear. Recalling his earlier statement that "perfect" existing imperial communications had given Canada no cause for complaint, King now believed "the very opposite

was now taking place." The British, he whinged, wanted friends in foul weather but ignored them in fair "so long as they got their way that was all they wanted."<sup>53</sup>

Thus on 13 August Macdonald wired Cranborne that King now desired a two or three-day imperial conference because the Churchill-Roosevelt meeting and ongoing British-American military talks had initiated a new phase in the war that required discussion. Macdonald put a good face on this reversal. Maintaining not completely honestly that King, "disappointed on personal grounds" for being excluded from such important developments, was not "much bothered," Macdonald emphasized King was more concerned that his peoples' pride in their national war effort might be hurt if Canada was excluded from British-American planning.<sup>54</sup> The imperial conference did not happen. While King had announced he would arrive in Britain on 21 August, Britain's War Cabinet doubted the time was ripe for an imperial conference, although it left the final decision to a still absent Churchill. When contacted by telegraph on 14 August, Churchill saw no reason to summon Menzies back to London for only a few days of meetings. Concerned the Australian would view such a request as an "invitation to join [the] War Cabinet," instead Churchill ruled King could be invited to come to London alone. Five days later, after Peter Fraser told the War Cabinet a hurriedly called imperial conference would serve no useful purpose, Churchill asserted that asking all Dominion Prime Ministers to sit on the War Cabinet "would present considerable difficulty" and would recast government machinery. Agreeing, the War Cabinet asked Churchill to explain these difficulties to Menzies.<sup>55</sup>

In Australia an increasingly frustrated Menzies was frantically manoeuvring to get back to Britain. He told Bruce on 13 August that his Cabinet had asked him to return to London to bring an Australian point of view firmly to bear on Far Eastern discussions. Further, the press had been clamouring for his resignation as Prime Minister so he could take up a place in Britain's War



Cabinet. Uncertain about his options, Menzies wanted Bruce to discern whether any Dominion Minister other than a Prime Minister could sit on Churchill's War Cabinet. But on 14 August the AWC's Labor Party members strongly opposed Menzies' plan, averring a Prime Minister's primary duty was to lead in Australia. Even when Labor leader John Curtin suggested Menzies could serve in London temporarily, Labor hardliners such as H.V. Evatt, convinced Menzies' notion was a desperate ploy to salvage the his faltering coalition government, overruled Curtin's compromise on 21 August. Without Labor's approval, Menzies could not go to Britain as long as he remained Prime Minister.<sup>56</sup>

That dilemma was soon solved. Facing mounting pressure within his coalition to step down, Menzies offered to form a national government with Labor, a suggestion Curtin was willing to consider. But on 26 August, with the eager Evatt ambitiously leading the way, Labor rejected the formation of a national government and called upon Menzies to resign and make way for a Labor administration. Two days later, announcing his government had opted to send a Minister to London, Menzies resigned as Prime Minister in favour of party ally Arthur Fadden. Australians naturally were shocked by this sudden chain of events, but Canada's Acting High Commissioner in Canberra laid the blame squarely on Menzies. Although Menzies was a "man of great charm and of outstanding intellectual capacity," E.B. Rogers found him tactless, thought he needlessly antagonized people, while "his handling of the situation in the last few weeks can only be characterized as inapt."<sup>57</sup>

Churchill had no intention to offer a harried Menzies refuge, having made it plain to King on 21 and 22 August his continued opposition to having any Dominion Minister other than a Prime Minister attend War Cabinet meetings. Furthermore, Churchill could not see how one Dominion representative could represent the interests of all four Dominions, a point King most



emphatically had supported as no Prime Minister had the right to make war-time decisions for even his own nation. The tone of the conversation on 23 August had been far more bitter. The previous evening Lord Astor had unsuccessfully lobbied King to push for Dominion representation on the War Cabinet as only someone with King's or Menzies' stature could influence a "determined" Churchill. Perhaps knowing something was up, the next day Churchill, having said on 22 August that Labor had been "pretty hard" on Menzies, had accused Menzies of loathing his own people and wanting above all to be in England. Disputing Menzies' claim that he was utterly encompassed by mindless yes-men, Churchill instead affirmed that his good Cabinet was comprised of men who "speak their minds." And when news of Menzies's difficulties in Australia reached London on 26 August, King avidly indulged in some self-congratulatory back-patting, recalling his concerns in May that Menzies would pay a price for devoting too little attention to domestic political concerns.<sup>58</sup>

On 28 August, before news of Menzies' resignation had arrived in Britain, King and Churchill gave their views full throat at the War Cabinet table. Still strongly opposed to altering the existing machinery, King asserted "Menzies had brought all this trouble on himself" by failing to realize each Dominion had unique problems requiring its own leadership. As for Menzies joining his War Cabinet, an adamant Churchill demanded that the Dominions Office and Ministry of Information immediately deny the possibility. If Menzies was absolutely determined to come, he could take Bruce's place as High Commissioner as Churchill would let only a Dominion Prime Minister into the War Cabinet. Only Cranborne indicated any willingness to consider some changes. Certain that support in Britain for improving Dominion involvement in the War Cabinet was "rather unreal and lacked backing," Cranborne thought Australian sentiment seemed "genuine"; thus, it could be difficult to flatly refuse any formal Australian request for

change. But once Menzies' resignation became public, on 29 August Churchill quickly informed Fadden it was impossible to appoint an Australian Minister to the War Cabinet without first consulting the other Dominions. Moreover, none of the Dominion Prime Ministers favoured the idea, with some taking "a very strong adverse view." Australian representatives willing to discuss the war effort remained welcome in London, and Churchill even offered, not very sincerely, a vague prospect of forming an IWC if all governments in the Empire agreed on its necessity.<sup>59</sup>

Menzies' decisive defeat did not stop his detractors from piling on. On 30 August 1941 King George told Prime Minister King that the Australians were different; Canadians, New Zealanders, and South Africans "all seemed to work in close harmony, but that in Australia they were always being critical," an astounding judgement given often fractious race-based politics in Canada and South Africa! A day later Cranborne expressed considerable relief at having dispensed with the "miserable Australians," averring Menzies' "intriguing was a constant danger." Then on 5 September, at Churchill's request, King allowed him to read Menzies' 3 July telegram though the Canadian insisted the matter not be put on the public record lest he be accused of not being "square" with Menzies. Churchill found the telegram "cleverly written," and ominously suggested King not lose "the communication whatever you do; keep it very carefully."<sup>60</sup> Such advice was quite unnecessary, for King never forgot Menzies's role in the events of 1941. When the CWC assembled in Ottawa on 10 September to hear the Prime Minister report upon his British activities, King ensured the minutes made special mention that Churchill's telegram of 29 August to Fadden had "substantially" employed King's arguments to reject Dominion representation in Britain's War Cabinet. Then in October, when Earle Page, Australian's newly appointed representative to the War Cabinet stopped in Ottawa on his way to London, King took special delight in Page's acidic assertions about Menzies's poor leadership

skills. According to Page, Menzies had been so intent on returning to Britain that he had not bothered to unpack his suitcase from his first trip, a claim King happily recalled well into the postwar period.<sup>61</sup>

