

PSF: London Naval Conference
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON
JAN 13 1936
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January 8 1936
DIVISION OF FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS
DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS
DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
8 1936
file
guy

My dear Mr. President:

It is obvious that the Japanese have no intention of accepting any agreement in London which will not recognize their demand for parity with the American and British navies and it seems perfectly clear to me that there is very little use in continuing the discussions too long in London in the face of this apparently fixed attitude of the Japanese Government. I am attaching hereto, therefore, a draft of a telegram to our Delegation in London which I would like to submit for your consideration.

This draft has received the approval of the Secretary of the Navy and the Acting Chief of Naval Operations, and, if you concur in its sense as now drafted, I shall be very glad to send it forward as soon as you may let me know that it meets with your approval.

Faithfully yours,

Woodrow Wilson
JAN 9 - 1936
OK
guy

Enclosure:
Draft of telegram.

The President,
The White House.

98

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CONFIDENTIAL FILE

FILED

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PSF:
London
Naval Conf - 1936
Dinner 1

January 14, 1938

Dear Norman:

Yours of December twentieth and twenty-first have only just come. Why the delay I don't know.

I have, of course, followed all of the developments from the time you got to London. I think you are right in being patient and tactful but without any thought as to making concessions as to principle.

Apparently your relations with the British and especially their point of view make your task in this respect more easy than last year.

Over here, the general tenor of press dispatches continues to give the impression that it is Japan and not any other power that is blocking some sort of agreement, even a modus vivendi.

I was a little afraid that my message to Congress might cause a great deal of bitterness in Japan, Germany and Italy, but apparently it was taken very calmly. In any event what I said had to be said not only for the record but in order to solidify the forces of non-aggression.

Things here are going well in spite of Supreme Court majority opinion and Hearst and Alfred E. Smith, and an 85% newspaper opposition. I still worry about world affairs more than domestic problems which includes election.

Sincerely yours,

ad

Honorable Norman Davis,
London, England.

PSF:
London Naval Conf
(12) (1)

File Personal

DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Claridge's Hotel,
London.
January 30, 1936.

Personal and Confidential.

My dear Mr. President:

I am pleased to receive your letter of January 14th but can not account for the delay in my letters to you.

Once it became a foregone conclusion that the Japanese would leave the Conference it was better to have them do so with the full onus upon themselves and with the united rejection by the other Powers of the unreasonable Japanese proposals.

I must say that our relations with the British have improved remarkably since last year. They have stood with us, taking their full share of responsibility without any attempt to pass the buck to us. Whatever tendency there was before to coddle Japan, in the hope of thus placating her, has disappeared. At one time Craigie did want to postpone coming to grips with the fundamental principles raised by Japan, in the hope that we could play along and ultimately get Japan to agree to qualitative limitation. I was convinced that this would be construed by Japan as a weakening on our part, and would only serve to make her sorer than ever once her proposals were rejected, as they inevitably would be. I also felt that any further flirting with the matter would make us look ridiculous. Accordingly,

I

The Honorable
Franklin D. Roosevelt,
The White House.

I had a frank talk with my friend Eden, who, by the way, is a real friend of ours. He agreed entirely with my views and overruled Craigie. Monsell, the First Lord of the Admiralty also agreed with me.

We have had some differences recently with the British with regard to the effect which the Japanese withdrawal may have had upon the preliminary understandings which we reached last fall with regard to qualitative limitation as to cruisers, battleships and calibre guns and about which we have cabled fully. This, however, is primarily a difference of view as to approach and will, I am satisfied, be cleared up.

I was at first afraid that when we got into the Four Power discussions, there would be an effort to bring in European political questions but such has not been the case. The only European question so far raised has been between England and France as to the advisability of bringing Germany ultimately into the negotiations. The indications are now that they will compromise on this by dealing with Germany and perhaps Russia in the same way that they do Japan, namely, that if and when the Four Powers reach an agreement, these other Powers will be informed of it and will be invited to adhere before the end of this year. I question whether it will be politically possible for the Japanese Government to become a party to such treaty but the British feel confident that they can get Germany and Russia to accept such a treaty, which will have considerable effect on Japan and that after the Japanese elections next May, the Japanese point of view will change somewhat and that before the end of the year if Great Britain

and

DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

-3-

and the United States together approach Japan on the subject, the possibilities are that she will accept or at least that she would not attempt to go counter to the provisions of the treaty or to alter the existing status quo.

When I read your message to Congress and your tribute to dictators with aggressive designs, I wanted to hug you. It was an excellent and wise thing to do.

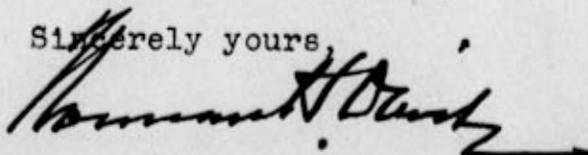
I was also very proud of your veto of the bonus, although I presume it will be passed over your veto.

I have just read Al Smith's outburst before the Liberty League, which I think was a shameful performance. Of course, the fact is that Al's attitude today is just the same as it was at the time of the convention and before there had been any New Deal legislation whatsoever. From this distance, it seems to me, however, that he will be unable to affect a single vote and that you have been gaining ground of late. Certainly I must say that it seems to me you have acted very wisely and courageously under the circumstances. I am proud of you. Your prestige in Europe is tremendous.

I presume we will be here about two weeks longer because if we can agree we ought to get through very quickly.

With warm regards and best wishes, I am as ever,

Sincerely yours,



P5F: London Naval Conference

file confidential

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

February 1, 1936

*London Naval Conf - 36.
(S) number*

My dear Mr. President:

Upon looking into the matter of the possibility of having the instrument which might result from the deliberations now going on at the Naval Conference at London made in the form of an Executive Agreement, I find that it would be entirely proper for some matters now under discussion there to be incorporated in the form of an Executive Agreement to cover such points as might lie entirely within the executive power to carry out. There are, of course, other points under discussion, control over which would not lie exclusively within the executive power.

