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*Le secrétaire aux Dominions au secrétaire d'État
aux Affaires extérieures*

Dominions Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs

TELEGRAM A. 51

London, December 13, 1929

IMMEDIATE. SECRET. My telegram 10th December, Circular A. 49. Matter was discussed today with Counsellor Designate of Soviet Embassy in London. From this discussion it appeared that Soviet Government would have no objection in principle to exchange of notes on the lines suggested in telegram sent through Norwegian Government as quoted in my telegram 6th December, Circular A. 48, but that in the first instance they would desire some assurance as to willingness of the Dominions to enter into negotiations especially on commercial matters such as had already been given by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom under Articles I and II of the Protocol, 3rd October. It was made clear that this was a matter on which it was not possible at present to make any statement to Soviet Government. Counsellor Designate undertook to report the position to his Government and ask for instructions. In the case of the Soviet Government pressing point we should be grateful for information as to attitude of His Majesty's Governments in the Dominions on this matter which could be communicated to the Soviet Government in so far as may be necessary. Impression gained was that Soviet have in mind in this connection chiefly question of trade relations with Canada but they may desire some definite indication as to views of other Dominions also.

Matter is very urgent as Soviet Ambassador Designate has just arrived in London and it will not be possible for presentation of his credentials (date of which will, under Article 7 of Protocol of 3rd October, determine time of exchange of undertakings between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and Soviet Government) to be deferred for more than a few days.

If, as we appreciate may perhaps be the case, it proves impossible within the time available for any undertaking which would satisfy Soviet Government to be arranged, we should, of course, do our best to induce latter nevertheless to agree to exchange of notes in respect to the Dominions on the lines already proposed. If such efforts prove unsuccessful there seems no alternative but to proceed with agreed notes as between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Soviet Government. It will be remembered that under wording of Article XVI of 1924 Treaty which is reproduced in proposed notes to be exchanged with His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom Soviet undertaking is applicable to "The British Empire".