

“Dirty Work at the Crossroads”: New Perspectives on the Riddell Incident

Robert Bothwell and John English

Volume 7, Number 1, 1972

Montréal 1972

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/030752ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/030752ar>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

The Canadian Historical Association/La Société historique du Canada

ISSN

0068-8878 (print)

1712-9109 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this article

Bothwell, R. & English, J. (1972). “Dirty Work at the Crossroads”: New Perspectives on the Riddell Incident. *Historical Papers / Communications historiques*, 7(1), 263–285. <https://doi.org/10.7202/030752ar>

“DIRTY WORK AT THE CROSSROADS”: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON THE RIDDELL INCIDENT

ROBERT BOTHWELL

University of Toronto

and

JOHN ENGLISH

University of Waterloo

On November 2, 1935, W. A. Riddell, the Canadian representative at the League of Nations, proposed the addition of oil, coal, iron, and steel to the list of sanctions to be imposed against Italy. Soon, this proposal became known as the “Canadian proposal” and gave new hopes to the supporters of collective security. One month later, the Canadian Government publicly repudiated Riddell’s action. These facts have never been disputed: much remains to be explained.¹

The “Riddell Incident” provides a particularly fruitful illustration of the attitudes and pressures to which Canadian diplomats and diplomacy were subjected. Never were the different views of Canadians on foreign policy so apparent, nor the frustration and uncertainty of Canada’s politicians and diplomats so magnified, as in the final three months of 1935. Riddell’s initiative at the League astonished his fellow delegates, and directed international attention towards a nation well-known for its traditional hostility to collective security through sanctions. The British Foreign Office, only two months before Riddell’s fateful move, foresaw little Canadian assistance in any attempt to enforce League sanctions against Italy: “Canadians have always felt that theirs is about the safest country in the world, and consequently there is very strong aversion to becoming involved in war” In the context of the Italian-Ethiopian crisis, a Foreign Office official argued, “Canada can be expected to be the least active of all the Dominions” in support of British policy at Geneva.²

This view was largely justified. For the most part, Canada in the thirties was not interested in foreign policy. In the House of Commons and the party caucus, the average M.P. quickly passed over foreign affairs to subjects which he considered more fundamental. The Canadian Institute of International Affairs (C.I.I.A.) struggled vainly to awaken popular interest, but it failed to prevent even its own members from differing wildly over the basic principles of foreign policy. Older members, such as Sir

Robert Borden, N. W. Rowell, Sir Robert Falconer, and J. W. Daffoe, supported collective security: the maintenance of international peace was only the sum of all nations' individual and collective responsibility.³ Younger members including the C.I.I.A.'s own secretary, Escott Reid, disagreed: collective security merely upheld an unjust international status quo.⁴

The divisions within the C.I.I.A. were mirrored in the Department of External Affairs.⁵ Mackenzie King in the 1920's had kept Canadian diplomats on a tight leash. Under R. B. Bennett in the 1930's, they were subject to the erratic impulses of an unconcerned autocrat. O. D. Skelton, the departmental Under-Secretary since 1925, was an inveterate critic of the League and profoundly suspicious of what he perceived to be British machinations to entrap Canada in imperialist webs. Skelton especially feared Article XVI of the League Covenant which provided for automatic sanctions against any Covenant breaker. Indeed, in April 1935, Skelton had only reluctantly permitted Riddell to participate on the "Committee of Thirteen" which was to consider means of implementing Article XVI. Riddell took his seat on the condition that his Government would not be bound to any interpretation of Article XVI which suggested that violation of the Covenant entailed "the application of sanctions" by League members.⁶ This Canadian hostility to the Article had a long history, with which Skelton completely agreed.⁷

The outlook of the Department's Counsellor, Loring Christie, accorded with Skelton's. Christie, who had returned to the Department in 1935, possessed a nationalist isolationist's distrust for European entanglements, and a precise lawyer's contempt for the Canadian supporters of the League, whom he unkindly termed "hysterical."⁸ To Christie, even the ineffective C.I.I.A. was a "General Staff" preparing for the next war.⁹ Although Christie preferred isolation, he did admit that Canada would once again follow the British lead into the now inevitable European war:

So far as Canada's action is concerned, if Great Britain gets into the fight, it hardly matters a damn what policy London pursues in the meantime On this score about all a Canadian can do is await the shaping of the event and hope wits will be bright and cool enough to prevent disunity here on top of catastrophe elsewhere.¹⁰

But the Department, like the nation, was not of one mind. Younger members of the Department such as Norman Robertson and Lester Pearson did not share Christie's gloomy isolationism at this point. In Ottawa, their opinions obviously carried less weight than those of Skelton and Christie. In London and Geneva, however, they found more sympathy for their views and some opportunity for independent action. In 1935, the Canadian High Commissioner to Britain and Canada's principal delegate

to the League in most cases was Howard Ferguson, a former Tory Premier of Ontario, whom his British hosts accurately considered to be "uninformed" for his work. Ferguson considered foreign affairs to be an extension of eternal verities. He prized the virtues of integrity and "steadiness," which he found were lacking in non-British stock. According to one observer, "it used to give [Ferguson] an awful pain at Geneva to hear some little fellow, representing some little nation, and speaking some language other than English get up and talk for an hour or so, and to know that the little fellow had the same right as he did to cast a vote."¹¹

For the critical year of 1935, the Department dispatched Lester Pearson to guide "Fergie" safely through the labyrinths of Geneva and London.¹² In Geneva, Ferguson also received assistance from the "Canadian Advisory Officer", W. A. Riddell. Riddell had no diplomatic status, but manifold diplomatic functions.¹³ Since his appointment in 1924, Riddell had unobtrusively conducted Canadian League business under the baleful eye of a jealous government and Parliament that occasionally twitched in its sleep. In 1928, Senator W.A. Griesbach had attacked Riddell for making unauthorized policy statements in Geneva. Senator Dandurand, Canada's perennial League delegate, rose to defend the envoy. Riddell, he claimed, was well instructed, and he faithfully followed the government's policy. In the light of later events, Dandurand's comments are ironic:

... if [the delegate] has any doubt as to the opinion of his Minister, it is his concern and duty to cable his Minister for instructions; so that if my honourable friend passed only a few months on the shores of Geneva Lake, he would find that we have a very prudent representative in the person of Dr. Riddell.¹⁴

Riddell's prudence was to be severely tested in 1935. Italy, a League member, wished to annex Ethiopia, another League member, to its colonial empire in violation of the League Covenant. Unfortunately, Mussolini's timetable for conquest clashed with the Canadian General Election of October 1935.¹⁵ Foreign policy therefore entered the Canadian campaign, although the depression inevitably shunted Ethiopia to an obscure corner of the electorate's mind. Opposition leader King met the crisis obliquely by criticizing the "inadequacy of the personnel of the Canadian delegation to the League," which he claimed was "unfitted" to understand international problems. Prophetically, King remarked that this delegation would represent Canada "at a meeting which would have to settle issues of peace and war and might decide upon the application of sanctions involving Canada in war."¹⁶

King's well-worn formula, "let Parliament decide," trotted forth to meet the new crisis. In Quebec City, on September 9, King promised that