My own feeling is that at this stage of the negotiations it is not advisable to take any definite stand with regard to the form in which the final agreements will be drawn up, as any definite indication of a hesitancy to enter into a formal treaty on points upon which agreement

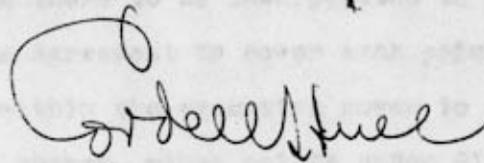
The President,
The White House.

agreement might be reached in a form which would correspond to positions we have definitely been in favor of might very easily be misinterpreted as a change of attitude on the part of this Government toward positions we have been maintaining up to the present. The delegation is keeping us currently informed of developments and we are following closely the progress of the negotiations and particularly the suggested drafts of the agreements as the discussion goes forward. Before the treaty is ready to be put into final form, we will thus be in a position to suggest the eventual form into which we would desire the various agreements to be incorporated. We might find it possible and advisable to have those matters coming within the jurisdiction and authority of the Executive to be put in the form of Executive Agreements, leaving the other matters in which Congress also exercises authority to be put in a formal treaty, or we might desire to have all the agreements incorporated in one instrument on the understanding that if it is not possible to present this entire instrument to the Senate for ratification at the present short session that the Executive will undertake to carry out those parts of the treaty which come within your exclusive jurisdiction, such as the notification of building construction and the general exchange of
information

information and any other agreements of a similar character.

If you concur in this method of handling the situation, it will not be necessary to give Mr. Davis any new instructions on the subject. I make this suggestion because, if the matter can be handled here as it develops in a way which would meet with your wishes, we would not have to disturb Mr. Davis in his plan of negotiation at the present time.

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Cordell Hull". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Cordell Hull".

PSF: London Naval Conference
Partly
paraphrased

~~sent~~
~~Part of this telegram~~
~~must be closely para-~~
~~phrased before being com-~~
~~municated to anyone. (B)~~

London

Dated February 3, 1936

Rec'd 7:05 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

83, February 3, 10 p.m. (GRAY)

Referring to your 29, January 29, 7 p.m. and
my 31, February 1, 7 p.m.

The British are unable to give any definite
assurance as to the ultimate tonnage of the light
surface category for the reasons outlined below:

France refuses now to commit herself as to the
ratio she intends to maintain relative to Germany.
Italy's construction will depend on that of France.
British building will in turn be influenced by
French and Italian as well as by Japanese building.
Under the Anglo-German agreement giving Germany a
thirty-five per cent ratio with the British fleet,
any increase in the latter would permit an increase
in the German fleet and thus again affect French
and Italian construction. This vicious circle makes
it impossible for the British to bind themselves in
advance with respect to their cruiser building
especially

sms Page 2 - No. 83, February 3 from London

especially as the French and Italians refuse to announce their programs for a period of more than one year. Again, the present Government can no more bind Parliament for a period of years without its consenting in some way, such as by ratification of a treaty, than our Government can bind Congress without its consent. Also, a Cabinet Committee is now sitting on the question of land, sea, and air defense of the Empire and no decision has been reached even as to what naval construction will be included in the budget for the financial year commencing next April.

Even if definite information and assurance could be obtained as to the amount of British construction, we believe it would be unwise to base a decision on such assurance unless it were in contractual form as this undoubtedly would lead to difficulties when the treaty was presented to the Senate and might cause future misunderstanding if the British found it necessary to exceed whatever program they may now contemplate.

However, it is apparent that, unless emergency

measures

sms Page 3 - No. 83, February 3, from London

measures are resorted to, the expansion of naval forces which can take place by January 1942 is naturally limited by available building facilities, the problem of personnel increase, et cetera, and finance.

Chatfield stated today that although he could not commit the British Government, the present intention of the Admiralty is to have sixty underage cruisers as soon as possible after 1942. The last of the cruisers necessary to attain sixty underage would be laid down in 1940 and completed in 1943. In addition they intend to retain ten overage cruisers so that in 1943 they would have sixty underage and ten overage cruisers. The majority but not all of the cruisers laid down would be of 8,000 tons, the remainder would be somewhere around 5,000 tons displacement. We estimate that the resultant increase in British underage cruiser tonnage will be between 125,000 and 150,000 tons and in addition ten overage cruisers of about 50,000 tons will be retained, so that the total increase over the cruiser tonnage allowed by present treaties will be between 175,000 and 200,000 tons. The British intend to maintain
150,000

ams Page 4 - No. 83, February 3, from London

150,000 tons of underage and 40,000 tons of overage destroyers, a total of 190,000 tons. (See my 82, February 3, 8 p.m.)

In this connection, it should be borne in mind that even on the basis of the fifty cruisers which the British were able to retain under the London Naval Treaty they would have to increase their total tonnage beyond the 339,000 provided by that treaty, because the replacement of their small war time cruisers by larger units would add approximately 70,000 tons to their present treaty strength. (See Craigie memorandum of July 25, 1934) The large increase in underage tonnage now forecast by the British is, therefore, not entirely due to an increase in numbers but is in part accounted for by the replacement of small cruisers built for special service in World War.

The question at issue is whether or not a treaty for qualitative limitation is of sufficient value to the United State for it to accept a building holiday in category A and 10,000 ton category B cruisers for a period of years. A decision on this question must be

(Paraphrase of page 5 of telegram No. 83, February 3, from Amdelgat, London).

be reached without definite assurance from the British either as to the ultimate tonnage of the light surface vessel category or as to the ultimate tonnage of any other category.

In view of the fact that we have eighteen category "A" and nine 10,000 ton category "B" cruisers built or building, Admiral Standley and I agree that we can afford to forego for a period of five or six years further construction of those two types. with the treaty reservations, of course, that there is no (repeat no) agreement implied or expressed either to continue the holiday beyond five or six years or to abolish these types, and upon the assumption that a qualitative agreement upon these terms is advantageous, we had been proceeding.

DAVIS.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 6, 1936.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

Will you speak to me
about this?

F. D. R.

PSF

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

February 5, 1936

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
THE UNDER SECRETARY
FEB 11 1936

My dear Mr. President:

You will recall that recent telegrams from the Naval Delegation in London have brought up the British proposal for a holiday in the building of 10,000 ton cruisers carrying 8-inch guns and 10,000 ton cruisers mounting 6-inch guns. We have discussed this matter very fully with the Navy Department and have requested and obtained additional information on the subject from the Delegation at London. I am attaching hereto copies of two pertinent telegrams from London on the subject, but I am quoting the last two paragraphs of Mr. Davis' No. 83 of February 3, as this, in my opinion, presents the nucleus of the question:

"The question at issue is whether or not a treaty for qualitative limitation is of sufficient value to the United States for it to accept a building holiday in category A and 10,000 ton category B cruisers for a period of years. A decision on this question must be reached without definite assurance from the British either as to the ultimate tonnage of the light surface vessel category or as to the ultimate tonnage of any other category.

In G

The President,
The White House.

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"In view of the fact that we have eighteen category "A" and nine 10,000 ton category "B" cruisers built or building, Admiral Standley and I agree that we can afford to forego for a period of five or six years further construction of those two types with the treaty reservations, of course, that there is no (repeat no) agreement implied or expressed either to continue the holiday beyond five or six years or to abolish these types, and upon the assumption that a qualitative agreement upon these terms is advantageous, we had been proceeding."

