

tations between the parties so decidedly opposed in principle—conversations, as they were called—in order to see if progress could not be made that way.

The French representative declared that there had already been conversations, political and technical, between the governments, and that he had every hope by the continuance of those conversations that a successful result, a compromise, could be attained.

The United States representative, the Honorable Hugh Gibson, took the ground that this would be the better course rather than to risk a wrecking of their hopes by having the second reading too soon.

I emphasize these matters because it shows that the carrying on of these negotiations, or conversations, was the joint will of the various parties to the Preparatory Commission. There was nothing unknown to any party. The plan was adopted because it was the mutual desire of all.

Then the conversations proceeded again. They were conducted, first of all, by correspondence between the governments. There was a meeting of the British representative with the Foreign Minister of France, and finally France made a suggestion—first informally and afterward by formal note—of a compromise, which Britain accepted. Its terms, in brief, were these: that the categories should be reduced to four capital ships of the larger size; aircraft-carrying vessels of ten thousand tons and over; cruisers of ten thousand tons and less, provided they were armed with six-inch guns or bigger; and, lastly, ocean-going submarines, but not what were known as coastal submarines, under six hundred tons. Those were the four classes within which France was prepared to limit her construction.

Great Britain had intimated, as early as the conference of 1927, but very plainly in the conference of 1928, that if France would meet the situation in regard to naval matters, Britain would go so far as to eliminate her objection to a claim of France in respect to military defense, namely, a claim that in estimating a maximum of any power's military defense there should not be included the reservists. Britain had stoutly objected to the inclusion of reservists. However, the majority of

nations were against it—the majority of the European powers—and it was felt that further objection on that score was worthless, and intimated to France, in the presence of the American representative, that if a compromise on fair terms could be arranged in respect of naval armaments, she would forego her objection with respect to the reservists. This, then, was foregone in accepting the terms of the French suggestion for limitation to four categories.

It will be noted that the terms of the French suggestion merely carried farther what was done in the Washington Conference of 1921, when fixed tonnage was set out for each nation in respect of capital ships alone; it merely carried the principle of limitation into smaller tonnage to the extent of vessels of ten thousand tons carrying six-inch guns or higher, and also submarines of six hundred tons or over; and it left wholly uncontrolled vessels under ten thousand tons carrying less than six-inch guns, and submarines under six hundred tons.

Now, I have stated to you—I know correctly and I hope clearly—the terms of the compromise which was accepted by Great Britain.

There is something at this point which I want to emphasize with all the force at my command: not only were these negotiations conducted with the full knowledge of the members of the Preparatory Commission with a view to arriving at a compromise, but when France made the suggestion finally accepted by Britain, in the letter from the French representative, there was stipulated that there could be no virtue in the compromise whatever unless it was agreed to as a basis of negotiation by the other members of the Disarmament Commission, including the United States of America; and Great Britain, in her reply, acquiesced wholly in the position of France and said, "Certainly. Never has it been thought that this compromise, though we have arrived at it, has any effective power or, indeed, can ever be used, unless after submission of its terms to the other members of the Commission those terms prove as a basis to be acceptable." This is of an importance which I cannot possibly overstate. The importance