Canada would not go to war without a national plebiscite. On the same occasion, Ernest Lapointe assured French-Canadians that there would be no war: Canadian national interests were not involved in Ethiopia.¹⁷ Bennett, sensing that the Liberals had struck a popular chord, joined the chorus which promised that Canada would not become entangled in Africa.¹⁸

Although Bennett was aware in May that a war was almost inevitable in Ethiopia, this September statement was his first on the subject publicly. During the summer, the information flowing from London from the regular meetings of the High Commissioners with the Foreign and Dominion Secretaries had become increasingly pessimistic. With the fall session of the League Assembly approaching Bennett knew that Canada would have to work out some position on the question. The Department of External Affairs accordingly gave consideration to a major confrontation between Italy and Ethiopia at the September session of the League Assembly. On August 9, London learned from a British official in Ottawa that: "Should the question of the dispute between Italy and Ethiopia arise, Canada's attitude would be, with a view to preventing war, to support sanctions." This indication that the usually reluctant Canadians might support "sanctions" was enthusiastically received in the Foreign Office. J. R. Garran, who wrote the minute on this despatch, found the Canadian position "very satisfactory" but hoped "that the Canadian Government officials [were] not talking openly about imposing sanctions under the Covenant"¹⁹ Such fears were unwarranted, as the British were soon to learn.

At a meeting at the Foreign Office on August 21, the British Government relayed its analysis that a war was probable in September or October, and asked what it should do. In the discussion which followed, Stanley Bruce, the Australian High Commissioner, outlined the threat to the League which Italian aggression posed. Inaction would bring a collapse. Yet sanctions were "impracticable and very dangerous." The new Foreign Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, disagreed: no one could say the League was not strong enough until its resources were tested. Canada's delegate at the meeting, Col. Georges Vanier, remained silent.²⁰

Vanier immediately sent a detailed summary to Ottawa where, contrary to the information the British had earlier received, the Canadian position on Ethiopia was still under consideration. Skelton at this time wanted to defer a definite statement "until telegraphic reports of developments at Council or Assembly were received," but the Italians were moving too quickly.²¹ At a Cabinet meeting on August 22, the crisis was studied. When Bennett and Skelton later discussed this meeting, Bennett reportedly said that he was "inclined to favour personally a policy of sanctions under the Covenant."²² Recognizing that there were strong forces

opposed to any policy which "might entail the risk of Canada becoming involved in war," Bennett was nevertheless prepared to support economic sanctions. Skelton had evidently not convinced the Prime Minister of the virtues of an abstentionist policy at this time. To reinforce his case, the Under-Secretary prepared a memorandum with a loaded set of the "pros and cons" of Canadian participation for a Cabinet meeting on August 26. He argued that interdiction of Italy's economic relations with the world was "war or next door to war." In this kind of situation, "passions rise, incidents multiply out of embargoes and blockades of this stringent character, and recourse to arms is difficult to avoid."²³

The instructions finally sent to Geneva early in September reflected more Skelton than Bennett: Skelton apparently had persuaded his superior. Canada, it was claimed, had always opposed sanctions because of the less than universal character of the League. Canadian public opinion, however, wished to preserve "the League from loss of authority consequent to failure to carry out the undertakings of the Covenant." The instructions were summarized in two sentences which made it clear that the delegation had actually received no instructions at all:

The Canadian delegation to the League Assembly have received general instructions which will be supplemented when, after deliberations of the Council, the issue takes more definite shape. While negotiations are continuing we have refrained from any definite statement.²⁴

Canada was not alone in its hesitation to offer full support of sanctions. This became apparent at a meeting of the Dominion and British delegations at Geneva on September 9. Charles Te Water, the South African delegate, suggested that Ethiopia should be made an "A" mandate under an unnamed sovereign. Not to be outdone, Bruce of Australia recommended a "C" mandate (tantamount to colonial status). Bruce hoped that "unanimity on the question of imposing sanctions would not be reached for, if there were unanimity, Signor Mussolini might well lose his head and declare war on somebody." According to a Dominions Office official, "both Mr. Eden and Sir Samuel Hoare were taken somewhat aback by these suggestions which were clearly difficult of accomplishment in that they presupposed acceptance by Abyssinia and willingness on the part of the League to take a course which there is little doubt almost every member would have regarded as morally wrong."²⁵

Despite this Riddell later wrote of an atmosphere of "expectancy" at the League in early September.²⁶ This mood was suddenly created by a notably vigorous speech by Hoare to the League on September 11. To virtually all the delegates, including the Canadians, it appeared that Hoare had harnessed British might to the League. Few delegates, how-

ever, took time to scrutinize the carefully balanced statements in the speech. While Hoare affirmed that Britain would stand by the League, he repeatedly emphasized that she would not do it alone. As Sir Robert Vansittart, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, later pointed out, virtually everyone missed the key sentence: "If the risks for peace are to be run, they must be run by all."²⁷ The exceptional strength of the speech can perhaps be explained by the fact that Prime Minister Baldwin, no supporter of sanctions, had approved it for "electioneering purposes."²⁸ Still, even *The Times* considered Hoare's speech "unambiguous."²⁹ It is therefore not surprising that other delegates, sensing the new direction, vigorously supported Hoare's policy. The Canadian delegation was most impressed by Hoare's commitment, which Ferguson supported in a brief speech to the Assembly on September 14.³⁰

The British soon learned that the speech had no similar impact in Ottawa. When, in September 1935, the Admiralty asked for the help of the Canadian Navy in "certain precautionary measures looking to the control of merchant marine movement," the request was referred to the Acting Prime Minister, Sir George Perley (Bennett was campaigning.). In a chilly reply to the British request, Ottawa pointed out that "any decision as to necessity of or method of executing any specific measure would be for the Canadian Government to make."³¹ But Ottawa's hostile response and the numerous reservations expressed on the hustings by Canadian politicians were not reflected in the attitude of the Canadians at Geneva.³² Obviously fired by Hoare's speech and Eden's leadership, Ferguson became a "hard-liner." When Eden announced that pressure on Mussolini would not be relaxed, Ferguson went farther and questioned "the object of the British Ambassador's explanation to Mussolini that the fleet in the Mediterranean had no aggressive intention."³³ In marked contrast to the British tactic in August, Eden appears to have assumed, rather than courted, the support of the Dominion delegations in late September. The Dominion delegates said nothing that would belie Eden's interpretation. When Eden explained to Ferguson and Bruce that "if Italy went to war in defiance of the judgment given under Article 15, and if that judgment was accepted by Abyssinia, then the application of Article 16 became automatic," neither delegate dissented, as Ottawa would most certainly have done.³⁴ Ferguson's consent by silence implied that Canada believed sanctions were automatic once an aggressor was identified as such by the League. This difference in opinion between Ottawa and its spokesmen in Geneva was to become very significant.

