

International Law Studies—Volume 21

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tions upon the point. The matter would therefore be delayed until he was notified that such instructions had been received.

The meeting was then adjourned until 3 p. m. December 30, 1921.

FOURTEENTH MEETING—FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1921, 3 P. M.

PRESENT.

United States.—Mr. Hughes, Senator Lodge, Mr. Root, Senator Underwood, Col. Roosevelt, Admiral Coontz. Accompanied by Mr. Wright, Mr. Clark.

British Empire.—Mr. Balfour, Lord Lee, Sir Auckland Geddes, Sir Robert Borden (for Canada), Senator Pearce (for Australia), Sir John Salmond (for New Zealand), Mr. Sastri (for India). Accompanied by Sir Maurice Hankey, Capt. Domville, Mr. Knowles.

France.—Mr. Sarraut, Vice Admiral de Bon. Accompanied by Mr. Kammerer, Mr. Denaint, Capt. Odend'hal.

Italy.—Senator Schanzer, Senator Albertini, Vice Admiral Baron Acton. Accompanied by Marquis Visconti-Venosta, Count Pagliano.

Japan.—Admiral Baron Kato, Mr. Hanihara, Vice Admiral Kato, Capt. Uyeda. Accompanied by Mr. Ichihashi.

The Secretary General. Assisted by Mr. Cresson and Mr. Pierrepont. Mr. Camerlynck, interpreter.

1. The Fourteenth Meeting of the Committee on Limitation of Armament was held in the Columbus Room, Pan American Union Building, on Friday afternoon, December 30, 1921, at 3 o'clock.

2. There were present: For the United States, Mr. Hughes, Senator Lodge, Mr. Root, Senator Underwood, Col. Roosevelt, Admiral Coontz; for the British Empire, Mr. Balfour, Lord Lee, Sir Auckland Geddes, Sir Robert Borden (for Canada), Senator Pearce (of Australia), Sir John Salmond (for New Zealand), Mr. Sastri (for India); for France, Mr. Sarraut, Vice Admiral de Bon; for Italy, Senator Schanzer, Senator Albertini, Vice Admiral Baron Acton; for Japan, Admiral Baron Kato, Mr. Hanihara, Vice Admiral Kato, Capt. Uyeda.

3. The following secretaries and technical advisers were present: For the United States, Mr. Wright, Mr. Clark; for the British Empire, Sir Maurice Hankey, Capt. Domville, Mr. Knowles; for France, Mr. Kammerer, Mr. Denaint, Capt. Odend'hal; for Italy, Marquis Visconti-Venosta, Count Pagliano; for Japan, Mr. Ichihashi.

The secretary general of the conference, assisted by Mr. Cresson and Mr. Pierrepont, was present. Mr. Camerlynck (interpreter) was also present.

The chairman (Mr. Hughes) said that he assumed that the next subject to be brought before the committee for discussion was the proposal with regard to the total tonnage of airplane carriers which each of the powers should have as a maximum under the proposed agreement. This was item 23 of the proposal circulated at the opening of the conference on behalf of the American Government.

"It was proposed that the total tonnage of airplane carriers allowed each power should be as follows:

United States-----	80,000 tons.
Great Britain-----	80,000 tons.
Japan-----	48,000 tons.

"Provided, however, that no power party to this agreement whose total tonnage in airplane carriers on November 11, 1921, exceeds the prescribed tonnage shall be required to scrap such excess tonnage until replacements begin, at which time the total tonnage of airplane carriers for each nation shall be reduced to the prescribed allowance as herein stated.

"24. (a) All airplane carriers whose keels have been laid down by November 11, 1921, may be carried to completion.

"(b) No new airplane carrier tonnage except replacement tonnage as provided herein shall be laid down during the period of this agreement; provided, however, that such nations as have not reached the airplane carrier tonnage hereinbefore stated may construct tonnage up to the limit of their allowance.

"25. Airplane carriers shall be scrapped in accordance with methods to be agreed upon."