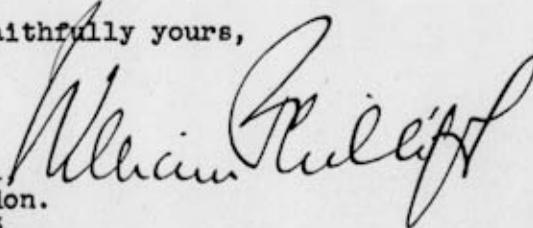
The Navy Department and ourselves have now reached the conclusion that we could very well acquiesce in the naval holiday on 10,000 ton cruisers and also accept the reclassification of light surface vessels, which in effect will be an amalgamation of destroyers and cruisers into one class which would comprise surface vessels from 100 tons to 8,000 tons.

Before communicating with the Delegation, however, I feel that we should have your considered decision in the matter as it is of course a step of rather considerable importance. I am therefore submitting herewith a draft of an instruction to the Delegation in London upon which I would be very grateful to have your comment.

Faithfully yours,

Enclosures:

Telegram 81, Feb. 1
from Amelgat, London.
Telegram 83, Feb. 3,
from Amelgat, London.
Draft telegram.



JS

Gray

LONDON

Dated February 1, 1936

Rec'd 4:45 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

21, February 1, 7 p.m.

Your No. 31, January 31, 7 p.m.

Replying to paragraph one General Board memorandum as to why the new proposed category light surface vessels (mentioned in our 76, January 30, 6 p.m.) does not include all of previous category (b) cruisers, British yesterday circulated a paper containing their proposals for new definitions. In this paper the former proposed definition (see also our 67, January 24, 8 p.m.) of "light surface vessels" has been changed to read as follows:

"Surface vessels of war other than aircraft carriers or exempt vessels, the standard displacement of which does not exceed 10,000 tons (10,160 metric tons) and which do not carry a gun above 8 inches (203 mm calibre).

The category of light surface vessels is divided into two sub-categories as follows:

A. Vessels carrying a gun above 6.1 inches (155 mm) calibre.

B. Vessels not carrying a gun above 6.1 inches (155 mm) calibre."

It will

-2-
From London, Feb. 1, #81.

It will be noted that 10,000 ton cruisers with 8 inch guns and 10,000 ton cruisers with 6 inch guns are now included in the definition of light surface vessels. The Delegation will insist that the treaty be so phrased that 10,000 ton cruisers of both sub-categories are still recognized as permissible types and that there is no agreement either expressed or implied to abolish these types or to continue the building holiday in these types beyond the date agreed upon. However, the British proposal with which we are in accord will defer further building of 10,000 ton cruisers with 8 inch guns and 6 inch gun cruisers above 8,000 tons for a definite period of years.

We are alive to the necessity for adequate escape clauses to cover every contingency, see our 72, January 26, 9 p.m.

Replying to paragraph two, it must be realized that in the absence of any limitation on the total tonnage of the light surface vessel category it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to obtain definite assurances as to the tonnage of this category. However, we will endeavor to ascertain from the British what, if any, definite information can be given as to their program and will further advise the Department on Monday.

DAVIS

KLP MEMB

DRAFT OF PROPOSED TELEGRAM

*File
Naval Conf - 36*

February 5, 1936

AMDELGAT,
LONDON (ENGLAND).

Your 81, February 1, 7 p.m. and 83, February 3,
10 p.m.

Upon the basis of the information and conditions contained in the above two telegrams, the Navy and State Departments agree that you may proceed with the discussion of a holiday for a period of five or six years in building Category A and 10,000-ton Category B cruisers with the reservation that there is no agreement, express or implied, either to abolish these types or continue the holiday period beyond five or six years.

On the basis of the information there is no objection to the reclassification of light surface vessels proposed by the British as reported in your 81, February 1, 7 p.m.

We are very anxious to receive even proposed tentative drafts of phraseology of provisions for a holiday as well as any other draft proposals as soon as they may be available.

PSF: London Naval Conference DCR



Handwritten initials: H, UK, JMR

RECEIVED DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FEB 8 - 1936

DEPARTMENT OF STATE WASHINGTON

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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

February 8, 1936

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS

My dear Mr. President:

Mr. Norman Davis has telegraphed from London requesting authority to add to our Delegation to the London Naval Conference - 1935, Captain Julius A. Furer, Assistant Naval Attaché, London, and Lieutenant Commander Leslie C. Stevens, Assistant Naval Attaché, London. Mr. Davis states that Admiral Standley desires Captain Furer's assistance in discussions which involve technical questions of construction and that he may find it necessary to call in Commander Stevens as an expert on aviation questions.

500 A 15-15-
Personnel

If Mr. Davis' request meets with your approval, I shall be glad to take the necessary steps to designate Captain Furer and Lieutenant Commander Stevens as technical assistants to the Delegation.

Faithfully yours,

Cordell Hull

The President,
The White House.

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FEB 11 1936

DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
FEB 11 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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PSF

DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

London Naval Conference *ACK*

FEB 13 1936

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE WASHINGTON

February 10, 1936

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

My dear Mr. President:

Norman Davis called us on the telephone this morning from London and said that as the work of the Naval Conference was developing now it is very possible that within a very short time they would proceed to the drafting of a treaty. He stated that he thought it would be advisable to send a lawyer from the State Department to assist them as legal adviser in the drafting. It seems to me that it probably would be advisable to send one of the Department's legal advisers over for this purpose, particularly in view of your suggestion that the instrument resulting from the Naval Conference be drawn up insofar as possible in the form of an Executive Agreement. The lawyer going from here could be given your instructions along these lines and thus could assist in the effort to follow out your suggestion as far as it may be possible.

As a means of refreshing your memory on the subject, I give here briefly the points upon which agreement has

The President,
The White House.

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Personnel*

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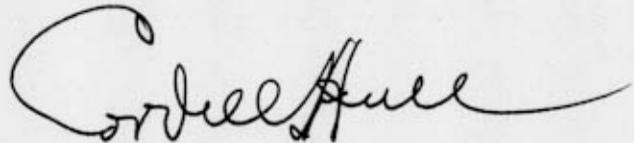
has either been already reached or upon which there is likelihood of reaching an agreement:

1. Advance notification and exchange of information with regard to naval construction.
2. Limitation of unit tonnage of capital ships.
3. Agreement on caliber of guns mounted on capital ships.
4. Limitation on unit tonnage of aircraft carriers and guns mounted on aircraft carriers.
5. Suspension of new building for a five or six year period of 10,000 ton cruisers.
6. Establishment of new category of "light surface vessels" including all vessels from 100 tons to 8,000 tons, except certain exempt and auxiliary vessels. Limitation of gun caliber to 6.1 inches on all new construction in this category.
7. Limitation of unit tonnage of new submarines to 2,000 tons.
8. Provision for no building between 10,000 and 20,000 tons (or at least a suspension of building within these limitations for the period of the treaty).
9. A specific "escape clause" in connection with the suspension of building of 10,000 ton cruisers.