Indeed, Churchill had made Page's appointment possible. Willing to throw Fadden a bone, on 1 September Churchill said Australia could send a special envoy to London to represent the Dominion before the Chiefs of Staff or other Ministers when the use of Australian forces was being considered. However, Fadden despatched Page on the mistaken assumption Churchill would permit Page's presence when the War Cabinet discussed matters affecting Australia. But while Churchill refused to let the Australian regularly attend War Cabinet meetings, Page's despatch reopened the IWC issue. With a Labor government led by Curtin now in power in Canberra, Menzies made a demand in *The Times of London* on 19 January for a permanent Australian member in the War Cabinet. Five days later *The Times* urged Churchill to bring the Dominions Secretary and some Dominion representatives into that body. Churchill took until 27 January 1942 to officially accept Page, citing the entry of Japan and America into the conflict as grounds for allowing Dominion Ministers to attend some War Cabinet discussions. But with Cranborne telling the War Cabinet on 26 January that Australia's demands for full membership in its ranks was inappropriate, Churchill drew a public line. While claiming a willingness to form an IWC, Churchill told Parliament it had been impossible to assemble the Dominion Prime Ministers, most notably Smuts and King, in London. Further, Churchill averred having Dominion members in the War Cabinet who lacked "power to take decisions and can only report to their Government evidently raises some serious problems."<sup>62</sup>

As in Britain, some Canadian newspapers had taken up the IWC cause. Pointing out Churchill was not averse to an IWC, the *Toronto Globe and Mail* on 27 January pondered

whether King would acquiesce as the "urgent need is now proved." One day later the *Toronto Star* carried former Canadian Prime Minister R.B. Bennett's maiden speech to the House of Lords in which he had demanded full Dominion participation in an IWC. Such pressure left King unmoved. As Glasgow had reported in September 1941, King's successful journey to Britain had "once again confounded his critics" and added to his stature, making him "now less dependent upon any single Minister or any group than he has ever been in his long tenure of power." A confident King approvingly noted Churchill "has held to his guns" while conceding "something vastly different from what the press has been representing." Speaking to the Canada's House of Commons on 28 January, King averred existing imperial consultative machinery worked exceedingly well. Page had been invited to sit on War Cabinet meetings "only as a matter of courtesy," and the power to make decisions would remain with Britain's War Cabinet. If new developments rendered current arrangements inadequate, then Canada might present an accredited representative to the War Cabinet.<sup>63</sup>

Menzies' Imperial War Cabinet hopes were finally dashed, though Australia strived unsuccessfully throughout the war to get its voice heard at the highest levels of Allied decision-making. Australian demands for Pacific War Councils (PWC) in London and Washington after Japan's dramatic entry into the war were heeded. The PWC was designed to be a formal ministerial forum in which smaller countries could express views and recommendations, a promise it never made good on. Churchill ignored its London branch, while Roosevelt used his Council as a congenial sounding board rather than as a legitimate arena for strategic debates.<sup>64</sup> In London, Bruce had replaced Page as Australia's representative to the War Cabinet, but by September 1942 Bruce was complaining he was "given so little information and consulted so little"; by 1943, he was not even being invited to meetings when Australian affairs were on the



agenda. When Bruce continued to carp, Churchill pointedly asked why Australia should have a representative in the War Cabinet when the other Dominions had none?<sup>65</sup>

Norman Robertson's July 1941 counsel that power was shifting to Washington was prescient. After America came into the conflict on 7 December 1941, Churchill and his advisers ventured to Washington to coordinate the Allied war effort. The Anglo-American discussions created a strictly Anglo-American Combined Chiefs of Staff, a powerful planning mechanism that excluded the Dominions and the Soviet Union from its deliberations. Indeed, King heard about the Combined Chiefs' formation via a newspaper article.<sup>66</sup> One would think the Dominions, eager to gain representation on the myriad of vital agencies feeding data into the Combined Chiefs command hierarchy, would have cooperated with each other. It did not happen. As the western Allies' third largest producer of munitions, Canada keenly sought a seat on the Munitions Assignment Board (MAB). Desirous to keep such boards small and efficient, Washington opposed letting Canada in lest other countries demand the same. Unwilling to alienate the Americans, the British sided with them. Unhappy with this cozy arrangement, Minister of External Affairs Evatt thought he had struck a deal with King to jointly present their demands for MAB membership at a PWC meeting with Roosevelt on 15 April 1942. But when the meeting got underway, Evatt found himself abandoned. Unwilling to alienate Roosevelt even though he desired an MAB seat, King declined to back Evatt for fear he would be seen as protecting imperial interests. King's 28 April communication to Evatt, coming as it did, with a refusal to provide Canadian troops to defend Australia against Japanese attack, but with a Canadian pledge to help Australia get more munitions allocations once it joined the MAB predictably failed to assuage Evatt's feelings of betrayal. In October 1942 Evatt dressed down

E.B. Rogers in Canberra, blasting King's empty gestures to Australia and claiming that Canada "was tied to Mr. Churchill's apron strings."<sup>67</sup>

More difficulties lay ahead. When Churchill, desirous to present a united front to growing American and Soviet power, suggested an imperial conference for 1943, King stalled. Believing Churchill sought an "Empire display" to hide the fact there would be no invasion of France that year, King feared a trip to London would convince many Canadians he had "become more interested in Churchill and Imperial politics than our own."<sup>68</sup> King finally agreed to attend an imperial conference in May 1944, but arrived in London with a definite message to deliver. The previous January, Lord Halifax, Britain's Ambassador to the United States, had made a speech in Toronto calling for closer imperial cooperation in defence and foreign affairs in order to compete with America and the Soviet Union after the war's end. Incensed, King had ensured an aide-memoire sent to Britain in February regarding potential Canadian military activities in the war against Japan emphasized that participation need not occur alongside British forces. Instead, Canada would make its choice based on its place as a Pacific nation, a desire to defeat Japan, Commonwealth membership, and most notably a "close and common interest with the United States." In London, when Curtin suggested forming a permanent system of imperial consultative machinery to deal with Asia-Pacific security questions, King refused to sign on. After the British pressed the Dominions to commit ground forces against Japan, King declined as any commitment was impossible until Britain and Canada had finalized their Pacific plans. When the Canadian decision finally came later that fall, imperialists were disappointed again; Canadian soldiers would join American forces to invade Japan itself, not participate in operations to retake lost British possessions.<sup>69</sup>

