

situation, but its inclusion, nevertheless, could not fail to raise in the public mind the whole question of colonial overseas territories.

There seems to be no doubt, when one examines all the information that we have from Washington, London and Paris, that the French are not prepared to budge in this matter, even to the point of sacrificing the treaty. I should, therefore, be very glad to have any suggestions which you may have to offer. In my judgement the inclusion of Algeria would make no real difference in the operation of the treaty, although it might add an undesirable ground for public criticism of its provisions. Ends.

274.

DEA/283(s)

*L'ambassadeur aux États-Unis  
au secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures*

*Ambassador in United States  
to Secretary of State for External Affairs*

TELEGRAM WA-122

Washington, January 15, 1949

TOP SECRET

Following for Reid only from Wrong, Begins: Reference my immediately preceding teletype. North Atlantic Treaty—Ambassadors' meeting—duration.

The Under-Secretary of State informed the Ambassadors' group yesterday afternoon that while it had not yet been possible for the State Department to come to any definite conclusion, they were thinking in terms of 12 to 20 years. He thought that any period greater than 20 years would considerably increase their difficulties with Congress here.

All other Ambassadors except myself said that their Governments had been thinking in terms of 40 to 50 years. They indicated, however, that they appreciated United States problems in this matter and left the impression that they would be prepared to settle for 20 years, but would very much regret a shorter period than this. Franks mentioned 25 to 30 years. He said that the United Kingdom Government favoured a longer period for the principal reason that they thought that it would have a greater appeal for public opinion. Lovett said that of course the United States Government was not thinking in terms of any very short term treaty and he agreed that there was merit in the argument for a treaty of, say, 20 years. He repeated that the views of the State Department were not absolutely firm but definitely gave the impression that 20 years was the maximum to which they would be prepared to go.

I said that we were thinking in terms of 12 to 20 years and I put forward the suggestion that if it were as long as 16 or 20, it might be wise to have a permissive provision for review of the treaty at the half-way mark. This suggestion was considered to have merit by all present. I pointed out that it would offer an opportunity not only to terminate the treaty if conditions were such as to make this desirable, but also to strengthen it and give it a longer term of life if present tensions contin-