And there was a supplement to those proposals, the additional proposal being as follows:

"No airplane carrier shall be laid down during the term of this agreement whose tonnage displacement is in excess of 27,000 tons, and no gun shall be carried by any such ship other than a capital ship with a caliber in excess of 8 inches."

The chairman said that he ought to add that the allowance to the United States, Great Britain, and Japan, as stated in item 23 of the proposal, was based on the ratio which had been proposed with respect to capital ships of 5-5-3, and, if the same ratios were provided with respect to France and Italy as would be furnished by the relation of the capital ship tonnage agreed upon, of course the figures would correspond accordingly.

There were a number of points embraced in the proposition. He supposed that it would be an advantage that the committee should not scatter the discussion by talking to different points at the same time; and, if it was quite agreeable to the delegates, he would suggest that the committee begin with the discussion of the maximum limitation of total tonnage, i. e., the maximum

allowed for the total tonnage of airplane carriers—not the maximum for individual carriers, but the total tonnage allowed for airplane carriers as stated in the proposal, namely, United States 80,000 tons, Great Britain 80,000, Japan 48,000 tons, and so on in proportion to the capital ship tonnage allowed.

Admiral Acton then read the following statement:

“With respect to aircraft carriers, the American proposals assign to Italy 28,000 tons, corresponding to the capital ship tonnage of 175,000 tons already determined upon. This would permit the construction of only one aircraft carrier of the maximum of 27,000 tons agreed upon for this class of vessel. It must, however, be taken into consideration that if a single vessel of this character were obliged to go into dry dock or were to be sunk at sea, Italy would find herself under these circumstances temporarily or definitely without any aircraft carrier whatsoever. We believe it therefore to be indispensable that we should be equipped with a total tonnage of aircraft carriers superior to that which has been assigned to us. To be precise we ask as our minimum a tonnage corresponding to a figure double that of the maximum tonnage displacement allowed to individual vessels of this class, i. e., 54,000 tons. It is moreover understood that if a tonnage superior to 54,000 tons is assigned to any other Mediterranean power, we demand a parity of treatment in this respect; i. e., we demand the allowance of an equal amount of tonnage.”

The chairman said, merely as a matter of clarification, he would like to ask whether, when Admiral Acton spoke of “any other power in the Mediterranean,” he included Great Britain.

Admiral Acton replied in the negative.

Lord Lee said he had listened with attention and with a certain sympathy to the remarks of Admiral Acton, because the admiral had suggested a situation which might and perhaps must occur in every navy through a ship being out of action at intervals during her career. The admiral had complained that, having only one airplane carrier, the Italian Navy would be deprived altogether of that arm if their one ship happened to be in dock or out of action. Looking at the matter impartially it appeared to him that the claim put forward by the Italian delegation was very difficult to resist. Since the proposal of the United States delegation to limit the maximum size of airplane carriers to 27,000 tons, with an armament not to exceed the 8-inch gun, he himself had had an opportunity to discuss the matter with his experts. They regarded those limits as reasonable and in strict accordance, so far as the British Empire was concerned, with the up-to-date needs of airplane carrier construction. Without claiming undue credit for the British Navy, he thought, perhaps, that it had experimented with and developed this class of vessel to a greater

extent than had any other navy, and in the opinion of his experts the limits proposed provided all that was necessary for fleet purposes.