Relations between senior members of the Australian and Canadian governments had become nearly unsalvageable. Stopping in Ottawa on his way back to Australia, Curtin irritated King by discussing Australia's plight in 1942 at length while saying little about Canada. Asked by an Australian reporter if he was satisfied with the results of the London parlay, Curtin looked directly at King before stating "the only man in that state of mind was the man who sat on the right hand of the almighty." Once back in Australia, the normally mild mannered Curtin snapped at visiting Canadian politicians who had asked if he wanted to see Canadian troops sent to Australia, barking "I don't care what Canada does." Then in San Francisco in 1945, as the Allies hammered out a charter for the fledgling United Nations, Evatt sought to block great power plans for exclusive vetoes on the Security Council. When Canada, also displeased with the veto, opted to practice quiet diplomacy behind the scenes rather than joining Evatt's loud frontal assault, Evatt labelled Canada's representative "an American stooge" and a "pawn in the move to defeat the Australian case." In response, the normally diplomatic Charles Ritchie lambasted Evatt as "insufferably megalomaniacal and irresponsible."<sup>70</sup> Matters would improve only once King retired in 1948 and Labor and Evatt lost power in 1949 to Menzies.

Clearly the failure of Canada and Australia to cooperate even after Menzies' eclipse demonstrates that clashing personalities alone cannot explain Menzies' failure to get King to back an IWC. Geography, isolation, and differing histories had made the two Dominions very distant allies. Canada's politically influential French Canadian minority had long made pro-imperial policies problematic for even Anglophile Conservative governments, and no Liberal regime had ever gained power in Canada without Quebec's strong support. Further, Canadian proximity to the mighty United States, a problem when Britain and America had suffered from poor relations prior to the twentieth century, was a godsend in 1940 when outside terrors loomed. As one

British observer had noted in 1935, "Canadians have always felt that theirs is about the safest country in the world," a sentiment shared by Skelton and the American military.<sup>71</sup>

Australia, so distant from Britain and America and uncomfortably close to an aggressively expanding Japanese empire, had no such luck. Thus as Canada had withdrawn into semi-isolation after 1918, Australians placed even greater emphasis on the British connection. The result, many Australian academics agree, was a "dependent" Australia which relied on British power and influence for its protection. For David Day, Coral Bell, W.J. Hudson, and M.P. Sharp, this was a mostly negative relationship as unquestioning reliance on the mother country induced apathy, perceptions of cultural inferiority, and a failure to devise independent Australian foreign and military policies. For Bernard Attard and P.G. Edwards, dependence was the natural product of historical and geographical rationales that not only made sense at the time, they also did not preclude Australian attempts to play real roles in the relationship with Britain.<sup>72</sup>

Menzies was an embodiment of such concerns. Much has been written about Menzies' imperialist tendencies, especially when, nearly alone among Commonwealth leaders, he supported Britain's politically disastrous role in the 1956 Suez Crisis. As late as April 1957, even after many Britons had turned against their own government for conspiring with France and Israel against Egypt, Menzies thought "we must stick with Britain...even if we do not always like everything they propose."<sup>73</sup> To comprehend that statement, one must understand that for Menzies and many others Australians: the Empire-Commonwealth had multiple meanings: symbolic, cultural, psychological, even moral; but also pragmatic and structural. Commonwealth preference and the sterling area were important elements in Australia's very livelihood, while imperial influence in Asia and the Pacific had long been a major buttress of Australia's sense of physical security.<sup>74</sup> Indeed, Gregory Pemberton argues Menzies' "Australian identity coincided with, but



was at the same time subsumed under, a 'British' identity." In 1956 that sense of Britishness led Menzies to support the ill-fated Suez intervention. But in 1941 it compelled him to disagree with Churchill and seek an IWC to control the British war effort because "the belief in the old empire was often held more firmly on the periphery than at the centre of the empire" among Dominion leaders who gained "a powerful place in the world" thanks only to membership in the Empire.<sup>75</sup>

King could understand such sentiments at some level despite his autonomist policies. He loved the pageantry of Britain's Royal Family and cherished Britain's long Liberal political tradition. Further, when Roosevelt had made overtures to Canada in the 1930s about harmonizing Canadian-American defence relations to safeguard continental security, King had made clear in 1937 while that sort of thinking "was all right up to a certain point," it "should never be permitted to run counter to the advantages" Canada gained from imperial ties. But on 10 September 1939, the day Canada had declared war on Germany, King's had envisioned the Empire functioning "with the complete independence of the parts united by co-operation in all common ends," a point of view alien to Menzies who had questioned King's wartime zeal in May 1941.<sup>76</sup> As his diary account of their May 1941 meeting indicates, King never understood Menzies' urgent desire to be in Britain or Australia's reluctance to follow a more independent path. During the 1926 imperial conference King had mediated a settlement to keep a Nationalist government from taking South Africa out of the Empire. The resulting deal, which had defined the Dominions as "autonomous Communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs"<sup>77</sup> and gave the Dominions equality of status with Britain, had been followed five years later by the Statute of Westminster which had removed British parliamentary supremacy from the Dominions. Canada had ratified the Statute almost immediately, but Australia had declined to do so until after the Second World War began.

Bernard Attard maintains Australians saw the 1926 Balfour Declaration as irrelevant sop to the radical Dominions, while Australia's Prime Minister in the early 1930s, J.H. Scullin, had dismissed the Statute as possessing "little importance."<sup>78</sup> But Australia's refusal to accept such constitutional evolution, when combined with Canada's absolute reluctance to act independently on the world stage in the 1930s, led Conservative British governments to act as if they spoke for the entire Empire, hence King's refusal to give Britain any automatic guarantees after 1935.