At these same meetings, Riddell also forcefully argued the case for sanctions. On September 24, Riddell made the startling suggestion that individual nations could take action on sanctions before Italy even began to fight.³⁵ In his report to Ottawa that evening, Riddell described Eden's

strong stand, but failed to note his own suggestion. "Other delegates" were said to have agreed that the anticipated Italian rejection of the League Council recommendations should be followed by "immediate action."³⁶ Skelton replied at once:

. . . with reference to your report of view of other delegates at Commonwealth Meeting, please advise whether recommendation of measures contemplated refers to Article XI or Article XVI also what measures were considered as being so contemplated. We assume reference to other delegates means other than Canadian delegates.³⁷

Riddell never directly answered the question implicit in Skelton's closing sentence. Indeed, he ignored Skelton's tone in the discussions of the next few days. On September 26, Riddell stated that his work on the Committee of Thirteen had convinced him that the Italians genuinely feared sanctions. He urged that a "technological committee" should be appointed as soon as possible to show the Italians "that they meant business."³⁸ These speculations were soon no longer academic: the Italians crossed the Ethiopian frontier on October 2.

The next few days were to be decisive for Canada's role in the crisis. With the election approaching on October 15, Canada was faced with several decisions which seemed critical to both Ottawa and Geneva. The almost certain defeat of the Bennett Government further complicated the situation. The first problem which confronted the Canadians was the vote on the League Council's report condemning Italy for its aggression.

In early October, the League showed more resolution than almost anyone had believed possible. On October 5, Skelton warned Bennett that the British wanted "to rush procedure in both Council and Assembly."³⁹ When Riddell urgently requested instructions on October 8, Skelton procrastinated. Riddell tried to outline the serious implications which abstention through lack of instructions would mean: Canada "would be grouped with those States [Austria, Hungary, and Switzerland] who may abstain for quite different reasons."⁴⁰ Skelton remained sceptical and refused to believe that "it is proposed to take vote on question of such vital importance without opportunity for full consideration."⁴¹ On October 9, Ottawa instructed Ferguson as delegation leader to abstain and to explain his abstention by referring to "the impossibility of anticipating decision of new parliament."⁴²

The astonished Ferguson felt that Canada would become an object of ridicule by joining Italy's satellites against the united British Commonwealth. By one account, Ferguson told the Canadian delegation that he would not make a public fool of himself in such circumstances. On Pearson's suggestion, Ferguson phoned Bennett and assembled the

delegation in his office on the afternoon of the vote. If Bennett returned his call, the delegation might be able to join the rest of the Assembly in affirming Italian guilt. If not, they were to go out and play golf. As the delegation waited with clubs ready, Bennett's call came through. Ferguson was able to persuade his old political crony, over the objections of Skelton and Christie, to let him use his own discretion. Ferguson had scored a hole in one: Skelton had taken a bogey. Christie reportedly "all but choked with rage" as Bennett tauntingly informed him of his decision.⁴³

This vote to condemn Italy was only one of the two critical decisions reached in this week in October and, probably, the less important one. On the morning of October 7, after the Council had condemned Italy and placed the issue before the Assembly, the Commonwealth delegates met. Eden announced that a Committee of the Whole and a sub-committee would be set up to study the means of implementing sanctions. The smaller committee, on which "all the key countries would be represented," would propose a plan for sanctions. If this plan were accepted, the countries which sat on this committee "at any rate would be committed."⁴⁴ Riddell judiciously omitted this important point from his account of the meeting which he sent to Ottawa. He reported Eden's assessment of the Council meeting on October 7 and then described the likely procedure:

... A Sanctions Committee will then be set up to determine what action under Article XVI shall be taken and how to coordinate such. This task might be given to Council by Assembly, but United Kingdom and others prefer to keep it in Assembly.

Eden's remark that the recommendations of this committee "would have to be accepted by all States whose co-operation is essential for genuine collective action" was not mentioned by Riddell. Instead, Riddell disingenuously asked: "Should Canada accept or refuse membership on Committee charges to draw up plans for collective sanctions of one set up by Assembly?" On the following day, Riddell's actions anticipated a favourable reply.⁴⁵

On the morning of October 8, before the Assembly met, the Commonwealth delegates considered which of their members should be represented on the proposed Sanctions Committee.⁴⁶ Eden outlined the functions of the committee and the responsibilities of its members. He suggested that South Africa, because of its great resources and its geographical proximity, and India, because of its large purchases of Italian goods, should be represented. Riddell, however, thought that Canada should be represented, because it was one of "the principal producers of key products." Te Water of South Africa objected that the Commonwealth was overstocking the Committee, but Riddell was unmoved. He would telegraph his government and receive permission by October 10.⁴⁷

On October 10, Riddell received a belated reply to his cable of October 7:

Prime Minister's view regarding membership on Sanctions Committee is that we should not seek place, but in certain contingencies should not refuse if requested to serve. If Canadian membership proposed, advise us immediately. In any case, we shall indicate at later date type of sanctions that would be appropriate in the event of Canada participating in applying economic measures.⁴⁸

These instructions came too late. Canadian membership had already been proposed by the Canadian delegate himself, not only for the universal Coordinating Committee, as Ottawa understood, but also for the smaller committee of "key countries." On October 10, membership on this smaller committee was formally accepted without instruction.

On October 10, when Ottawa gave its permission to act on the "Sanctions Committee" since the committee was "to consist of all members of the Assembly," the confusion which sprang from Riddell's ambiguous telegrams becomes clear.⁴⁹ Canadian membership had in fact been proposed for two committees, the "Sanctions Committee" for "key countries" and the "Co-ordinating Committee" made up of the whole Assembly. Permission was granted for the latter, but not for the former. Ottawa, indeed, was unaware of its existence. The Canadian delegation was turning the tables on External Affairs; sensing that the Department would disapprove of its actions and attitudes, it took advantage of the confusion caused by the election and couched its reports in ambiguous terms, omitting significant information.

The British were naturally encouraged by Canada's actions at Geneva which they took to represent the policy of the Canadian Government. The Foreign Secretary told the American Ambassador "that while some months ago the Dominions had hung back now the British Government had the whole-hearted support of the Dominions. . . ."⁵⁰ The American Minister in Ottawa, however, reported that two high Canadian officials, Skelton and General A.G.L. McNaughton, thought that "the interests of the United States and Canada were absolutely parallel." To them, the interests of the two nations were not served by entanglement in European affairs. McNaughton emphatically agreed with Skelton in his attitude towards the Covenant and sanctions, but he did admit that if Italy went to war against Britain, Canada must join in. He hoped, nevertheless, that the American people would take an understanding view, and that the American Government "would shape its policy to allow for the Canadian position so that no unnecessary conflict would arise."⁵¹

After "Canada" had accepted membership on the Committee of Eighteen, Ferguson brought Canada to the forefront of the discussions in

this committee. Although the Canadian delegation had been instructed that “no definite attitude should be taken until further communication has been sent,”⁵⁴ Ferguson on October 11 called for “definite progressive action” against Italy. The League should not allow “technical difficulties . . . to stand in the way.” He also called for an immediate arms embargo against Italy and the removal of any weapons embargo against Ethiopia.⁵³ On October 14, Ferguson made a similar speech in which he reinterpreted recent Canadian history: Canada was a country which had fully appreciated “the obligations imposed upon her and the risks she was running” as a member of the League of Nations.⁵⁴

