

**Viscount Cranborne – Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs**  
**Britain World War 2**  
**Word Count: 1524 Words**

As the Viscount Cranborne, Robert Arthur Gascoyne-Cecil, 5<sup>th</sup> Marquess of Salisbury and Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, I am dreading the horrors and yet excited to face the challenges of the upcoming conflict. I was educated at Eton College, gained the rank of lieutenant in the service of the Grenadier Guards, and fought in the horrible First World War. Since that terrible conflict, I have been a Justice of Peace, Parliamentary Secretary to the Lord Privy Seal, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and Privy Counsellor. Given all of this experience, it is no wonder that I am the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs – although my expertise extends far beyond the dominions.

With regards to the upcoming conflict, there are a few goals that I have in mind. The first is that we finally show a strong stance to the belligerence of countries such as Germany and Japan. Our goals with Russia, as I will go on to discuss, should be slightly different. Additionally, England needs to draw on its strong diplomatic relations with the rest of the world, especially powerful nations such as the United States, to secure the economic support that is needed for a long and protracted conflict that this war may become. Furthermore, France should remain strong, and be the key cog in our defence against Nazi Germany. Keeping the war off British soil is essential, and using the massive manpower of France to fight a protracted war against the Germans (or a quick one, if possible) is imperative. As well, we must work to weaken the alliance between Russia and Germany. It is only a matter of time before Russia recognizes the untrustworthiness of Hitler (as well as the two countries' ideological differences), but anything we can do to speed this process on its way would be extremely beneficial to our war

effort. France cannot stand alone, and our best chance to defeat the menace of Nazi Germany will come with the Red Army advancing on Berlin from the east along with our forces from the west. Lastly, securing American support in the war is incredibly important. While economic aid is essential, their troops may eventually be needed – as in the First World War – to finish off the Nazis.

With regards to the Dominion, we must first and foremost ensure its safety. Many of these countries are unable to defend themselves, and rely on us for protection. While we can of course never lose the great island on which we live, allowing some of our largest allies – not to mention suppliers of men, arms, and essential materiel - to fall to the Axis powers would be a great blow to our war effort. With regards to the aforementioned supply from the Dominion, it is imperative that we maximise the goods, weaponry, and manpower we receive from these countries. Not only will the development of industries be good for the individual nations, as their economies will gain strength, but the goods these industries produce will be integral to our defeat of the Nazi war machine. Additionally, the British Commonwealth Air Training Program has just begun, and I will work to improve it to give us the best odds in our battle against the Luftwaffe. Finally, it is important that the colonies remain loyal. Propaganda to promote the Allied war effort and legislation to suppress dissent may be necessary to obtain full support from the colonies. While these activities are certainly undesirable, they may be needed. After all, in a time of war, only our greatest effort is enough to emerge victorious. Through these measures, if enough support is ultimately obtained, conscription may be introduced in some countries in the dominion, which would be extremely beneficial. In the coming struggle, we will need every man

and woman we can get, and measures to increase the amount of soldiers we can field will be needed.

Canada was, quite simply, unprepared for the recent declaration of war. Its regular army began the war with 4500 men, its fleet consisted of 6 destroyers, and it was very poorly equipped. Part of the reason for the state of the Canadian military is that even in December 1938, the government slashed \$8 million off of its \$28 million defence budget. Despite this, however, the strong British heritage of the country is evident in its enlistment numbers; in September 1939, 58000 Canadians enlisted to fight against Germany. We can only hope that enlistment will continue to increase. Canada's contribution to this war will go far beyond its military, however; Merchant convoys out of Halifax will prove integral to keeping Britain well supplied in the face of German U-Boat blockades, and we can expect Canada (and with some luck the United States), to ensure those merchant boats are well stocked with supplies. Ultimately, caution will have to be the main policy when considering the war effort in Canada. Its French Canadian population has not taken well to wars in the name of Britain in the past, and most of its population would prefer to fight in defense of their homeland than on the offensive in Europe. This being said, support for the war can be improved, and I am confident that Canada's military contributions can grow. One has to only look to the First World War, where more than 7% of the country – 600000 soldiers – enlisted to fight, to see the type of contribution Canada can provide. Thus, with regards to Canada, we must have two main goals: Grow its industry capabilities to supply our armies, and grow support for Britain to enlist as many men as possible – perhaps, if French Canadian support can be found, enough for conscription.

Australia is another Dominion with very strong ties to Britain. They were almost universally supportive of our declaration of war, and can be counted on to provide consistent backing for our war effort. This being said, just how much Australia can contribute is up in the air. They have, as previously noted, traditionally relied on Britain militarily, and conscription is opposed by most in the country when it comes to overseas service. Conscription is in effect in the Citizen Military Forces, but the CMF is solely a militia to protect Australia at home. Besides, it is doubtful that the CMF would be enough to satisfy even Australia's defensive needs, because unlike Canada, Australia faces a legitimate and immediate threat from Japan. If Singapore falls – not something we'd like to have happen, of course, but a possibility nonetheless – Australia could be in danger of invasion. As the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, I will not allow this to happen, and this means Australia protecting itself with more than just a militia. Along with increasing Australian military capabilities, Britain must itself protect Australia, and if we cannot then we must call on other countries to lend support. In any event, I will work to strengthen Australia's military along with their industry so that they can support us in the most effective manner possible.

New Zealand is an interesting case in the war, primarily because it has some political opposition to the war in the form of a Communist Party. While legislation could be enacted to silence this party, it is important to remember that doing so would upset the Soviet Union. And considering that we'd like to bring the Soviet Union to our side in the war, upsetting them by destroying the Communist parties in New Zealand and elsewhere could be a mistake. Of course, given the incredible ideological differences between our own society and Communism, we should not allow these parties to grow too much, but they could be an effective bargaining chip

with the Soviet Union. Secondly, conscription is very much a possibility in New Zealand, although a large, war-changing event may be required to trigger it. With or without conscription though, the needs of New Zealand and of Britain will have to be carefully balanced regarding the military.

South Africa, the final large dominion nation I will discuss, is another country where the political situation is interesting. The admirable Jan Smuts is in control of the country, and is firmly pro-British, but the Herenigde National Party – a major political force – are not. There is even a pro Nazi movement, the Ossewabrandwag, led by Jon Vorster. These individuals hold no value to us except to hurt our war effort, and thus should be silenced. South Africa also has its own problems with regard to manpower, as its fighting units are only composed of white men, with non-whites completely excluded. While attempting to put non-whites into combat units would be a best case scenario, they may have to work in labour units. Regardless, improving South African war capacity is a large priority, and working to create conditions favourable for some sort of conscription – even if it is only for white men - would be beneficial.

In sum, the Dominion nations will be integral to Britain winning this war. I look forward to promoting Britain, increasing their contributions to the war, and ultimately destroying the Axis powers.

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