So by clumsily seeking to undo the sins of the peace, Menzies had opened himself and Australia to attack. Metaphors of childhood abound. Canada's High Commissioner to Australia T.C. Davis put matters colourfully in 1945. Admitting affection for Australians despite their being "the spoilt brat of the family," he prescribed "a few beatings and a bit of kicking around and then you couldn't beat them."<sup>79</sup> Moffat, America's Minister in Ottawa until his untimely death in 1943 and the American Consul in Sydney from 1935 until 1937, had explained Canadian-Australian differences just days before Menzies' arrival in Ottawa in May 1941. Governmentally, Australia was "still in the adolescent stage," whereas Canada was a "postgraduate who has just completed his doctor's thesis." Less complimentary, "if a process required seven steps the average Australian could never see more than two at most; the Canadian can see at least five, sometimes six and occasionally all seven." A year later, as Australia vainly had sought Canadian military assistance to ward off Japan, Moffat had maintained Canadians and Australians had never "clicked" in part to Australia's "undisguisedly" anti-Canadian trade policy. "The other Dominions mean relatively little to the Canadian"; if Australia was threatened now, "the unfortunate reaction of all too many Canadians to Australia's plight is that she should have thought of herself first and not denuded her own territory by sending so many of her soldiers abroad."<sup>80</sup>

Some Australians saw things very differently. In June 1941, after touring central Canada, A.S. Watt, First Secretary in Australia's Legation in Washington, indicted Canada as a nation riven by racial, geographical, economic, and political differences. Watt opined that a visitor to Canada did "not feel that he is meeting a self-confident distinctive people determined to take strong and positive action to sustain and develop their own distinctive nationhood." Years of unceasing political compromise, designed to avoid domestic upheaval, had weakened Canada's ability to create a "bold and positive" foreign policy. By contrast, Watt felt certain that Australians were a homogenous people, "more distinctive, assertive and self-confident than the people of Canada," far less inclined to let regional interests override federal concerns and powers. Upon reading this memorandum, R.G. Casey, Watts' boss, commented that Canada, thanks to American protection, had developed a "poor relation" complex; "I am more than ever satisfied that Australia benefits, in more ways than one, in having no land frontiers with other countries."<sup>81</sup> Many Canadians, as they ponder increasingly problematic American security policies since the attacks on 11 September 2001, might agree with Casey.

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## END NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Robert Menzies diary, 7 May 1941, in A.W. Martin and Patsy Hardy, ed., *Dark and Hurrying Days: Menzies' 1941 Diary*. Canberra: National Library of Australia, 1993, 123-124.

<sup>2</sup> Martin Gilbert, *Finest Hour: Winston S. Churchill 1939-1941*. London: Heinemann, 1983; C.P. Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments: The War Policies of Canada 1939-1945*. Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 1970, 146-148; Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict: Volume 2: 1921-1948. The Mackenzie King Era*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981, 317-318; J.L. Granatstein, *Canada's War: The Politics of the Mackenzie King Government 1939-1945*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1975; John F. Hilliker, *Canada's Department of External Affairs. Volume 1: The Early Years, 1909-1946*. Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990; John F. Hilliker, "Distant Ally: Canadian Relations with Australia During the Second World War," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 13 (October 1984), 49; and Galen Roger Perras, "She Should Have Thought of Herself First": Canada and Military Aid to Australia, 1939-1945," in Margaret Macmillan and Francine McKenzie, ed., *Parties Long Estranged: Canada and Australia in the Twentieth Century*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2003, 127.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Menzies, *Afternoon Delight: Some Memories of Men and Events*. New York: Coward-McCann, 1967; Martin and Hardy, *Dark and Hurrying Days*; Paul Hasluck, *The Government and the People 1939-1941*. Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1952; P.G. Edwards, *Prime Ministers & Diplomats: The Making of Australian Foreign Policy 1901-1949*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1983; D.M. Horner, *High Command: Australia & Allied Strategy 1939-1945*. Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1982, 435; David Day, *Menzies & Churchill at War*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1993; and A.W. Martin, *Robert Menzies. A Life: Volume 1 1894-1943*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1993, 354.

<sup>4</sup> E.M. Andrews, *Isolationism and Appeasement in Australia: Reactions to the European Crises, 1935-1939*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1970; and Chamberlain quoted in Day, *Menzies & Churchill at War*, 6.

<sup>5</sup> Day, *Menzies & Churchill at War*, 8-10; Menzies to Chamberlain, 1 September 1939, in R.G. Neale, ed., *Documents on Australian Foreign Policy 1937-49. Volume II: 1939*. Canberra: Government Publishing Service, 1976, 212; and see correspondence between Menzies, King, and Britain regarding peace aims in David R. Murray, ed., *Documents on Canadian External Relations 1939-1941 Part 1: Volume 7 [DCER 7]*. Ottawa: Department of External Affairs, 1974, 183-200. King's mediation plan is discussed in Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict*, 276-278. Menzies' war aims initiative is described in P.G. Edwards, "S.M. Bruce, R.G. Menzies and Australia's War Aims and Peace Aims, 1939-40," *Historical Studies*, vol. 17, April 1976, 1-14.

<sup>6</sup> The Australians had resisted exchanging High Commissioners with Canada they believed their interests overseas were best served by British diplomats. They also refused to reward what they saw as Canada's attempts to weaken the Empire's ability to speak as one unit on foreign affairs; see Galen Roger Perras, "Parties Long Estranged: The Initiation of Australian-Canadian Diplomatic Relations, 1935-1940," in Linda Cardinal and David Headon, ed., *Shaping Nations: Constitutionalism and Society in Australia and Canada*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2002, 135-165.

<sup>7</sup> Diary, 15 January 1940, W.L.M. King Papers, Library and Archives of Canada [LAC].

<sup>8</sup> L.R. Macgregor quoted in O.D. Skelton memorandum, 25 June 1938, vol. 2959, file B-80, Department of External Affairs Records, RG25, LAC; Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict Volume 2*, 294; King diary, 15 December 1939, LAC; Menzies to King, 22 May 1940, W.L.M. King Papers, Memoranda & Notes, vol. 400, LAC; no. 87,



King to Winston Churchill, 24 May 1940, Ibid.; no. 5, King to Menzies, 24 May 1940, Ibid.; and M29, Churchill to Menzies, 24 May 1940, PREM4/43B/1, Public Record Office [PRO]. See also P.G. Edwards, "R.G. Menzies's Appeal to the United States May-June, 1940," *Australian Outlook*, vol. 28, April 1974, 64-70.

<sup>9</sup> T.W. Glasgow to the Governor-General of Australia, 4 June 1940, Correspondence Files of the Australian High Commission Ottawa, Series A3095/2, Item 17/1, National Archives of Australia [NAA].