Skelton would have disapproved of this statement both as an historian and as an Under-Secretary. At this time, Skelton reluctantly supported a policy of limited sanctions while lamenting the position in which the “flagrant” Italian action had placed Canada. If the invasion had not been so “flagrant,” it would not have been so difficult for Canada, “which has always seen in the Covenant and in particular in Articles 10 and 16, a source of danger — particularly so with the United States not a member of the League — to avoid the issue on one ground or another.” Skelton was reportedly troubled because “the bridge between England and the Continent . . . has once more been ‘open to traffic’ and that if Canada consents to throw in her lot with Britain in the present crisis, she may find herself committed, . . . to a policy of maintaining the European ‘status quo.’” Skelton regarded the Italo-Ethiopian crisis as a possible disaster for Canada; friendship with the United States was one of the principal bases, if not the cardinal basis, of Canadian foreign policy. Now, this remote war might create a serious clash between Canada and the United States over sanctions.⁵⁵

Skelton, despite his fears, realized that Canada could not avoid taking a stand, and External Affairs began to consider what type of sanctions should be imposed.⁵⁶ The defeat of the Bennett Government on October 15 brought no new instructions from Ottawa, but Ferguson, as a Bennett appointee, resigned immediately and Riddell became head of the delegation. With Bennett gone and King as Prime Minister, the British feared that Skelton’s views would predominate. Bennett had usually supported sanctions in the face of strong opposition from his foreign policy advisers. As an official in the Foreign Office noted, “unfortunately Mr. Bennett’s personal views now count for nothing, and should hostilities break out, I am afraid that Canada would be rather isolationist like the U.S.A.”⁵⁷ These suspicions were justified. On October 24, Skelton drew up a memo on the problems confronting the new government in foreign affairs. These were judiciously sifted through Skelton’s brilliant and biased mind; the Italo-Ethiopian crisis was first on the list. Summarizing the proposals for sanctions made to date by the League, he noted that a decision on some of

them was due by October 28. The defects of the League and the dangers of the situation pervaded his analysis. Skelton argued that new legislation would be required to implement the sanctions now demanded. This, evidently, would have to await the assembling of the new Parliament — thereby forcing a delay of at least a month. To further strengthen his case, Skelton attached the unbalanced “pro and con” memorandum of August.

The King Government quickly undertook new directions in foreign policy. One of the first meetings of the new cabinet, on October 25, discussed the major questions in foreign affairs which Skelton had outlined. To his distress, King soon learned that the cabinet was far from unanimous in its attitude towards Canadian policy in the Italo-Ethiopian War. The leading French-Canadian minister, Ernest Lapointe, threatened to resign “if the Government was to decide for military sanctions.” This was particularly ominous because many considered “military sanctions” the logical consequence of “economic sanctions.” While King himself drew a clear distinction between military and economic sanctions, he nevertheless wrote in his diary that “we should not be expected to go further [than economic sanctions]. . . . Our own domestic situation must be considered first, and what will serve to keep Canada united.”⁵⁸

Immediately after the cabinet meeting, King saw the American Minister and proceeded with arrangements for a visit with Roosevelt. Referring to the Ethiopian crisis, the forthcoming London Naval Conference, and the Canadian-American trade agreement under negotiation, King said, “. . . we must stand together on all these questions.” Elaborating on the subject of the Ethiopian war, King said “in so many words that if the United States and Canada could present to the world a united front it should have an enormous effect for good.” Skelton’s voice had found an echo. King qualified his remarks by saying that he realized the United States could not accept any formal agreement but that he hoped that “a frank exchange” with Roosevelt would have almost the same effect.⁵⁹

A statement was drafted and redrafted in the Department of External Affairs. Christie produced a draft telegram to the League Secretariat informing them coolly that although Canada was not interested in Ethiopia and remained uncommitted to sanctions in “essentially European disputes,” it was willing to do all it legally could once it was assured that “substantially common action is being taken.”⁶⁰ Christie’s telegram was not sent, but a careful statement was issued supporting the sanctions proposed by the League and justifying this action by referring to the prospects for “earnest” cooperation. Sanctions were upheld, but Ottawa’s grudging attitude was clearly evident.⁶¹

Before this statement reached Geneva, the Canadian delegation at Geneva was instructed to take no action until told to do so by the new government. Riddell, however, replied that he would "maintain vigorous position on sanctions as instructed in July" for the Committee of Thirteen. A puzzled Skelton once again told Riddell to take no definite attitude. Riddell wired back that he was referring to previous instructions and once again ignored the purport of Skelton's instructions.⁶² Skelton was unwilling to accept or perhaps did not realize the dynamics of the situation. This is understandable since, as we have seen, Riddell had been disingenuous in his account of the actions of the Canadian delegation and, in particular, of the implications of Canadian membership on the Committee of Eighteen. The crucial decision, in fact, had been taken on October 8, when Riddell without permission had volunteered Canadian membership for the Committee of Eighteen and had secured it over the claims of other Commonwealth states. Riddell was acting solely in the context of the "Geneva spirit" of collective security. The broader implications of sanctions, especially the probability of American non-participation, which so perturbed External Affairs, were not considered in Geneva. The disagreement was fundamental and on principles derived from intense feeling.⁶³

Riddell's remoteness from the concerns of Ottawa became very apparent when the Committee of Eighteen and its Sub-Committee on Economic Measures began to debate what sanctions to apply. On October 19, the Co-ordinating Committee adopted five proposals for the embargo of trade and credits for Italy. The fourth recommended an embargo on the export of key materials. The materials which were to be restricted were listed under two categories. List One was composed of materials controlled by League members. Although nickel could be supplied by the United States as well as Canada, it was on List One. Once again, the Canadian delegate bore some responsibility. When the French delegate, Robert Coulondre, suggested the inclusion of nickel on October 17, Riddell "would not put forward any definite motion as to specific materials but did note that such materials as were included should be embargoed in all their forms."⁶⁴ Since this was not an objection, nickel was duly included. Riddell had followed the letter but not the spirit of his instructions.

At this same meeting, the Swiss delegate enquired why such "essential products" as cotton, coal, copper and oil had not been included in List Two. Coulondre agreed "that a certain confusion had arisen." The final version of List Two products not controlled by League members "should include products on which an embargo had to be postponed; those were, in the main, the products mentioned at the previous meeting—coal, copper, and oil." On October 19, the Spanish delegate objected that iron ore was on the list of sanction products while iron, pig iron, and steel were not. Riddell

argued once again "that any scheme of economic sanctions should be comprehensive." He would not make any "definite proposal" but he did express "the doubts of his delegation concerning these aspects of the proposal."⁶⁵ Riddell was, on the whole, very encouraged. He wrote to a friend, "Considering everything, the measure of unanimity has been striking and seem to augur well for the successful application of sanctions."⁶⁶ The "Geneva spirit" was at work.