10. A general "escape clause" in case any power did not abide by the qualitative limitation to be fixed by the new treaty.

If it should meet with your approval to send a legal expert from the Department, I would suggest that Mr. Jacob A. Metzger, Assistant to the Legal Adviser of the Department of State, be designated for this duty. Mr. Davis further suggested that in order that he be available as soon as possible ~~whoever~~ is ordered to this duty sail from New York on the Steamship WASHINGTON on Wednesday, February 12. I should be grateful, therefore, to have your comment on this suggestion at your convenience.

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Cordell Hull". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed text "Faithfully yours,".

PSF: London house 12/6

DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

*file
Confidential*

Claridge's,
London,
February 18, 1936.

My dear Mr. President:

I realize, of course, that there are reasons why you should desire to avoid just now raising the question of battleship construction. However, my opinion is that it may be necessary and also expedient to do so before the adjournment of Congress. The British inform us confidentially that they intend to lay down two or three battleships this year and a corresponding number for each of the next four years. If therefore we do not make provision to lay down at least two this year, the first thing we know the British will be way ahead of us and then it will look as if we are building to catch up with the British. It seems to me therefore that once the British announce their building program, which they will probably do within the next thirty days, you would then be justified in asking Congress for an appropriation. While we have now tentatively

agreed

The President,
The White House.

agreed to increase the age of battleships to twenty six years, you would have the justification by explaining that even if we should build two battleships a year for the next few years some of our battleships would be thirty years old before their replacements are completed.

As ever, faithfully yours,

Wm. H. Duff

PSF; London Naval
Conference

DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

*file
confidential*

Claridge's Hotel,
London, February 18, 1936.

My dear Mr. President:

As I have explained in recent dispatches, the chief remaining obstacle to naval agreement is the question of German participation. The Anglo-German naval agreement has a hole in it in that while it binds Germany to a maximum fleet of thirty-five percent of the British, it only obligates the Germans to maintain the same types as the British provided there is a general naval agreement limiting types. For the British as well as for the French it is most important to get Germany tied into a general agreement but our French friends, for political and other reasons, wish to trade on the British desire to tie Germany into a general agreement. The danger of the situation is that the Germans and the French are both in a position to hold a hammer over the British, the Germans refusing to go in unless they are original parties to a treaty, and the French refusing to go in if the Germans are original parties. The British, however, are becoming irritated, particularly at the French and I am inclined to believe they will find some way to break the impasse.

The Honorable
Franklin D. Roosevelt,
Washington, D. C.

The British claim that the French are largely to blame for the growing menace of German rearmament and that it could have been prevented had the French not been so unwise and unreasonable as to refuse to accept the British Draft Disarmament Convention in the spring of 1933, which the Germans had agreed to as a basis for negotiations. The British also point out to the French that they missed another chance to hold Germany in line when they refused to accept the proposal, which Eden brought back from his visit to Hitler a year and a half ago, to limit the German air force to fifty percent of the French, with the result that the situation is now reversed. The British also defend their naval agreement with Germany on the ground that, in view of German air and land rearmament, the military clauses of the Treaty of Versailles had become a fiction and they did not propose to miss the opportunity so offered by the Germans for limiting German naval rearmament. In addition the British claim that this naval agreement was distinctly advantageous to France, which the French admit is true. The crux of the difference between the two of them is that the French want the British to commit themselves so definitely with France for the maintenance of the status quo in Europe as to close the door to any possible appeasement with Germany.

The British, on the other hand, feel that while they must increase their own armaments as a protection against Germany, they should not overlook the possibility of exercising a moral influence over Germany to bring about an appeasement which would avert an ultimate war and which is all to the advantage of France as well as themselves. They furthermore contend that the French should know that in the last analysis Great Britain has to defend France, and that the French should realize that it is not in their own interests to have the British so tie themselves up as to leave only the alternative of war.

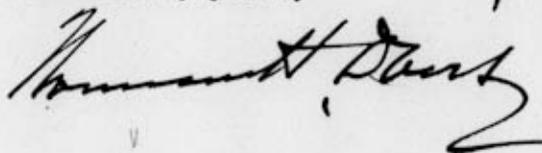
Unfortunately, nearly all of the political leaders in Europe and even here are now thinking of how best to prepare for the war which they think Germany is going to force upon them and giving no thought to how to avert such a war. Anthony Eden is one of the few who seems to have the vision to realize that while it is necessary to be prepared for any eventuality, it is vitally important to consider constructive ways and means to prevent war. Eden has told me in great confidence that while it is necessary to be well armed in order to exercise any influence over Germany, he is giving considerable thought to what might be done in a big and constructive way to give a sufficient measure of satisfaction to Germany to curb the war spirit and to avert war. He recognizes, however,

-4-

that a sop will not be sufficient and that it has to be something big and comprehensive. If he should be able to work out such a solution, it would be in connection with the real reduction and limitation in armaments. Eden therefore thinks that a naval agreement is of vital importance, not only in order to avoid a naval race, but also in order that this may help pave the way to subsequent agreements as to land and air armaments. He is accordingly very averse to the French desire to make a naval agreement conditional upon a general political settlement.

With warm regards and best wishes, I
am, as ever,

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ramsay MacDonald". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

PSF: London Naval Conference #

*W.P.
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last page
Other view OK
HRR*

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

February 20, 1936

Dear Mr. President:

Under instructions the French Ambassador called upon us to make an appeal with regard to a reduction in tonnage of capital ships. His instructions, moreover, authorized him to take the matter up with you personally, which, however, he does not feel it necessary to do.

Our suggestion is contained in the accompanying instruction to Davis, which, with your approval, I would like to read to deLaboulaye. In this way we would be steering the negotiations away from Washington and back to London, where they belong.

Faithfully yours,

William Phillips

Enclosure.

The President,
The White House.

THE UNDER SECRETARY
FEB 20 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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FEB 21 1936
DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

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DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Claridge's Hotel,
London,
February 24, 1936.