<sup>10</sup> On 20 August 1940 Minister of External Affairs John McEwen ordered R.G. Casey, Australia's Minister to America, to seek a security deal. But after Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles indicated the Canadian pact was "solely connected with Western Hemisphere defence," Casey said seeking a deal was inadvisable as the "American public was not yet advanced that far." When Welles' Assistant, Adolf Berle, noted in mid-September an arrangement might be possible if "arranged quickly and confidentially," Casey doubted anything could be accomplished before the November presidential election; no. 131, McEwen to Casey, 20 August 1940, Department of External Affairs Records, Correspondence Files of the Australian Legation in the United States, Series A3300/7, Item 38, NAA; no. 215, Casey to McEwen, 21 August 1940, Ibid.; and no. 14, Casey to McEwen, 17 September 1940, Ibid. King aide Leonard Brockington had approached America's Minister to Canada, J. Pierrepont Moffat, about expanding the Canada-US deal to include Britain, Australia, and New Zealand. But Secretary of State Cordell Hull killed the proposal as America was not yet ready for an alliance in the Pacific; Moffat memorandum of discussion with Brockington, 19 August 1940, Department of State Records, Matthews-Hickerson File, RG59, reel 5, National Archives and Records Administration [NARA]; John Hickerson to Welles and Hull, 23 October 1940, J. Pierrepont Moffat Papers, vol. 46, Houghton Library, Harvard University [HL]; Glasgow to McEwen, 23 September 1940, H.V. Evatt Papers, file External Relations Canada-Australian Legation Ottawa 1940, Flinders University Library Archives; and Lord Casey, *Personal Experience 1939-1946*. London: Constable & Co., 1962, 59.

<sup>11</sup> British Chiefs of Staff, "The Situation in the Far East in the Event of Japanese Intervention Against Us," 15 August 1940, COS (40) 592 (Revise), CAB80/15, PRO; Churchill to Menzies and Fraser, 11 August 1940, PREM4/43B/1, PRO; and Churchill to Anthony Eden, 24 September 1940, in Martin Gilbert, ed., *The Churchill War Papers. Volume II: Never Surrender May 1940-December 1940*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1995, 864-865.

<sup>12</sup> No. 579, Menzies to Lord Cranborne, 8 November 1940, in W.J. Hudson and H.J.W. Stokes, ed., *Documents on Australian Foreign Policy 1937-49. Volume IV: July 1940 - June 1941 [DAFP IV]*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1980, 263; minute 39, 25 November 1940, Advisory War Council Minutes, Series A2682, NAA; and Bruce memorandum, 19 December 1940, Lord Bruce Papers, Series M100, file December 1940, NAA. After hard negotiations, in March 1941 the Americans agreed, once in the war, to shift ships to the Atlantic and Mediterranean so the Royal Navy could reinforce Singapore. But the American Navy would not transfer any assets to Singapore. Churchill broke the deadlock, telling his military advisers "the first thing is to get the Americans into the war"; then "we can settle how to fight it afterwards": Churchill, "Prime Minister's Minute," 22 November 1940, Premier's Office Records, PREM3/61/6, PRO; Churchill to A.V. Alexander & Admiral Dudley Pound, 17 February 1941, in Martin Gilbert, ed., *The Churchill War Papers. Volume 3: The Ever-Widening War*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2000, 234-236; and ABC-1 report, "United States-British Staff Conversations," 27 March 1941, Cabinet Office Records, CAB122/1582, PRO.

<sup>13</sup> Menzies diary, 29 January 1941, 23-24.

<sup>14</sup> Menzies diary, 22 and 24 February 1941, 63 and 65-66, and 14 April 1941, 112. One can trace Churchill's fractious relationship with his military advisers in Alex Danchev, "Dilly-Dally, Or, Having the Last Word," *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 22 (1987), 21-44; and Alex Danchev and Daniel Todman, ed., *War Diaries 1939-1945: Field Marshall Lord Alanbrooke*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2001.

<sup>15</sup> No. 478, Bruce to Menzies, 19 September 1939, Series M100, file September 1939, NAA; D19, Anthony Eden to Menzies, 21 September 1939, Documents of the Cable Section of the Prime Minister's Department, Series CP290/6, Item 67, NAA; and Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs [SSDA], "Arrangements for the Visit of Dominion

Ministers," 18 October 1939, Cabinet Office Records, CAB67/1, PRO. Upon assuming power in December 1916, determined to reduce British army influence while improving battlefield prospects, Lloyd George proposed forming an Imperial War Cabinet which would include Dominion Prime Ministers, some of the most ardent critics of British generalship. Further, by bringing Dominion leaders into the decision-making process, a wily Lloyd George hoped they would provide more Dominion troops; see C. P. Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict. Volume 1: 1867-1921*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984, 203-217.

<sup>16</sup> D145, Chamberlain to Menzies and King, RG25, vol. 825, file 716, LAC; no. 197, Menzies to Chamberlain, 2 May 1940, PREM4/43A/11, PRO; and no. 192, British High Commissioner in South Africa to SSDA, 26 April 1940, *Ibid*. Smuts had overcome Nationalist opposition to entering the war by eighty votes to sixty-five in the Union Parliament; Keith Jeffrey, "The Second World War," in Judith M. Brown and WM. Roger Louis, ed., *The Oxford History of the British Empire. Volume IV: The Twentieth Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, 309.

<sup>17</sup> King diary, 2 May 1940, LAC.

<sup>18</sup> Skelton quoted in Ramsay Cook, "J.W. Dafoe at the Imperial Conference, 1923," *Canadian Historical Review*, 41 (March 1960), 36-37; "The Negotiation, Signature and Ratification of Treaties: Resolution of the Imperial Conference of 1923," in H. Duncan Hall, *Commonwealth: A History of British Commonwealth of Nations*. London: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1971, 983-988; and "Minutes and Final Report of the 1923 Imperial Conference," Imperial Conference Records, CAB32/9, PRO.

<sup>19</sup> Casey to S.M. Bruce, 26 April 1928, in W.J. Hudson and Jane North, ed., *My Dear P.M.: R.G. Casey's Letters to S.M. Bruce, 1924-1929*. Canberra: Australian Government Publication Service, 1980, 337; Correlli Barnett, *The Collapse of British Power*. London: Pan, 2002, 181; and W.L. Morton, "Review of William Lyon Mackenzie King. II. The Lonely Heights, 1924-1932," *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 45 (December 1964), 320-321.