At this point Lord Lee said he would like to mention that the airplane carrier was essentially a fleet weapon. It was not an independent unit, but was essentially an auxiliary to a modern fleet, and it was therefore important that the number of airplane carriers should be adequate and proportionate to the size of the fleet. For this reason the British Empire delegation associated themselves with the view that the ratio of capital ships could be applied also to airplane carriers in order to bring both number and tonnage into line with actual requirements. At the present time the British Navy possessed five airplane carriers, which included four vessels which were really experimental, and three of which were small and inefficient. These vessels, in fact, were in the nature of gropings, in the light of experience gained by the war, and certainly four of these were experimental and obsolete. In these circumstances, whatever decision might be reached as regards the total tonnage, he would have to demand that Great Britain should be entitled, in spite of the rule as regards new construction, which would be discussed later, to scrap at any moment the experimental ships which they now possessed and to replace them with new ships designed to meet the requirements of the fleet. This was the only way in which the British fleet could attain that equality with the other fleets to which it was entitled. With that reservation the British Empire delegation regretted, in view of the fact that submarines, which were an important weapon of war, were to be continued, and airplane carriers were an equally important weapon of antisubmarine defense, that it would be impossible to reduce the number of their airplane carriers for fleet service. In these circumstances the delegation to which he belonged felt that the tonnage laid down in the original American proposals was inadequate to the essential requirements of the British Empire, as indeed it must be if the British Navy was to have numbers proportional to the number required by Italy, and he presumed by the other powers. Before committing himself finally to the exact figures at which he thought the total tonnage limit should be fixed, Lord Lee said he would be glad to hear the views of the other delegations present. The British Empire delegation were most anxious, as indeed they had shown, to limit not only armaments but expenditure on armaments, and they were most anxious to avoid competition in every class of craft, and therefore to limit the numbers and tonnage of airplane carriers to the lowest point compatible with safety.

In conclusion, Lord Lee said he would like to hear the views of his colleagues of the other delegations.

Admiral de Bon said that the question of the total tonnage of aircraft carriers was evidently intimately related to the maximum of each unit. Now, in this respect, there was evidently great uncertainty, aircraft being still the subject for further study and examination, and he did not see that in any country definite views concerning a type of aircraft had been reached. If there were uncertainty with regard to aircraft, this uncertainty would evidently apply to the aircraft carriers. The decisions which the committee could take on this subject were therefore marked in advance by a degree of weakness due to this uncertainty, and could therefore be only provisional.

Having made this reservation, Admiral de Bon asked nothing better than to support the views of the other members of the committee. In the present case it could be assumed that about 25,000 tons would be the maximum tonnage of an ordinary aircraft carrier.

The French delegation considered that France actually required two aircraft carriers for European waters. This followed the same line of reasoning advanced by Italy. They also considered that a third was necessary for use in their colonial possessions. The use of aircraft for police purposes in the colonies was considered by them as of the greatest service. If newspaper reports might be believed, the French delegation suggested that an actual example of this fact was now offered in Egypt, where, in order to maintain order, the effect created by the presence of aircraft was invaluable.

Admiral de Bon stated that in view of the above the French delegation considered that three aircraft carriers were necessary for the needs of France. If each one of these were of 25,000 tons, that would make a total of 75,000 tons; but in order more nearly to approach the general wishes expressed, he said that he would voluntarily agree that 60,000 tons might be sufficient for the present, and by a rearrangement of tonnage three vessels might be built in conformity with this allowance.

Admiral Baron Kato said that he had listened with pleasure to the remarks made by Lord Lee on the question of airplane carriers. Lord Lee's sympathies with the Italian demand for two carriers were in accord with his position. He, too, believed the Italian demand to be justifiable.

Now the American proposal allowed Japan a total tonnage of 48,000, with which she could construct only one and a half airplane carriers. That would not, in his judgment, give Japan a sufficient force for her protective purposes. Admiral Baron Kato sought permission again to call the committee's attention to the insular character of his country, the extensive line of her coast, the location of her harbors, and the susceptibility of her cities,

built of frame houses, to easy destruction by fire if attacked by air bombs. All these necessitated Japan's having a certain number of airplanes and "portable" airplanes; that is to say, a means of distributing airplanes in such a manner as adequately to meet her local needs. Japan could not have an enormous number of airplanes to be stationed in all places where they were needed because she was economically incapable. To meet all these needs Japan was exceedingly desirous to have three airplane carriers of 27,000 tons each, or a total tonnage of 81,000. In asking for this increase, he would, of course, raise no objection to a proportionate increase on the part of the United States or Great Britain.