Riddell took part in these debates without precise current instructions. When an abbreviated version of King's first statement on the crisis reached Geneva on October 29, it is not surprising that Riddell extracted more from the document than its author had intended it to convey. Initially, however, Riddell said nothing with which his superiors could disagree. On October 31, he again objected to any exceptions to sanctions: "If there were going to be reservations, other governments would have to review their position."⁶⁷ This was a position of which King would have approved. He was also willing to accept sanctions, if they were universally enforced. Unlike Skelton, King supported the view that condemnation of Italy implied the application of Article 16 in at least its economic aspects.⁶⁸

King, however, would not have followed the path which Riddell took on November 1. At a meeting of the Sub-Committee on Economic Measures on that day, Riddell exhorted the members to remember that "they were building up the structure of sanctions through the concerted action of the nations and should be wary of anything that threatened that structure." He defended sanctions as "the biggest experiment yet tried among the nations." Canada was prepared to play her part although "a long way from the seat of the trouble." Could other nations more directly involved do less? In a passionate conclusion, Riddell said:

Believing that his government felt as he did on this matter, he would consider he was betraying them if he weakened on these proposals and must frankly say he could not associate himself with any attempt to undermine what, not only now, but in the future, would be found to be the most effective sanction of all.⁶⁹

Canada was taking a lead, not waiting for others to show her the route. Nothing could have won less favour in Ottawa nor more acclaim in Geneva. To Riddell, the latter came first.

Later that day, Sir Samuel Hoare at a meeting of Commonwealth delegates paid a special tribute to Riddell whose speech he termed "both very effective and very well-timed." Te Water, now a supporter of sanctions, and Eden also praised Riddell's courageous stand. The Dominions now were in the forefront of the moves against Italy.⁷⁰

By November 2, difficulties of definition were seriously impeding the imposition of sanctions. As we have seen, the application of sanctions on

raw materials was not universal since derivative products were not included. The Spanish delegation protested. Spanish refusal to comply could destroy unanimity, the foundation of the sanctions framework. Riddell, accordingly, cabled to Ottawa on the morning of November 2 for permission to make a statement in the Sub-committee on Economic Measures that same day. Rather than remove iron ore from the list, the Spanish challenge would be met by adding the derivative products whose omission was protested. That morning Coulondre of France approached Te Water and Riddell and asked one of them to make the proposal. Coulondre argued that France was too much in the vanguard of sanctions; other nations should make the proposal. After Te Water declined, Riddell agreed. The Canadian then sounded various delegates on the prospects of such a resolution. When he learned that the inclusion of copper would produce Chilean objection, copper was removed from the list. The question of consultation with the British delegation did not really arise. When the expected cable from Canada did not arrive, Riddell asked his advisers, Pearson and Jean Désy, what he should do. Their advice was contradictory.

No attempt was made to postpone consideration or to delay the meeting. To Riddell, it must have seemed that his coordination with the British in Geneva, although it had produced some objections from Ottawa, was the policy which the Canadian Government must follow. Eden certainly would not object to this proposal: why should Ottawa or, indeed, how could Ottawa? At noon, Riddell read his proposal to add oil, coal, iron, and steel to Proposal IV. A few hours later, Ottawa's reply to Riddell's morning cables arrived: he was to speak no more about sanctions and drop the proposal.⁷¹

Riddell's motion was accepted, but it was to a large extent a paper triumph of Geneva, part of an exchange of sham promissory notes between Britain and France and the other members of the League. Outside of Geneva, few thought that a petroleum embargo was "practical politics," since oil sanctions required the cooperation of non-members of the League. With the inclusion of Riddell's proposal among the sanctions suggested, impracticability was compounded by implausibility. The United States was the chief non-member oil producer and the effect of American cooperation on sanctions had been disappointing.⁷² Individual American diplomats sympathized with the dilemma of the League countries, but they admitted that the Roosevelt administration's efforts to prevent exploitation of the war by American companies were toothless. The American Government went so far as to ask its representative in Geneva to beg foreign governments not to embarrass the Americans by asking questions "with regard to any action we might take with respect to any particular com-

modity in question."⁷³ Roosevelt was sympathetic, but he realized his hands were tied by his isolationist Congress.

On November 2, Riddell informed Ottawa of his proposal.⁷⁴ News of the Canadian initiative was soon published in the Canadian press. *The Montreal Gazette* headlined on November 4: "Canada urges wider embargo;" on the next day, "League adopts Canadian plan;" and on November 6, "League Sub-Committee sends Canadian Proposal to Economic Sub-Committee." The news of Riddell's unforeseen initiative was received with surprise and concern in External Affairs. The American Minister learned this from a most surprising informant:

It may be interesting to note that . . . the Counsellor of the [American] legation was informed confidentially by Mr. Norman Robertson of the Department of External Affairs that Dr. Riddell's statements had been made without submission of the statements for approval by the Canadian Government. He seemed to feel that Dr. Riddell had gone further than his government had expected at the moment, but implied that of necessity his statements would be supported from here.⁷⁵

Ottawa immediately pointed out the obvious to Riddell: he had acted "without authorization" in making the proposal. They warned him that he "must of course realize that [he was] acting for the Government of Canada and not for any other government delegation or committee." In the future, Riddell was told he should act only when expressly authorized by Ottawa. On receipt of this telegram, Riddell replied that he had been motivated by a desire to forestall the extension of the list to include the key products noted in his previous telegram. This he hoped to do by moving that they be added to the list in principle, but that their embargo would only come into force when it could be made effective.⁷⁶ In short, his move was intended to slow events.

Riddell had once again sought refuge in partial information and evasiveness. His explanation of his action as one to delay an expansion of sanctions which would have affected Canada adversely is most unconvincing. Te Water and Coulondre would not have understood this explanation, and, indeed, Riddell's own account in his book of 1947 does not agree with the interpretation in this telegram. Riddell himself had told the American Consul in Geneva that the exclusion of copper from the list was done only to achieve the necessary Chilean cooperation on sanctions.⁷⁷ In Canada the press did not share the Riddell interpretation as the *Gazette's* headlines show. The international press without apparent exception considered Riddell's proposal a significant attempt to widen the embargo. *The Times* on November 4 noted "an important development" at Geneva. Editorially, *The Times* commented that the Canadian proposal showed Canada's strong attachment to its "fundamental duty." *The New York*

Times claimed that the effect of the wording of the Canadian proposal was to put responsibility on the U.S. and Germany to extend the embargo to these key materials.⁷⁸ Prominent League supporters in Canada such as J.W. Dafoe were enthusiastic, and J.H. Woods of the *Calgary Herald* declared that the prestige of the Empire had never been so high.⁷⁹

On the whole, however, Canadian editorials only timidly approved of sanctions. Even this the American Minister believed to be "in advance of general public opinion." He felt that the Government and many of the principal Canadian newspapers found themselves in the role of educating the general public to the importance of Canada's responsibility.⁸⁰ In the recollection of one newly elected Member of Parliament, this was unlikely, since the Liberal caucus itself lacked such education.⁸¹ To this general if lukewarm support of sanctions in the Canadian press, a significant exception must be made, the French-Canadian press. Virtually all the Quebec press, including the Liberal organ, *Le Soleil*, was intensely hostile to sanctions.⁸²

Ottawa was unhappy, but it appeared that Norman Robertson's prediction that "of necessity" the Canadian Government would support Riddell would be fulfilled. In November, King and Skelton left for Washington and Sea Island, Georgia. In Washington, they were to discuss a trade treaty and the international situation with Roosevelt. Ethiopia was on the agenda of the meetings, but no record of the talks appears to exist.⁸³ Roosevelt probably told King that he was sympathetic to the League attempt to stop Italy, but that his hands were tied. In any case oil sanctions did not appear to be of great importance since the chance of their universal adoption seemed remote. It was only as the "Canadian proposal" gathered momentum and crystallized opinion behind the League that the Canadian Government began to worry about its undeserved reputation as a moral leader on sanctions.