<sup>20</sup> Casey to Bruce, 12 January 1928, in Hudson and North, *My Dear P.M.*, 241-242. An enraged Australian Prime Minister William Hughes had labelled Meighen the "voice of America." As renewal could severely injure Canadian-American relations given American opposition to renewal, Meighen had averred Canada should have veto power; Hughes quoted in Peter Spertalis, *The Diplomatic Battles of Billy Hughes*. Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1983, 218-229; and Loring Christie, "The Anglo-Japanese Alliance: Recapitulation of Points," 1 June 1921, reprinted in *External Affairs*, vol. 18 (September 1966), 402-413.

<sup>21</sup> King diary, 2 November 1935, LAC.

<sup>22</sup> Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict*, 205-211 and 236-237; and King diary, 13 September 1938, LAC.

<sup>23</sup> King's hopes for a limited liability war are discussed in Granatstein, *Canada's War*, Chapter One. On 29 August the Canadian Chiefs of Staff had proposed sending two divisions to Britain, as Skelton had tried to convince King to concentrate only on hemispheric defence; see Chiefs of Staff, "Canada's National Effort (Armed Forces) in the Early Stages of a Major War," 29 August 1939, Privy Council Office Records, Defence Council and Emergency Council, RG2 7c, vol. 1; and Skelton, "Canadian War Policy," 24 August 1939, King Papers, Memoranda & Notes, vol. 228, LAC.

<sup>24</sup> King diary, 2 May 1940, LAC; and no. 68, King to Chamberlain, 10 May 1940, PREM4/43A/11, PRO.

<sup>25</sup> No. 104, Casey to Menzies, 30 May 1940, in H. Kenway, H.J.W. Stokes, and P.G. Edwards, ed., *Documents on Australian Foreign Policy 1937-49. Volume III: January-June 1940*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1979, 361; no. 607, L.B. Pearson to King, 22 October 1940, RG25, vol. 2753, file 572-40, LAC; Day, *Menzies & Churchill at War*, 33; and no. 377, British High Commissioner in Australia to SSDA, 23 October 1940, PREM4/43A/13, PRO.

- <sup>26</sup> Skelton, "Empire War Cabinet," 20 November 1940, *DCER* 7, 437-438; D553, SSDA to Menzies, 1 November 1940, *DAFP IV*, 255-256; King diary, 3 November 1940, LAC; and no. 490, King to Vincent Massey, 6 December 1940, *DCER* 7, 438.
- <sup>27</sup> Menzies diary, 6 March 1941, 82; Elibank and Cranborne cited in A201, Massey to King, 9 April 1941, RG25, vol. 2753, file 572-40, LAC.
- <sup>28</sup> Gilbert, *Finest Hour*, 280-287 and 332; Lloyd George quoted in Henry Channon diary, 23 July 1940, Robert James Rhode, ed., *Chips. The Diaries of Sir Henry Channon*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1967, 262.
- <sup>29</sup> Menzies diary, 26 April 1941, 118-119; and diary, 1 and 2 May 1941, Maurice Hankey Papers, Churchill Archives Centre. P.G. Edwards avers Hankey and Leo Amery almost alone among Britain's elite had seemed committed to congenial imperial policy-making rather than dismissing Dominion leaders with token concessions; Edwards, *Prime Ministers & Diplomats*, 46.
- <sup>30</sup> Day, *Menzies & Churchill at War*, 144-150; and Churchill Oral Answer in Hansard, excerpted in Gilbert, *The Churchill War Papers*, 571.
- <sup>31</sup> Day, *Menzies & Churchill at War*, 169; John Charmley, *Churchill: The End of Glory. A Political Biography*. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1993, 447; and Margaret MacMillan, "Sibling Rivalry: Australia and Canada from the Boer War to the Great War," in Margaret MacMillan and Francine McKenzie, ed., *Parties Long Estranged: Canada and Australia in the Twentieth Century*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003, 19-20.
- <sup>32</sup> Menzies diary, 7 and 8 May 1941, 123-125. Menzies' speech to Canada's Parliament on 7 May is found in *House of Commons Debates. 1941. Volume III*, 2629-2632.
- <sup>33</sup> King's diary makes no mention of meeting Menzies in 1935. However, when asked by then Prime Minister R.B. Bennett to lunch with visiting Australian Prime Minister Joseph Lyons in July 1935, King declined, not wishing to accept any invitation from Bennett during an election campaign. However, King also admitted caring "too very little about the guest"; King diary, 9 July 1935, LAC. In August 1935 Menzies regretfully found Canadians "to be excessively Americanized," while his biographer notes Menzies, after happy weeks in Britain, disliked Canada's "colder reality"; Martin, *Robert Menzies*, 165.
- <sup>34</sup> King diary, 7 May 1941, LAC.
- <sup>35</sup> King diary, 4 and 19 October 1922, 15 September 1939, and 11 May 1940, LAC.
- <sup>36</sup> J.L. Granatstein, "King and His Cabinet: The War Years," in John English and J.O. Stubbs, ed., *Mackenzie King: Widening the Debate*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1977, 173-190; and King diary, 27 January 1941, LAC. The Minister was C.D. Howe, Canada's "super-minister" of Munitions and Supply.
- <sup>37</sup> King diary, 7 May 1941, LAC. No minutes of the 7 May CWC meeting appear to exist. American diplomat W. Averell Harriman claims Menzies "was of the few men who talked up to [Churchill] and had a salutary effect in several situations. Actually the Prime Minister was influenced by Menzies' advice even though he would not admit it"; Harriman to Roosevelt, 7 May 1941, Franklin Roosevelt Papers, President's Secretary's Files [PSF], box 37, file Great Britain: Harriman, W. Averell 1941-42, Franklin Roosevelt Presidential Library [FRPL].
- <sup>38</sup> King diary, 7 May 1941, LAC.
- <sup>39</sup> Day, *Menzies & Churchill at War*, 178; and King diary, 7 May 1941, LAC.