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Denver 11-36*

My dear Mr. President:

At a luncheon on Friday I had a rather interesting talk with Grandi (with whom I have been on very friendly terms for several years) which I think will be of interest to you. Grandi, who was called to Rome recently for a meeting of the Council of State, showed concern about what the present situation may lead to. He intimated that he is not particularly in Mussolini's good graces. Being more of a Liberal, he realizes the dangers of dictatorship, but he is nevertheless a patriot and loyal to Mussolini. He said that he knew Mussolini most intimately and for that reason he was quite concerned about the future; that while Mussolini is not a statesman, he said that he is essentially a genius and a poet which leads him to do things at times which may not be good statesmanship. He said that he was particularly anxious to have the Abyssinian question

settled

The President,

The White House.

settled quickly because otherwise it would lead to disastrous results. In substance he says that Mussolini will not give in and that he can see three possible alternatives: first, combine with Germany; second, lead a Communist revolution in Italy, or third, a 50-50 settlement of the Abyssinian question. Either of the first two, as Grandi sees it, would be disastrous and the only hope is the 50-50 settlement. Grandi said that in his opinion such a settlement should be brought about by direct negotiations between England and Italy without the intervention of France but with the full cooperation of the League itself and that he felt it was greatly in the interests of Italy to remain in the League and to help strengthen the League.

As I cabled to Washington, Grandi also told me he doubted if Mussolini would commit himself definitely to a naval agreement until the Abyssinian question is settled. My distinct impression was that Grandi and possibly Mussolini are most eager for a settlement but that if he should settle the naval question without any quid pro quo it would

be

-3-

be difficult to explain to the Italian people and
he would be giving up a card that might help him
bring about a general settlement.

With best wishes, I am, as ever,

Faithfully yours,

Samuel H. Davis

PSF: London ~~NAWE~~
Conference
Bot 157

9

DIVISION OF WESTERN
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
FEB 28 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON
February 27, 1936

1936 FEB 27 PM 3 56

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

WP OK

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File

Dear Mr. President:

A further telegram from Norman Davis just received requires new instructions, and I should be grateful if you would kindly indicate whether the proposed draft reply meets with your approval.

You will note that the Italians will not now join in any naval agreement. In these circumstances Davis suggests three alternatives: First, an agreement to be signed by England, France and the United States (Germany to be brought in later); Second, in case France should refuse to sign now, the suggestion is that we and Great Britain initial a treaty to which all the naval powers would be invited to adhere. Davis's third alternative is not clear to me, but it is possible

The President,
The White House.

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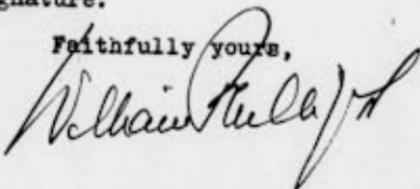
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that it refers to our No. 46, of February 25th, in which we offer to leave with the British Government a memorandum of the type of treaty we could accept, providing it is accepted by the principal naval powers.

As a matter of fact all of Davis' inquiries have already been answered by us except authorizing him to sign a three power agreement (England, France and the United States). But that point also was disposed of in our original instructions to the American Delegation, authorizing the signature of a three power treaty in the event that there could not be a five power signature or a four power signature.

Faithfully yours,



Enclosure:
Draft telegram.

PSF: Loidon
Naval
Conference

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 28, 1936.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

What would you think of sending a telegram to Davis asking him to try to get even a gentleman's agreement from Great Britain, France, Italy (and through England from Germany) whereby each nation would agree to notify the other of every decision to lay down Naval vessels of any size over one hundred tons?

If such a gentleman's agreement could be obtained these four or five powers could then jointly or severally invite Japan to do the same thing.

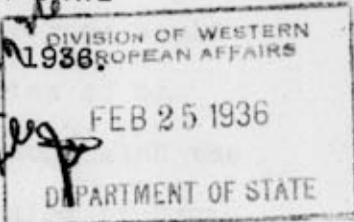
F. D. R.



Approved by the President and dept telegram also approved by the President

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON FEBRUARY 25 1936



Dear Mr. President:

May I call your attention to the telegram just received from Norman Davis? You will note that the British have asked Davis whether, if France and Italy continue to oppose conditions and to put an impossible price on their adherence, we would be disposed to enter into a naval agreement with Great Britain and Germany to which the other powers would be invited to adhere. To this Davis said that he was inclined to believe that there might be serious objections.

The British then suggested that, if we object to an American Anglo-German treaty, we might be willing to sign an Anglo-American agreement, thus permitting England to undertake bilateral agreements with Germany and possibly with France and thereafter that, acting together, the British and American Governments might be able to bring Japan into such an agreement.

The President

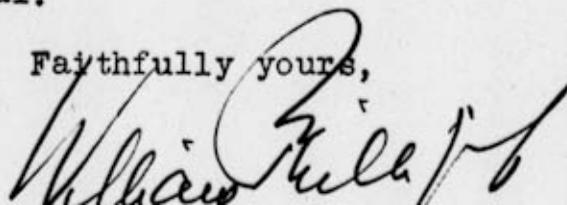
The White House.

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FEB 25 1936

Davis has very properly held that it would be better to have one treaty, to which everyone would be invited to adhere, instead of a series of bilateral agreements. Thereupon he has suggested the drafting of a naval treaty to be initialed by Great Britain and the United States and then, by an exchange of notes, agree to invite the other naval powers to adhere. If, therefore, we follow Davis' thought in this connection, we would find ourselves, together with Great Britain, obliged to appeal to the principal naval powers to forget their political difficulties and differences and sign up with us.

We in the Department feel that this might be unfortunate and that it might be wiser for us to throw the burden on the British Government, as the inviting power to the conference, to obtain, if she can, the other signatures. With this in mind, we have drafted a brief instruction to London, which expresses our viewpoint, but which we naturally shall not send without your approval.

Faithfully yours,



PARAPHRASE OF TELEGRAM

FROM: American Delegation, London.
TO: Secretary of State, Washington.
DATED: February 25, 1936, 8 p.m.
NO. 105.

FOR THE SECRETARY'S CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.

I was told last evening by Craigie and Monsell of their conversations with the French on Friday and Saturday and with the Italians yesterday.

As far as capital ships were concerned they wished to defer their decision until a reply from Washington had been received by them. (Your reply of last Thursday had apparently not been transmitted to Corbin). Concerning a general agreement the position was taken by the French that they would either sign a protocol providing for the participation by Germany as an original participant in the initial treaty, conditional upon the settlement of other questions, such as an air agreement, prior to the date of signature, or sign at a fixed date a four-power treaty which would permit subsequent adherence of other powers including Germany, but which would not be conditional upon German adherence. The first alternative was rejected by the British but they stated that they would take up the second alternative with Germany, in order to ascertain

whether

whether Germany would later participate in an agreement without specific provision being made beforehand, since without the assurance that Germany will come in the British are unwilling to conclude a four-party treaty. Craigie felt confident that Germany would come along on these conditions but Monsell is very doubtful of it.