After King arrived at Sea Island in the second week of November, it became apparent that the Italians regarded the Canadian proposal as a serious threat. On November 12, Italy warned of the consequences of sanctions, "not only to Italy, but to the whole world."⁸⁴ On the next day, Italy termed the proposed sanctions "an act of hostility."⁸⁵ On November 26, a Rome spokesman referred to the proposed oil embargo as a hostile action requiring reprisals.⁸⁶ Two days later, rumours circulated in "well informed circles that in view of the uncertainty introduced into the general political situation by the proposal to place an embargo on the export to Italy of petrol and other raw materials, the Italian Government had found it advisable to order certain troop movements and also to suspend . . . the recently announced permits of three months leave to a number of soldiers. . . ."⁸⁷ The Rome correspondent of *Le Temps* reported that impo-

sition of an oil embargo would be "un sabotage direct de l'expédition africaine."⁸⁸ Riddell agreed; an "effective embargo" on oil would stop Mussolini.⁸⁹

In Paris, Premier Pierre Laval collapsed and told his Cabinet on November 26 that he would oppose oil sanctions.⁹⁰ In London, another reluctant supporter of sanctions, the new High Commissioner, Vincent Massey, pointed out to the Canadian Government that the proposed oil embargo was universally referred to as "Canada's suggestion."⁹¹ The press references did not escape the two vacationers in Georgia. On November 23, a telegram from Georgia to Ottawa instructed Acting Under-Secretary Laurent Beaudry to inform Riddell "not to take any initiative in making or advocating the proposal though he may vote for proposal if it meets with approval other members generally."⁹² King had originally considered refusal of permission to vote. He relented, however, "because of reported imminence of the discussion at Geneva."⁹³ In a letter of November 26, Skelton told Beaudry that Riddell should be forbidden to take action without authorization. Skelton suspected that the oil proposal was a British subterfuge created to drag Canada further into the imbroglio. The oil question, Skelton believed, "was going to be full of dynamite, and in view of Riddell's unfortunate action, he must not be allowed to act at his own discretion, or pull any more of Mr. Anthony Eden's chestnuts out of the fire."⁹⁴

Ernest Lapointe, the Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs, was disturbed at the continual references to the "Canadian proposal" in the world press. Through his Acting Under-Secretary, he wired to Georgia and asked "whether some course of action could be adopted to counteract this effect."⁹⁵ On November 29, Skelton outlined to Beaudry a method for repudiating Riddell. Massey was to inform the British that Riddell acted without authorization and Lapointe was to make a statement affirming Canada's adherence to sanctions, but noting that Riddell had expressed his own opinion, not that of his Government, when he proposed the oil embargo.⁹⁶ This course was carried out on December 1.

Riddell was given a resumé of the press statement on December 1. He replied that everyone in Geneva knew that he was acting only as a member of the Committee in order "to secure a satisfactory compromise."⁹⁷ The Canadian Government told Riddell later that day that the decision to make the public statement had been "taken reluctantly and after consultation with the Prime Minister, under pressure of incessant press comment on danger of war attributed to 'Canadian proposal'. . . ."⁹⁸ This explanation is quite plausible. Observers on the spot felt that the Canadian Government had been willing to let Riddell's proposal stand and only repudiated him "when it was thought that Signor Mussolini would regard oil sanctions as a

cause for war." Only then, "did the Canadian Government show that they had realized the possible implications of Dr. Riddell's suggestion."⁹⁹

Some explanations of the Canadian Government's action were immediately current. "An extremely reliable source" told the American Minister that Lapointe had acted under the pressure of "French-Canadian elements;" King had been consulted, but the form of consultation was described as inadequate.¹⁰⁰ This interpretation, which was later accepted by Riddell, is false. Skelton and King had conceived the idea of a public repudiation and had cabled the essence of the statement to Ottawa.

King's office later collected a list of opinions on the Riddell repudiation. Heading the list of "those approving" was the Italian Government, followed by the Italian vice-consul in Toronto, the Italian Colonial Committee in Toronto, *Le Soleil*, *L'Action Catholique*, *Le Devoir*, and, finally the *Ottawa Citizen*, then a supporter of Social Credit. The Italian Government was reported to have been especially pleased with the Canadian action. As *Le Temps* reported from Rome, "après avoir traversé des heures de profonde anxiété, on respire."¹⁰¹ *Osservatore Romano* said that the news of the repudiation had created a "sensation" in Rome and that it was felt that sanctions would now surely fail.¹⁰² Mr. King's list of opinions shows, however, that Canadian opinion was largely against the repudiation. Those disapproving, either moderately or strongly, included *The Ottawa Journal*, all four Toronto papers, *The Winnipeg Free Press*, *La Presse*, *Montreal Star* and such commentators as Escoffier Reid and Colonel George Drew. Their reasons for disapproval were various, and some were not so vigorously opposed as the others.¹⁰³

The British Foreign Office reacted immediately. Lancelot Oliphant surmised, "it looks like some dirty work at the crossroads." Another minute observed that "the Canadian Government have very easily — and without much dignity — lost their nerve. It is an omen — the solidarity of the Dominions is early magnified." Vansittart, who had considered the proposal "premature," agreed that "to make a suggestion and then run away is not helpful to the more exposed members of the League." "Horrible," concluded Oliphant.¹⁰⁴

In a few days, however, the British Government was to contribute its own "dirty work," the Hoare-Laval pact. The oil sanction became largely irrelevant once this agreement became public. Canada once again could find a convenient scape-goat. After Hoare-Laval, the "Geneva spirit" which Riddell's daring proposal had helped to stimulate, atrophied and then died.

The Riddell incident must be considered in its context. King's "correctness" and Riddell's "wrongness" or *vice-versa* are unimportant

when one considers the longer series of interconnected events. Riddell's proposal of November should be seen as the product of the actions of the Canadian delegation in the week between October 7 and 14. The Canadian delegation's success at this time in reacting to Geneva rather than to Ottawa inspired and virtually guaranteed Riddell's later boldness. The action of the King Government in repudiating Riddell must be seen in the context of its ambiguous support of sanctions, the position in which it found itself after the election, and the indifference of the Liberal Party and the Canadian people to all but imminent war. Riddell's action is interesting as an example of what a strong-minded delegation could do to commit an unwilling and unwitting government to a course of action of which it fundamentally disapproved. While Canada at Geneva worked in tandem with the British, the government in Ottawa under King struggled to bring Canadian policy in line with American.