- <sup>40</sup> No. 1453, Moffat, "Periodical report on general conditions in Canada," 9 May 1941, RG59, Decimal File 1940-44, file 842.00PR/209, NARA. The best account of Quebec's influence on King's foreign policy is John MacFarlane, *Ernest Lapointe and Quebec's Influence on Canadian Foreign Policy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.
- <sup>41</sup> King to Churchill, 10 May 1941, PREM4/43A/12, PRO; Cranborne to Churchill, 12 May 1941, *Ibid.*; and Churchill to King, 12 May 1941, *Ibid.*
- <sup>42</sup> King diary, 12 May 1941, LAC; and Macdonald memorandum, 14 May 1941, PREM4/43A/12, PRO.
- <sup>43</sup> Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments*, 147.
- <sup>44</sup> King to Churchill via Massey, 26 May 1941, DCER 7, 417-418; M600/1, Churchill to Cranborne, 30 May 1941, PREM4/43A/12, PRO; Cranborne to Churchill, 30 May 1941, *Ibid.*; Cranborne to Churchill, 3 and 6 June 1941, *Ibid.*; and War Cabinet Conclusions, 9 June 1941, WM (41) 58<sup>th</sup> conclusions, CAB65, PRO.
- <sup>45</sup> No. 99, Churchill to King, 11 June 1941, RG25, vol 801, file 549, LAC; no. 903, King to Massey, 14 June 1941, Dominions Office Records, DO35/999, PRO; Massey to Churchill, 16 June 1941, PREM4/43A/12, PRO; Churchill quoted in unsigned memorandum to J.J.S. Garner, Dominions Office, 18 June 1941, *Ibid.*; and no. 429, Churchill to Menzies, 21 June 1941, *Ibid.*
- <sup>46</sup> Diary, 21 June 1941, in John Colville, *The Fringes of Power: Downing Street Diaries 1939-1955*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1985, 404. Colville claimed Churchill found Menzies "agreeable," and asserted the Australian's "presence at the war's centre was greatly missed" after May 1941; John Colville, *Winston Churchill and His Inner Circle*. New York: Wyndham Books, 1981, 175.
- <sup>47</sup> Responding to Borden's 1918 claim that the IWC was a "cabinet of governments," in September 1919 Lapointe had attacked that phrase as "grandiloquent words and nothing else." There could be no cabinet of governments unless there was a Parliament to which that cabinet was directly responsible, and Lapointe was certain Canadians opposed all centralization schemes framed by "any body of men in which Canada would have only one representative out of twelve"; Lapointe quoted in Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict. Volume 1*, 290.
- <sup>48</sup> King diary, 24 June 1941, LAC; CWC minutes, 24 June 1941, RG2 7c, vol. 4, LAC; "Canada and War Conference," *The Times of London*, 30 June 1941; and Ian Mackenzie memorandum, 4 July 1941, Ian Mackenzie Papers, vol. 46, file CNS20, LAC.
- <sup>49</sup> AWC minute 346, 28 May 1941, Series A2682, NAA; Day, *Menzies & Churchill at War*, 203-203; Menzies to King, 3 July 1941, RG25, vol.5757, file 66(s), LAC; and Menzies to Smuts, 3 July 1941, Prime Minister's Department Records, Series A3196, Item 1941 0.9131-2, NAA.
- <sup>50</sup> Moffat to Sumner Welles, 31 May 1941, Roosevelt PSF Papers, box 25, file Canada 1941, FRPL.
- <sup>51</sup> King diary, 14 July 1941, LAC; Lester B. Pearson, *Mike: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson. Volume 1*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972, 170-171; Pearson, "Notes on Attached Questions," 18 July 1941, Lester Pearson Papers, vol. 23, file Commonwealth Relations 1933-48, LAC; and Robertson to King, 27 July 1941, RG25, vol. 5757, file 66(s), LAC.
- <sup>52</sup> No. 40, Smuts to Menzies, 10 July 1941, Prime Minister's Department Records, Series A3195, Item 1941 I. I2021, NAA; and no. 2, King to Menzies, 2 August 1941, *Ibid.*, Item 1941: I.I4055, NAA.
- <sup>53</sup> Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict*, 318; King diary, 7 August 1941, LAC; Lambert quoted in Grant Dexter memorandum, 16 September 1941, Grant Dexter Papers, box 2, file 20, Queen's University Archives; "Record of



meeting of Chiefs of Staff with the Under-Secretary of State of External Affairs," 11 August 1941, file 193.009 (D3), Directorate of History & Heritage, Department of National Defence; CWC minutes, 13 August 1941, Privy Council Records, Cabinet War Committee, RG2 7c, LAC; and King diary, 12 August 1941, LAC.

<sup>54</sup> No. 1228, Macdonald to Cranborne, 13 August 1941, DO35/999, PRO; and no. 1223, Macdonald to Cranborne, 13 August 1941, Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Tudor 36, Churchill to Clement Attlee, 14 August 1941, PREM4/43A/12, PRO; Abbey 46, Attlee to Churchill, 14 August 1941, Ibid.; War Cabinet 82<sup>nd</sup> conclusions, 14 August 1941, WM (41), CAB65, PRO; and 84<sup>th</sup> conclusions, 19 August 1941, Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Menzies to Bruce, 13 August 1941, Series M100, file August 1941, NAA; AWC minute 467, 14 August 1941, Series A2682, vol. 3, NAA; Day, *Menzies & Churchill at War*, 222-224; and no. 410, Acting Canadian High Commissioner to Australia E.B. Rogers to Robertson, 28 August 1941, King Papers, Memoranda & Notes, vol. 234, LAC.

<sup>57</sup> Day, *Menzies & Churchill at War*, 224-228; and Rogers to Robertson, 29 August 1941, King Papers, Memoranda & Notes, vol. 234, LAC.

<sup>58</sup> King diary, 21, 22, 23, 26, and 27 August 1941, LAC.

<sup>59</sup> King diary, 28 August 1941, LAC; War Cabinet 87<sup>th</sup> conclusions, 28 August 1941, WM(41), CAB65, PRO; and no. 607, Churchill to Fadden, 29 August 1941, Correspondence Files of the Prime Minister's Department, Series A1608, Item H33/1/2, NAA.

<sup>60</sup> King diary, 30 August 1941, LAC; Cranborne quoted in Day, *Menzies & Churchill at War*, 229-230; and King diary, 5 September 1941, LAC.

<sup>61</sup> CWC minutes, 10 September 1941, RG2 7C, LAC; and King diary, 21 October 1941, LAC. As late as May 1948, as King pondered retirement, he recalled Page's unpacked bag claim as well as his May 1941 warning to Menzies that he was risking his position in Australia by concentrating too much on Britain's situation; King diary, 28 May 1948, LAC.