The Italians indicated, in substance, that they would find justification for signing a naval agreement difficult as long as sanctions were being applied against Italy unless they could at least show that something, even a slight reduction in the tonnage of capital ships, has been gained by such an agreement. However, they did not definitely refuse to do so and it is believed that they are endeavoring to use this as a means of bringing pressure to bear for initiating a move for the future peaceful settlement of the Abyssinian question.

We were then asked by Monsell whether we would be disposed to enter into a naval agreement with Great Britain and Germany, ^{to} which the other powers would be invited to adhere and which he believed would bring the others in very quickly, if France and Italy continued to impose so many conditions and to put an impossible price on their adherence. This was a matter to which we would have to give very careful consideration, I told him, but there might be serious objections to it, I was inclined to think.

If

If we objected to entering into an American Anglo-German treaty, to which other powers would be invited to adhere, we might sign, the British suggested, an Anglo-American agreement and then England could enter into a bilateral agreement with Germany and likewise with France if it was feasible to do this. Later on the United States and Great Britain might be able to bring Japan into such an agreement. While I realize that it might be possible to work this out through a series of bilateral agreements, I told them, my first thought on the subject was that it would be advisable to have one treaty to which all the naval powers would be invited to adhere instead of a series of bilateral agreements between various governments. We might consider the possibility of going ahead and drafting a naval treaty as contemplated to be initialed by the United States and Great Britain, I suggested, and then we could agree to invite the other naval powers to adhere by an exchange of notes. As between ourselves we might also agree to exchange information and so much as the other powers did not depart therefrom to adhere to the principles of the treaty. While I was not prepared to commit the United States in any way to such ends, I told them, we would give the matter consideration and consult Washington concerning it if it appealed to them.

them.

The idea appealed to them very much, the British replied, as it would have the advantage of avoiding complications because of the susceptibility of the Germans and the French and would perhaps be the most likely and practical way of bringing these two nations and all the other naval powers into line during the course of the next twelve months.

The views of the President and yourself as to these various suggestions would be very much appreciated by me for our guidance.

DAVIS

*Handled to Mr. Tolson
lost of [unclear]
referred to [unclear]*

*W. G. C. [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear]*

*W. G. C. [unclear]
(54, Feb 29, 4pm) PSF; London Naval Conf.*

*file
gang*

~~W. G. C.~~



PM 2 51

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

DIVISION OF WESTERN
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
MAR 4 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

February 29, 1936.

Dear Mr. President:

Two telegrams have been received this morning from Norman Davis in regard to dealing with the proposed naval treaty in certain eventualities. I fear it will be necessary to ask you to be so good as to read both despatches, which are difficult to summarize intelligently, and I enclose them herewith.

I attach also our draft reply, for your consideration, and which, I feel, deals with all the contingencies raised by Davis.

As I am leaving this evening for Boston to attend the funeral of John Coolidge, Jimmie Dunn will be at your service at any time and will call at the White House after you have

approved

The President

The White House.

500-A 15-A 5/702

MAR 5 1936

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approved the message or made such alterations
as you may desire. He will take charge of
it and bring it to the State Department for
despatch.

Faithfully yours,

William Brewster

PSF: London Naval Conference

Page 3 To Amelgat, London February 29, 1936

As far as Germany is concerned, an American-Anglo-German Treaty seems inadvisable. I suggest the British be informed that in view of the essentially European aspects of the German Navy and the fact that the German Navy even under the proposed Treaty would not exceed more than approximately a third of the total British naval force, the United States would greatly prefer a bilateral British-German arrangement if based essentially on their ratios as at present agreed upon.

PSF: London Naval Conf. *Mark*

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

1936 MAR 14 10 22 March 11, 1936

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
MR. CARR
MAR 14 1936

THE UNDER SECRETARY
MAR 12 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

My dear Mr. President:

Senator Trammell, Chairman of the Naval Affairs

Committee in the Senate, has asked the Department for use in connection with draft legislation on the subject, whether it will be necessary for the United States to scrap its excess tonnage in each category of naval vessels in excess of the limits set forth in the London Treaty before December 31, 1936, and, further, whether the State Department has any information or assurances which would indicate that Japan and Great Britain interpret the treaty in the same way, and whether they intend to scrap their excess tonnage also.

We have drawn up a letter to Senator Trammell, copy of which I enclose herewith, stating the position of this Government as we see it in the matter, and I might say, also, that this letter has been shown informally to the Navy Department and has received their approval.

In

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The President,
The White House.

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DIVISION OF WESTERN
Hemispheric Affairs
MAR 10 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

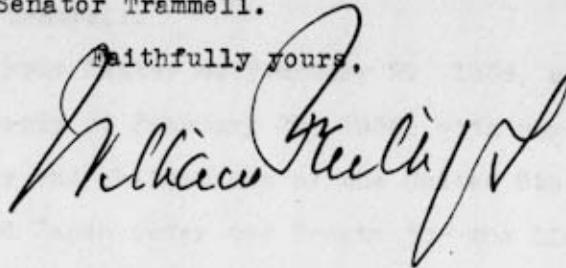
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MAR 21 1936

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In order that you may be fully informed of all developments in connection with the naval situation, the Secretary has asked me to lay this letter before you for any comment you may care to make before it is sent forward to Senator Trammell.

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "William Brewster". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed text "Faithfully yours,".

Enclosure:
Draft of letter to
Senator Park Trammell.

COPY

Department of State
Washington

In reply refer to
WE 500.A 15 A 3/1768

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

My dear Senator Trammell:

I refer to your letter of February 21 1936, and to my preliminary reply of February 27, 1936, with regard to the intentions and obligations of the United States, Great Britain and Japan under the Treaty for the Limitation and Reduction of Naval Armament signed at London, April 22, 1930, with respect to the scrapping of excess naval tonnage. You request on behalf of the Committee on Naval Affairs this Department's interpretation of certain provisions of the London Naval Treaty. You inquire specifically (1) whether it will be necessary for the United States to scrap the tonnage in each category in excess of the limits set forth in the London Treaty by December 31, 1936; (2) whether this Department has any

The Honorable

Park Trammell,

United States Senate.

any information or assurance which would indicate that Japan and Great Britain interpret the treaty in the same way and that they intend to scrap their excess tonnage in like manner.

