

*Note from the Secretary of State of the United States to the French Ambassador at Washington*

WASHINGTON, December 28, 1927.

EXCELLENCY: I have the honor to refer to the form of treaty entitled "Draft of Pact of Perpetual Friendship between France and the United States," which His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs was good enough to transmit to me informally last June through the instrumentality of the American Ambassador at Paris.

This draft treaty proposes that the two powers should solemnly declare in the name of their respective peoples that they condemn recourse to war, renounce it as an instrument of their national policy towards each other, and agree that a settlement of disputes arising between them, of whatsoever nature or origin they may be, shall never be sought by either party except through pacific means. I have given the most careful consideration to this proposal and take this occasion warmly to reciprocate on behalf of the American people the lofty sentiments of friendship which inspired the French people, through His Excellency M. Briand, to suggest the proposed treaty.

The Government of the United States welcomes every opportunity for joining with the other governments of the world in condemning war and pledging anew its faith in arbitration. It is firmly of the opinion that every international endorsement of arbitration, and every treaty repudiating the idea of a resort to arms for the settlement of justiciable disputes, materially advances the cause of world peace. My views on this subject find a concrete expression in the form of the arbitration treaty which I have proposed in my note to you of December 28, 1927, to take the place of the arbitration convention of 1908. The proposed treaty extends the scope of that convention and records the unmistakable determination of the two Governments to prevent any breach in the friendly relations which have subsisted between them for so long a period.

In view of the traditional friendship between France and the United States—a friendship which happily is not dependent upon the existence of any formal engagement—and in view of the common desire of the two nations never to resort to arms in the settlement of such controversies as may possibly arise between them, which is recorded in the draft arbitration treaty just referred to, it has occurred to me that the two Governments, instead of contenting themselves with a bilateral declaration of the nature suggested by M. Briand, might make a more signal contribution to world peace by joining in an effort to obtain the adherence of all of the principal powers of the world to a declaration renouncing war as an instrument of national policy. Such a declaration, if executed by the principal world powers, could not but be an impressive example to all the other nations of the world, and might conceivably lead such nations to subscribe in their turn to the same instrument, thus perfecting among all the powers of the world an arrangement heretofore suggested only as between France and the United States.

The Government of the United States is prepared, therefore, to concert with the Government of France with a view to the conclusion of a treaty among the principal powers of the world, open to signature by all nations, condemning war and renouncing it as an instrument of national policy in favour of the pacific settlement of international disputes. If the Government of France is willing to join with the Government of the United States in this endeavour, and to enter with the United States and the other principal powers of the world into an appropriate multilateral treaty, I shall be happy to engage at once in conversations looking to the preparation of a draft treaty following the lines suggested by Mr. Briand for submission by France and the United States jointly to the other nations of the world.

Accept [etc.]

FRANK B. KELLOGG.