<sup>62</sup> War Cabinet 88<sup>th</sup> conclusions, 1 September 1941, WM (41), CAB65, PRO; no. 585, Fadden to Churchill, 5 September 1941, Series A1608, Item H33/1/2, NAA; War Cabinet 104<sup>th</sup> conclusions, 20 October 1941, WM(41), CAB65, PRO; NAA; no. 22, Cranborne to King, 27 January 1942, RG25, vol. 5757, file 66(s), LAC; Day, *Menzies & Churchill at War*, 240; "Dominions and War Policy," 24 January 1942, *The Times of London*; War Cabinet 11<sup>th</sup> conclusions, 26 January 1942, WM(42), CAB65, PRO; and Churchill statement, excerpted in no. 253, Massey to King, 27 January 1942, RG25, vol. 2753, file 572-40, LAC.

<sup>63</sup> "Australia Asks a War," *Toronto Globe and Mail*, 27 January 1942; "Bennett Advocates Empire War Cabinet," 28 January 1942; no. M40/41, Glasgow to Frederick Stewart, 11 September 1941, Frederick Shedden Papers, Series A5954/69, Item 435/9, NAA; King diary, 28 January 1942, LAC; and King statement of 28 January 1942, carried in no. 175, King to Massey, 29 January 1942, RG25, vol. 5757, file 66(s), LAC.

<sup>64</sup> Stanley W. Dziuban, *Military Relations Between Canada and the United States 1939-1945* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 1959), 67-68. Roosevelt used the PWC to disseminate information about Pacific operations and "to give me a chance to keep everybody happy by telling stories and doing most of the talking"; Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, 355. Though he told Cordell Hull in 1943 the PWC "really was of no particular benefit," as Minister of External Affairs in Curtin's government, Evatt unsuccessfully tried to revive it in 1944-45 so it could play a role in "all Pacific war

matters including Armistice and post-hostility matters"; Norman Harper, *A Great and Powerful Friend: A Study of Australian American Relations Between 1900 and 1975*. St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1987, 110; and Evatt to Frederic Eggleston, 19 December 1944, in 'Pacific War Council,' 1946, AWM68 Records, Series 3 DRL8052/184, Item 419/45/13, Australian War Memorial.

<sup>65</sup> Christopher Thorne, *Allies of a Kind: The United States, Britain, and the War Against Japan, 1941-1945*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978, 258.

<sup>66</sup> Stacey, *Canada and the Age of Conflict Volume 2*, 327.

<sup>67</sup> Perras, "She should have thought of herself first," 134-135. Canada could sit in on MAB meetings when Canadian issues specifically were on the agenda, and gained full membership on some lesser Combined Chiefs' advisory bodies; see Galen Roger Perras, *Franklin Roosevelt and the Origins of the Canadian-American Security Alliance, 1993-1945: Necessary But Not Necessary Enough*. Westport: Praeger, 1998, 104-109.

<sup>68</sup> King diary, 4 April and 21 August 1943, LAC.

<sup>69</sup> Halifax speech to the Toronto Board Trade, 24 January 1944, Correspondence Files of the Department of External Affairs, Series A989/1 item 43/125/4/4, NAA; King diary, 25-27 January 1944, LAC; Maurice Pope aide memoire, 19 February 1944, RG2, vol. 32, file D-19-1 (Asia), LAC; "Improvements in the Machinery for Empire Cooperation Desired by the Australian Government," 15 May 1944, Series A5954/1, Item 289/10, NAA; Dominions Prime Ministers 14<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes, 15 May 1944, PMM (44), Ibid.; King diary, 15 May 1944, LAC; and Galen Roger Perras, "Once Bitten, Twice Shy: The Origins of the Canadian Army Pacific Force," in Greg Donaghy, ed., *Uncertain Horizons: Canadians and Their World in 1945*. Ottawa: Canadian Committee for the History of the Second World War, 1997, 77-99.

<sup>70</sup> King diary, 31 May and 1 June 1944, LAC; "Time for Offensive, Mr. Curtin Says," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 June 1944; Paul Malone to Robertson, 12 July 1944, RG25, vol. 5699, file 4-G(s); and Evatt and Ritchie quoted in Perras, "She should have thought of herself first," 143-144.

<sup>71</sup> I.P. Garraon minute, 27 August 1935, Foreign Office Records, FO371/19128, PRO. Skelton argued while Canada could not "escape being affected by developments elsewhere," it should not seek American or British military aid as the Dominion was "still the most secure, the least exposed of all countries." American army intelligence agreed; Skelton memorandum, February 1937, O.D. Skelton Papers, vol. 27, file 9, LAC; and Military Intelligence Division, "Canada: Political Estimate," 1 June 1937, RG59, Decimal File 1930-39, file 842.00/504, NARA.

<sup>72</sup> David Day, *The Great Betrayal: Britain, Australia & the Onset of the Pacific War 1939-1942*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989; Coral Bell, *Dependent Ally: A Study in Australian Foreign Policy*. Melbourne: Allen & Unwin, 1988; W.J. Hudson and M.P. Sharp, *Australian Independence: Colony to Reluctant Kingdom*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1988, 126; Bernard Attard, *Australia as a Dependent Dominion, 1901-1939*. London: Sir Robert Menzies Centre for Australian Studies, University of London, 1999; and Edwards, *Prime Ministers & Diplomats*, 3.

<sup>73</sup> W.J. Hudson, *Blind Loyalty: Australia and the Suez Crisis, 1956*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1989, 114-115.

<sup>74</sup> David Goldsworthy, "Menzies, Britain and the Commonwealth: The Old Order Changeth," in Frank Cain, ed., *Menzies in War and Peace*. St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1997, 99-115.

<sup>75</sup> Gregory Pemberton, "An Imperial Imagination: Explaining the Post-1945 Foreign Policy of Robert Gordon Menzies," in Frank Cain, ed., *Menzies in War and Peace*. St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1997, 157.

<sup>76</sup> King diary, 10 May 1937 and 10 September 1939, LAC.

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<sup>77</sup> "Status of Great Britain and the Dominions [The Balfour Declaration] 1926," in Hall, 978-979.

<sup>78</sup> Attard, *Australia as a Dependent Dominion*, 15; and Scullin quoted in Day, *Great Betrayal*, 3.

<sup>79</sup> No. 107, Davis to Robertson, 29 December 1945, James Garfield Gardiner Papers, reel 4210, 41887-90, Saskatchewan Provincial Archives.

<sup>80</sup> Moffat to John R. Minter, 2 May 1941, Moffat Papers, HL; and Moffat to Atherton, 2 February 1942, Foreign Service Posts Records, Canada-Ottawa 1936-1939, RG84, Series 2195A, file 800, NARA.

<sup>81</sup> A.S. Watt to Casey, 10 June 1941, Series A5954/69, Item 435/9, NAA; and Casey to Stewart, 11 June 1941, *Ibid.*