The obligation regarding the scrapping of tonnage under the London Naval Treaty of April 22, 1930, is set forth in Part III, Article 16. I enclose for convenient reference a copy of the Treaty. The article referred to will be found on page 23. It will be noted that this article states that the completed tonnage in the cruiser, destroyer and submarine categories as given in a table embodied therein "is not to be exceeded on the 31st December, 1936" and, furthermore, that "Vessels which cause the total tonnage in any category to exceed the figures given in the foregoing table shall be disposed of gradually during the period ending on the 31st December, 1936."

This Department believes that the intent of the foregoing provision is unmistakable and that under it the process of scrapping tonnage in excess of the amounts given must be completed by December 31, 1936.

This Government has no specific information as to the interpretation placed upon Article 16 of the treaty by the other signatories thereto. It has, however, no

reason

reason to doubt, in view of the unequivocal language of the provision cited, that their interpretation corresponds with its own.

This provision however, is subject to an exception. Should any contracting power desire to retain tonnage in excess of the figures embodied in the table given in Article 16, it may do so under the terms of Article 21. (See page 26 of the enclosed copy of the treaty.) In such event "that High Contracting Party will notify the other Parties to Part III as to the increase required to be made in its own tonnages within one or more of the categories of such vessels of war, specifying particularly the proposed increases and the reasons therefor, and shall be entitled to make such increase. Thereupon the other Parties to Part III of this Treaty shall be entitled to make a proportionate increase in the category or categories specified * * * ."

Up to the present this Government has received no formal notification that one or other of the parties to Part III of the London Treaty intends to invoke Article 21. However, one of the technical advisers to the British delegation at the Naval Conference now in progress at London has informally indicated to the chief American delegate to the Conference that the British intend to scrap all cruisers in excess of the 339,000 tons permitted by treaty by December 31,

ber 31, 1936, and to invoke the "escalator clause" (Article 21) in order to retain 40,000 tons in destroyers which would otherwise have to be scrapped.

No information regarding the intentions of the Japanese Government with respect to the scrapping of excess tonnage has come to the attention of this Government.

I would reiterate that this Government has no evidence which would indicate that the interpretation placed on the provisions by the other signatories to the treaty differ from its own. I feel confident that in the event that one or the other country decides to invoke the "escalator clause" and retain any excess tonnage it will duly inform the other signatories to Part III of the London Treaty. Finally, I see no reason to doubt that such scrapping as may be obligatory upon the signatories to Part III of the London Treaty will be accomplished in accord with the terms of Article 16, which require that the scrapping shall be effected "during the period ending on the 31st December, 1936."

In view of the confidential character of this letter I shall be grateful if the Committee will take precautions to safeguard its contents from becoming public.

Sincerely yours,

Enclosure:
Treaty Series, No. 830.

P.S. London Name Log.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
RECEIVED
MAR 16 1936
DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

THE UNDER SECRETARY
MAR 14 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

*MR
W
FDR*

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

March 14, 1936

My dear Mr. President:

I am enclosing copies of Norman Davis' telegrams, No. 137, March 13, and 138 of March 14, with regard to the question of our delegation's initialing or signing the naval treaty in London now, and the possibility of ratification being required at the present session of the Senate. I am also enclosing a draft of a telegram which I would suggest sending to the delegation with a view to having them so arrange the initialing or signing of the treaty as far as we are concerned in a manner which will not commit us to the presentation of the treaty for ratification before the adjournment of Congress, as I understand it is your desire not to have the treaty presented for ratification at this session.

570 A 15a 5

I would be very grateful if you would give me your comment as to whether this draft telegram would meet with your approval.

Faithfully yours,

William Phillips

Enclosures:
Telegrams 137 and
138 from Amdelgat,
London, and draft
telegram in reply.

The President,
The White House.

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MAR 16 1936

PSF
London Naval Conf

D. PAI RECEIVED
MAR 23 1936
DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
MAR 20 1936
DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

THE UNDER SECRETARY
MAR 20 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

March 19, 1936

RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
MAR 24 1936
PM 3 44

My dear Mr. President:

1729

Norman Davis has just sent us a telegram, No. 146, a copy of which I enclose, suggesting that a declaration of policy be agreed to as between the United States and Great Britain to the effect that, notwithstanding that the new naval treaty has no provision for quantitative limitation, the Governments of the United States and Great Britain intend to avoid at least as between themselves competition in naval construction, that parity as between their naval requirements has become an established principle acceptable to both Governments and countries, and that adherence to this principle will contribute to the furtherance of friendly relations between them.

I am not at all sure that it is advisable that this question arise at all at this moment, as I believe both Governments have been acting on the supposition that parity was an established principle between them.

However,

The President,
The White House.

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MAR 23 1936

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However, as the matter has come up, I have drafted a reply to Mr. Davis which agrees with his suggestion, but asks that the arranging of such a declaration by our two Governments be made in a manner which will avoid any appearance of an agreement between the two countries which might raise the question of ratification on our part, and also that there appears to be no need for any undue publicity with regard to such an arrangement.

I would be grateful to have an expression of your opinion on this question.

Faithfully yours,

William Phillips

Enclosure:
Telegram 146,
March 19, 4 p.m.
from Amelgat, London.
Draft reply.

N.P.

*Instructions along lines
of President's direction
Telephoned to Mr Davis
at 7:30 PM March 20, 1926.*

File

*Will you change in
accordance with our
consequence?*

FOR

TSF: London Naval Inf

THE UNDER SECRETARY
MAR 20 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

March 20, 1936

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
RECEIVED
MAR 23 1936
DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
MAR 20 1936
DIVISION OF
WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
President:

file UK
JNR

I am enclosing a copy of a telegram from Norman Davis which is in two sections. The first section of this telegram describes the reasons for a protocol of signature to be entered into by France, Great Britain and ourselves at the time of signing the naval treaty. This protocol provides for exchange of information on any construction which might take place in the interval between January 1 and the coming into force of the treaty, and permits of consultation between the signatories in the event of the construction of any other power at any time before the treaty comes into force rendering it desirable that the treaty be changed before coming into force. Section 2 of Mr. Davis' telegram gives the actual text of the protocol of signature. It appears advisable to us to enter into this arrangement to take care of the gap between the 1st of January and the date of the treaty coming into force, which will, of course, be delayed as far as we are

The President,
The White House.

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MAR 23 1936

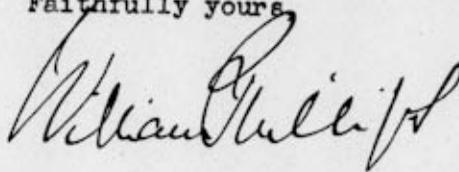
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are concerned by the necessity for ratification by the Senate.