The two-dimensional nature of Canadian foreign policy at this time is remarkable. Far from being the effective linch-pin between British and American foreign policy, those parts of the Canadian Government that believed in dealing with the Americans also sympathized with isolation and distrusted the British. They feared, as Skelton did, that Canada would always be pulling the British “chestnuts out of the fire.” Canada in this crisis does not appear to have attempted to interpret Britain to America, nor to have capitalized on its role as a “North American nation.” Seen from this viewpoint, King's statement to Armour on October 25 is ironic:

[King] explained how Canada could be of great use as a link between Great Britain and the United States. This was a role which he had always insisted Canada should play more actively, even than it had done in the past.¹⁰⁵

When, therefore, it became clear that Canada was being cast in the role of a moral leader on sanctions at the same time that American hesitation on an embargo was becoming more obvious, King's desired “Canadian-American united front” in foreign policy became impossible. The repudiation of Riddell was a late and clumsy attempt to rectify this. King had been consistent; events made him appear not to be. Riddell had been faithful to sanctions with his Geneva colleagues, but insincere with his own Government in Ottawa. His extraordinary attempt to determine Canadian foreign policy in Geneva may have been courageous or irresponsible, but it was most definitely and inevitably a failure.

NOTES

¹ Riddell's own account may be found in his *World Security by Conference* (Toronto, 1947). The most recent analyses, which are based almost exclusively on Canadian manuscript sources, although not Riddell's papers and diary at York University, are James Eayrs, *In*

Defence of Canada: Appeasement and Rearmament (Toronto, 1965), ch. I, and John Munro, "The Riddell Incident Reconsidered," *External Affairs* (Oct. 1969), 366-75.

² Foreign Office (FO), 371/19128/J4117. Minute by J. Garran on despatches from Ottawa. August 27, 1935.

³ See the very useful comments on Canadian opinions on foreign policy scattered throughout Maurice Bourquin, ed., *Collective Security: A Record of the Seventh and Eighth International Studies Conference* (Paris, 1936). The comments by Alan Plaunt and T.W.L. MacDermot are especially good. Also, *Interdependence, 1934, 1935, passim*, and E.B. Rogers and R.A. MacKay, *Canada Looks Abroad* (Toronto, 1938), Part II.

⁴ Carter Manny, *The Canadian Institute of International Affairs: 1928-1939* (Unpublished A.B. thesis, Harvard College, 1971).

⁵ Interview with Rt. Hon. Lester B. Pearson, April 1970.

⁶ Riddell to Secretary-General, League of Nations, April 29, 1935 in League of Nations, *Official Journal* (July 1935), 909.

⁷ Rogers and MacKay, *op. cit.*, 108-9, 115-120.

⁸ Christie to Lionel Curtis, Sept. 28, 1937, Christie Papers, (Public Archives of Canada).

⁹ Christie to Lord Lothian, May 26, 1935, Lothian Papers, 17-300-302A (Scottish Record Office).

¹⁰ Christie to Lothian, Oct. 20, 1936, Christie Papers, v. 19.

¹¹ Herbert S. Goold, U.S. Consul-General, Toronto, to Norman Armour, U.S. Minister, Ottawa, November 12, 1936. State Department 842.00/499½ (National Archives, Washington).

¹² Pearson Interview, *op. cit.*

¹³ Riddell, *op. cit.*, 28.

¹⁴ Canada. *Senate Debates*, March 21, 1928, 132-3.

¹⁵ See George Baer, *The Coming of the Italo-Ethiopian War* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), ch. 2.

¹⁶ *The Times* (London), Sept. 5, 1935.

¹⁷ *Toronto Star*, Sept. 9, 1935.

¹⁸ *Le Matin*, an opponent of sanctions, observed, "le Canadien parle comme un Français." Sept. 11, 1935

¹⁹ Coverley Price (Ottawa) to Dominions Office, August 9, 1935. Accompanying minute by J.R. Garran, August 14, 1935. Foreign Office 371/19124/13663.

²⁰ Dominions Office 35/6109A/22/4, August 21, 1935.

²¹ High Commissioner in Canada to Dominions Secretary, August 23, 1935. FO 371/19128/1727/176.

²² High Commissioner in Canada to Dominions Secretary, August 23, 1935. FO 371/19128/1727/178. Riddell later recalled that Bennett was "a much keener supporter of the collective system than certain of his advisers Sometimes one felt that Mr. Bennett had little opportunity to consider the instructions which were sent to Geneva and at other times when there was a change of front one could surmise that the Prime Minister had had a hand in it." Undated note, Riddell Papers (York University Archives).

²³ O.D. Skelton. "Pros and Cons of Canadian Participation," August 1935, King Papers, v. 165, file 1507.

²⁴ External Affairs to Dominions Office, September 3, 1935, Bennett Papers, v. 431, file 1-150.

²⁵ Dominions Office Minute, DO356109A/22/4, September 9, 1935. Also, DO 35 6109A/331.

- ²⁶ Riddell, *op. cit.*, 101.
- ²⁷ Robert Vansittart. *The Mist Procession* (London, 1958), 532. Also, Baer, *op. cit.*, 320-32.
- ²⁸ Vansittart, *op. cit.*, 532.
- ²⁹ *The Times*, September 12, 1935.
- ³⁰ League of Nations, *Official Journal; Special Supplement 138* (Geneva, 1935), 77-8.
- ³¹ I. C. Christie. "Canadian Defence Commitments: 1932-1936," enclosing correspondence between Admiralty and Canadian Department of Naval Service, September 1935, Christie Papers Additional.
- ³² *Supra*, 260-L.
- ³³ Meeting of delegates from Commonwealth and Britain, September 24, 1935, DO 35 6109A/22/4/1707.
- ³⁴ Meeting of delegates from Commonwealth and Britain, September 25, 1935, DO 35 6109A/22/4/1707.
- ³⁵ Meeting of September 24, *loc. cit.*
- ³⁶ Riddell to External, September 24, 1935, Bennett Papers, v. 431, file L-150.
- ³⁷ External Affairs to Riddell, September 24, 1935, *Ibid.*
- ³⁸ Meeting of Commonwealth and British delegates, September 26, 1935, DO 35 6109A/22/4.
- ³⁹ Skelton to Bennett, October 5, 1935, Bennett Papers, v. 431, file L-150.
- ⁴⁰ Riddell to Skelton, October 8, 1935, Bennett Papers, v. 431, File L-150.
- ⁴¹ Skelton to Riddell, October 8, 1935, *Ibid.*
- ⁴² Acting Secretary of State to Riddell, October 9, 1935, *Ibid.*
- ⁴³ This account is drawn from a memorandum on the event by Mr. George Ferguson of Montreal; the Pearson interview, *op. cit.*; and L.B. Pearson, "Report of telephone conversation between Mr. Ferguson-Geneva and Mr. Bennett-Lindsay, Ontario," Oct. 9, 1935. Initialed by Howard Ferguson. Riddell Papers.
- ⁴⁴ B. Cockram, Geneva, to H. Paynton, Dominions Office, October 7, 1935 enclosing notes of discussion. DO 35 6109A/460.
- ⁴⁵ Riddell to External, October 7, 1935, Bennett Papers, v. 431, file L-150.
- ⁴⁶ This Committee became known as the Committee of Eighteen.
- ⁴⁷ Meeting of Commonwealth and British delegates, October 8, 1935, DO 35/6109A/22-4/707.
- ⁴⁸ Acting Secretary of State to Riddell, October 9, 1935, "Decoded 10th A.M.," Riddell Papers.
- ⁴⁹ Acting Secretary of State to Riddell, October 10, 1935, Bennett Papers, v. 431, file L-150.
- ⁵⁰ Bingham to Secretary of State, October 19, 1935, State Department 765.84/1666.
- ⁵¹ Armour to Secretary of State, October 10, 1935, State Department 765.84/1808.
- ⁵² Acting Secretary of State to Riddell, October 10, 1935, *loc. cit.*
- ⁵³ League of Nations, *Official Journal: Special Supplement 145* (Geneva, 1935), 30.
- ⁵⁴ League of Nations, *Official Journal: Special Supplement 146* (Geneva, 1935), 53.
- ⁵⁵ Armour to Secretary of State Hull, October 4, 1935, State Department 765.84/1794.
- ⁵⁶ Pierre Boal, U.S. Embassy, Ottawa to Secretary of State, October 12, 1935, State Department 765.84/2051.
- ⁵⁷ High Commissioner in Canada to Dominions Office and minute, October 19, 1935, FO 371/19199/16644.