The chairman said that, as he understood it, the situation disclosed by the discussion was as follows: Great Britain desired five airplane carriers at whatever the maximum for each individual ship might be taken to be, and, if that were 27,000 tons, it would mean a maximum of 135,000 tons. France desired 60,000 tons, which, of course, could be divided in such a way as would be deemed best suited to the special needs of France. Italy desired two, which, at a maximum of 27,000 tons, would make an allowance of 54,000.

Japan desired three, which, at the maximum of 27,000 tons, would be 81,000 tons.

Now, the chairman continued, this appeared to be, with the single exception of a very slight difference between 54,000 and 60,000 in the case of France, in the ratio of the capital ships. It was quite apparent, for the reasons that had been very cogently presented, that the original figures of the American proposal would not meet what were deemed to be the needs of the various governments. He also understood that there was agreement by all that the caliber of guns carried should be limited to 8 inches, in connection with the suggested maximum tonnage of 27,000 tons.

If that disposition was agreeable to the other powers, he saw no reason why the American delegation should not accept it, with the maximum allowance for the United States corresponding to that which Great Britain had asked. And he assumed also that there would be no objection, if France had this slight excess over the exact amount allowed by the ratio—that is, 60,000 tons instead of 54,000 tons—in allowing Italy a corresponding amount on the basis of parity for which Italy had always contended.

If that was agreeable, he would put it to a vote, unless it was desired to continue the discussion further.

The delegations being polled in turn, each voted in the affirmative.

The chairman said that he understood that that vote, in view of the discussion which had preceded it, might, without separate

action, be taken to include the maximum of 27,000 tons for the individual tonnage, and the armament of 8-inch guns.

The chairman added that in the course of his remarks Lord Lee had referred to a fact which had been emphasized by other delegates, namely, that the development not only of airplanes, but of airplane carriers, was in an experimental stage and that the airplane carriers which they now had were not deemed to be anything more than experiments; hence, that the proposal made at the beginning, which was stated in item 24 of the proposal, i. e.:

"No new airplane carrier tonnage except replacement tonnage shall be laid down during the period of the agreement would not be applicable to the situation in which the powers found themselves, because the existing tonnage was not of a definite type, but provisional and experimental; and that, therefore, those who had carried their experimentation to the point of having actual ships would be placed at an inequitable disadvantage as compared with those who had not built their ships and who could take advantage of the latest information and inventions. That seemed to be a very reasonable position, and the American delegation would bring forward a proposal based on the liberty of the powers to consider the existing airplane carrier tonnage as an experimental tonnage and to provide for replacement from that standpoint."

Subject to that matter of replacement of airplane carriers (which he assumed, might well go with the other provisions as to replacements now under consideration by the technical staffs) he believed that there was nothing more that need be considered at this time with regard to airplane carriers. He asked whether he was right in this assumption.

In view of what had been said in the general discussion, he understood that that was the view of all present, but perhaps he should ask for a definite expression. Without awaiting the drafting of a specific resolution at the moment he would ask whether there was assent to the proposal to regard existing airplane carriers as being of an experimental character and to the principle that, in defining the rule of replacements as to airplane carriers, each power should be entitled to proceed to supply itself, to the maximum stated, with airplane carrier tonnage.

Lord Lee asked, in order to avoid misunderstanding, if it was understood that the principles of replacement, which he had indicated as desirable, were accepted.

The chairman answered that this was of course so, with the understanding that the old experimental carriers should be scrapped; that it was understood that this liberty was a liberty of replacement, not a liberty of addition.

The chairman said that the United States of America assented to the proposal he had just made. He then polled the other delegations and each replied in the affirmative.

The chairman declared the proposal unanimously adopted.