I might say that this protocol of signature is not in a form which would require the ratification of the Senate, but calls only for action which probably comes within the jurisdiction of the Executive.

If this protocol of signature meets with your approval, I shall be very glad so to inform Mr. Davis.

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "William Phillips". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "William Phillips".

Enclosure:
Telegram 149,
March 19, 11 p.m.
from Amdelgat, London.

*PSF
London Naval Conf.*

THE UNDER SECRETARY
MAR 20 1936
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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MAR 23 1936
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COMMUNICATIONS

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MAR 20 1936 *file*
DIVISION OF *file*
WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

*W.P.
EK
FOR*

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON
March 20, 1936

My dear Mr. President:

You will recall that the so-called Part IV of the London Naval Treaty prescribed rules of submarine warfare, as follows:

"Article 22.

"The following are accepted as established rules of International Law:

"(1) In their action with regard to merchant ships, submarines must conform to the rules of International Law to which surface vessels are subject.

"(2) In particular, except in the case of persistent refusal to stop on being duly summoned, or of active resistance to visit or search, a warship, whether surface vessel or submarine, may not sink or render incapable of navigation a merchant vessel without having first placed passengers, crew and ship's papers in a place of safety. For this purpose the ship's boats are not regarded as a place of safety unless the safety of the passengers and crew is assured, in the existing sea and weather conditions, by the proximity of land, or the presence of another vessel which is in a position to take them on board.

"The High Contracting Parties invite all other Powers to express their assent to the above rules."

You

The President,
The White House.

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MAR 23 1936

500-A-15-A-5 SUBMARINES/5 G

*570 A-15-25
Submarines*

You will further recall that under Article 23 of the London Treaty it was stated that, "The present Treaty shall remain in force until the 31st December, 1936, subject to the following exceptions:

"(1) Part IV shall remain in force without limit of time.

"(2) Etc."

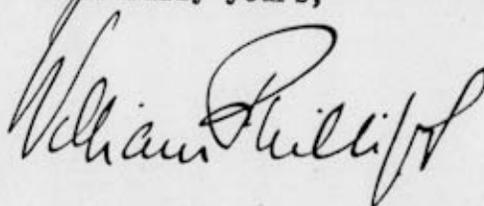
In view of the fact that the French and the Italians never acceded to the London Naval Treaty, the acceptance of the rules as to submarine warfare, as laid down in Part IV of that Treaty, are now applicable only to the United States, Great Britain and Japan as parties to the Treaty. It has always been desired that these rules be subscribed to by other nations, in fact, all of the nations of the world, if possible. At the present naval conference at London, it has been decided that the best way to obtain general adherence to these rules would be to embody them in an instrument separate from the new treaty and endeavor to obtain adherence to this instrument by as many nations as possible. It has now been decided that the nations signatory to the new naval treaty shall in a procès-verbal separate from the treaty itself authorize the British Government to invite all other governments to adhere to a declaration embodying the rules of

international

international law concerning submarine warfare to which the United States, Great Britain and Japan are now expressly committed under the London Naval Treaty of 1930. As there appears to be some question whether the full powers our delegates now have will authorize them to sign such a procès-verbal, I would suggest that you permit us specifically to authorize our delegates to sign a "procès-verbal designed to obtain further accessions to the rules of international law concerning submarine warfare to which the United States as well as the United Kingdom and Japan are now expressly committed under the London Naval Treaty of 1930."

We consider it highly desirable to obtain general express recognition of these important rules and I feel sure that you will agree that it would be most advisable for us to lend our cooperation to obtaining the adherence of other powers to these methods of warfare.

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "William Phillips". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

*File
Confidential*

March 30, 1936

*PSF: Naval Combs
Danner 1-36*

My dear Mr. President:

In your memorandum of March 21, 1936, you raise the question as to whether, if prior to ratification of the Naval Treaty, another Power should engage in a large amount of building, the United States would have the right to make up for any deficiencies at a future date.

An examination of the terms of the Treaty shows that the interests of the United States in this respect are fully protected. Inasmuch as the Treaty contains no quantitative limitation whatsoever - aside from the holiday in the construction of cruisers exceeding 8,000 tons -, the United States will be free, even after the Treaty has gone into effect, to build any amount of vessels it desires in any category other than cruisers exceeding 8,000 tons. As

regards

The President,

The White House.

*Respectfully yours,
William Phillips*

regards the cruiser holiday, you will recall that we agreed to this provision on the understanding - made explicit in a statement before the Conference by Mr. Davis - that we would be free to invoke the "escape clause" in the Article relating to the cruiser holiday in the event that Great Britain should engage in an amount of cruiser construction in excess of that foreshadowed in the recent White Paper on British defense policy. Since it is a physical impossibility for Great Britain to exceed her announced program within the period allotted for ratification of the Treaty, no difficulty will arise under this head. In any case, paragraph (1) of the Protocol of Signature-which I quote below - serves as a protection against any excessive building in the period before the Treaty goes into effect:

"If, before the coming into force of the above-mentioned treaty, the naval construction of any Power or any change of circumstances should appear likely to render undesirable the coming into force of the treaty in its present form, the Governments of the countries on behalf of which the treaty has been signed shall consult as to whether it is desirable to modify any of its terms to meet the situation thus presented."

Faithfully yours,

William Phillips

PSF: London Naval Conference

*Wants
action*

December 28, 1936.

AMEMBASSY

TOKYO (JAPAN)

The Japanese Ambassador notified us this morning of the formal invocation by His Government of Article 21 in order to retain 15,598 tons of excess submarines.

We have replied by note that we will exercise our right to retain a proportionate amount of tonnage in the submarine category and on December 31, 1936, will have 15,230 tons of excess submarines.

ACTING

WE:RTP:NNB

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*Howley's
State*

Excellency:

The receipt is acknowledged of Your Excellency's note, dated December 28, 1936, in which you state that the Government of Japan has decided to invoke Article 21 of the London Naval Treaty, 1930, in order to retain 15,598 tons of submarines in excess of the maximum tonnage which is permitted in this category under the terms of Article 16, paragraph 1, of the London Naval Treaty, in order to meet the requirements of the national security of Japan.

In view of the decision of the Government of Japan to invoke Article 21, this Government will exercise its right under this Article to retain a proportionate amount of tonnage in the submarine category.

On

His Excellency

Mr. Hiroshi Saito,
Japanese Ambassador.

- 2 -

On December 31, 1936, this Government will have 15,250 tons of submarines in excess of the maximum tonnage which is permitted under the terms of Article 18, paragraph 1, of the London Naval Treaty, 1930.

Accept, Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

Acting Secretary.

12/31/36

12/31/36