1972). 170. According to Lapointe, Ilsley and "one or two others" would resign if sanctions were rejected.

⁵⁹ O.D. Skelton, "Italo-Ethiopian Question," October 24, 1935, King Papers, v. 165, C117290-305; Armour to Secretary of State Hull, October 26, 1935, State Department 033.4211/1; and "Memorandum by the Minister in Canada (Armour)," Oct. 24, 1935 in *Foreign Relations of the United States 1935* (Washington, 1952), v. 2, 28-30.

⁶⁰ I. C. Christie, "Draft Telegram to League Secretariat," October 27, 1935. External Affairs 65-P-35.

⁶¹ For the text of the summary of the statement sent to Riddell, see Riddell, *op. cit.*, 113.

⁶² Cited in Munro, *op. cit.*, 369. The Committee of Thirteen instructions were given of course by the Bennett Government. *Supra*, 259.

⁶³ It is improbable that Riddell misunderstood Skelton's explicit instructions throughout October to avoid commitments nor is it likely that Riddell was unaware of the attitudes and opinions prevalent in Ottawa as has been recently claimed. See Munro, *op. cit.*, 372.

⁶⁴ League of Nations. *Official Journal; Sub-Committee on Economic Measures* (Geneva, 1935), 104.

⁶⁵ League of Nations. *Official Journal; Special Supplement 145* (Geneva, 1935), 80. (October 19, 1935).

⁶⁶ Riddell to Rowell. October 22, 1935, Riddell Papers.

⁶⁷ League of Nations. *Official Journal; Special Supplement 146* (Geneva, 1935), 20. (October 31, 1935).

⁶⁸ This had been King's stand in a well-known speech of Dec. 12, 1934 and in the later stages of the election campaign. See King Papers, "Replies to Criticism re Riddell," v. 165, C177644-5.

⁶⁹ League of Nations. *Official Journal: Special Supplement 146* (Geneva, 1935), 55-6. (November 1, 1935).

⁷⁰ Gilbert. American Consul at Geneva, to Secretary of State, November 2, 1935, State Department 765.84/2282; Riddell Diary, November 1, 1935.

⁷¹ This account is taken from several sources: Riddell, *op. cit.*, ch. XV; a memo prepared by B. Cockram for Sir Maurice Hankey in December 1935, DO 35 158/6109A/80; meeting of Dominion and British delegates at Geneva, Dec. 5, 1935, DO 35 6109A/22/4 and Faysr, *op. cit.*, ch. 1.

⁷² Arnold Toynbee. *Survey of International Affairs: 1935*, v. 2, (London, 1936), 239.

⁷³ Undersecretary of State Phillips to Gilbert, November 4, 1935, State Department 765.84/2353; see Herbert Feis, *Seen from E.A.* (New York, 1947), for a first-hand account of the American difficulties. Also, Brice Harris, *United States and the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis* (Stanford, 1964).

⁷⁴ Cited in Munro, *op. cit.*, 366.

⁷⁵ Armour to Secretary of State, November 5, 1935, State Department 765.84/2443.

⁷⁶ Ottawa's cable and Riddell's reply are cited in Munro, *op. cit.*, 366.

⁷⁷ Gilbert to Secretary of State, November 8, 1935, State Department 765.84/2457.

⁷⁸ *The New York Times*, Nov. 5, 1935.

⁷⁹ *Montreal Gazette*, Nov. 6, 1935.

⁸⁰ Armour to Secretary of State, Nov. 5, 1935, State Department 765.84/2443.

⁸¹ Interview with Senator Paul Martin, May 2, 1970. Senator Martin said that most Liberal M.P.'s uncritically accepted King's every opinion on foreign affairs.

⁸² *Le Soleil*. October 1935. *passim*.

⁸³ No record exists in either the National Archives or the Roosevelt Library at Hyde Park.

⁸⁴ *The Times*, (London), Nov. 26, 1935.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, Nov. 12, 1935.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, Nov. 26, 1935.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, Nov. 28, 1935.

⁸⁸ *Le Temps*, Nov. 26, 1935.

⁸⁹ Riddell to Rowell, Nov. 21, 1935, Riddell Papers.

⁹⁰ Geoffrey Warner, *Pierre Laval and the Eclipse of France: 1931-1945* (New York, 1968), 64

⁹¹ Massey to External Affairs, Nov. 29, 1935, King Papers, v. 165, C117247. Earlier in 1935 Massey had been on record as favouring a strong role for small nations in the League. The book in which he gave this opinion was suppressed when he became Canadian High Commissioner in London. See Vincent Massey, *Canada in the World* (Toronto, 1935); and *What's Past is Prologue* (Toronto, 1963), ch. 7-8.

⁹² Cited in Munro, *op cit.*, 372-3.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 373.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, Riddell to Secretary of State, Dec. 1, 1935.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 374. Beaudry to Riddell, Dec. 1, 1935.

⁹⁹ High Commissioner in Ottawa to Dominions Secretary, Dec. 5, 1935, DO 35 156/6109A/3.

¹⁰⁰ Armour to Secretary of State, Dec. 2, 1935, State Department 765.84/2836.

¹⁰¹ *Le Temps*, Dec. 5, 1935

¹⁰² *Osservatore Romano.*, as reported in *Neue Frankfurter Zeitung*, Dec. 3, 1935.

¹⁰³ “Replies to Criticism Re Riddell”, unsigned and undated, King Papers, v. 165, C117643-61. Reid and the *Star* took the stand that King’s move was not wrong, and that it did not repudiate sanctions.

¹⁰⁴ FO 371/19128/J8721/5499/1.

¹⁰⁵ Armour to Secretary of State, Oct. 26, 1935, State Department 033.4211/1.