The chairman said that there were a number of points stated in the American proposal with respect to replacement and scrapping and other restrictions and regulations. He had no desire to preclude discussion in the slightest degree on any of these points, but possibly, as they were almost all of a technical character, it would be of advantage to have the experts, who were considering the replacement chart, consider all these detailed matters relating to capital ships and airplane carriers, the two subjects upon which an agreement had been reached, and bring in for the consideration of the committee a statement both as to replacement and the particular regulations as to scrapping which they proposed to suggest, and as to any other restrictions or modifications of restriction contained in the American proposal.

Those matters being relegated for the moment to the consideration of the subcommittee of experts, he asked whether there was any other question which the committee desired to discuss in relation to the limitation of naval armament.

The chairman then said that he supposed it would be in order to have a formal agreement prepared relating to capital ships and including the limitation of the size of individual ships of war and the armament of individual ships, as well as the limitation upon the size and armament of airplane carriers themselves. That agreement might be put in course of preparation while the experts were dealing with the replacement chart in detail. In other words, the committee could have the general form of it, the articles upon which it had agreed, in the course of preparation and that could await the insertion of the particular details of replacement, etc., when they were ready.

His suggestion, then, would be, if the committee had nothing further it wished to discuss at the moment in relation to naval armament, that a committee be formed consisting of the heads of the delegations, merely to take note of the progress that was made with the preparation of the agreement and of the progress that was made by the committee of experts, and to have such informal consultations as might seem helpful in the course of that work, and that the committee should adjourn subject to the call of the chair and a meeting could be had when this agreement was ready to be presented for consideration and approval. He inquired whether this was acceptable. He said he should add to this that, as he understood it, in the matter of the resolution presented by Mr. Root which the committee had had under consideration at the morning meeting—that is, the second and

third resolutions as well as the resolution with regard to the tonnage of individual auxiliary craft, the committee was awaiting the receipt of instructions by certain of the delegations, and that as soon as the committee could take them up, the chair would call a meeting for that purpose. There was also the subcommittee dealing with the first resolution, as to submarine warfare, and whenever that committee was ready to report the chair would be advised.

In conclusion, the chairman, at the request of Mr. Root, announced that there would be a meeting of the subcommittee to which the first resolution regarding the rules of international law covering submarine warfare had been referred, on Saturday morning, December 31, at 11 o'clock in the Governors' Room, to which each member might bring any expert or experts he might desire.

The chairman assumed that there would be no objection to making public all that had been said at this meeting.

The committee then adjourned at 4.45 p. m., subject to the call of the chair.

FIFTEENTH MEETING—THURSDAY, JANUARY 5, 1922, 3.30 P. M.

PRESENT.

United States—Mr. Hughes, Senator Lodge, Mr. Root, Col. Roosevelt, Admiral Coontz. Accompanied by Mr. Wright, Mr. Clark, Mr. MacMurray.

British Empire.—Mr. Balfour, Lord Lee, Sir Auckland Geddes, Rear Admiral Sir E. Chatfield, Sir Robert Borden (for Canada), Senator Pearce (for Australia), Sir John Salmond (for New Zealand), Mr. Sastri (for India). Accompanied by Sir Maurice Hankey, Capt. Domville, Mr. Flint, Mr. Mousley.

France.—Mr. Sarraut, Mr. Jusserand, Admiral de Bon. Accompanied by Mr. Kammerer, Mr. Denaint, Mr. Ponsot, Capt. Odend'hal, Commandant Frochot.

Italy—Senator Schanzer, Senator Rolandi-Ricci, Senator Albertini, Vice Admiral Baron Acton. Accompanied by Marquis Visconti-Venosta, Count Pagliano, Commander Prince Ruspoli.

Japan.—Admiral Baron Kato, Mr. Hanihara, Vice Admiral Kato, Capt. Uyeda. Accompanied by Prof. Tachi, Mr. Sugimura, Mr. Shiratori, Mr. Ichihashi.

The secretary general, accompanied by Mr. Cresson and Mr. Osborne.

Interpreter, Mr. Camerlynck.

1. The fifteenth meeting of the Committee on Limitation of Armament was held in the Columbus Room of the Pan American Union Building on Thursday, January 5, 1922, at 3.30 p. m.