

Correspondence relating to a proposed Convention to regulate  
Questions of Commerce and Fishery between the United  
States and Newfoundland.

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No. 1.

SIR TERENCE O'BRIEN to LORD KNUTSFORD.  
(Received March 20, 1890.)

Government House, St. John's, Newfoundland,  
February 28, 1890.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honour to enclose a copy of a Minute of Council of 27th instant, when a telegraphic message from his Excellency the Governor-General of Canada and my reply thereto were considered.

2. Your Lordship will observe that my Ministers are strongly of opinion that, as our interests are not identical, and we have no burning questions with the United States such as those existing between that country and the Dominion, we would be more likely to obtain better reciprocal advantages for our fisheries by negotiating direct with the former than while we are included with the latter in such arrangements.

3. From a report made by the then Colonial Secretary, the Hon. E. D. Shea, dated 9th December, 1884, it would appear that this matter has been already laid before the Imperial Government, when great hopes were held out that it would be favourably received. It was, however, postponed until after the Presidential election, when, the mission of the Right Hon. J. Chamberlain supervening, Newfoundland found itself included with Canada in the *modus vivendi* necessitated by the failure of these negotiations.

4. As I have reason to believe that the States would not object to treat with us direct, and would give us far better terms than we have at present, I fully concur in the proposals of my Government, and would strongly urge your Lordship giving them your favourable consideration.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

T. O'BRIEN, Lieut.-Colonel,  
Governor.

The Right Hon. Lord Knutsford, G.C.M.G.,  
&c.

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Enclosure in No. 1.

EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF COUNCIL of February 27, 1890.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR having brought under the notice of Council the following Telegram received by him from the Governor-General of Canada on the 22nd instant, viz., "My Ministers would like to have the views of your Government on the question of extending the operation of the *modus vivendi* for another year or longer," it was resolved that a reply be forwarded that "Bait question is under the consideration of my Government. Until a decision is arrived at no answer can be given," and that as the interests of this Colony are not identical with those of the Dominion of Canada, that a strong representation to that effect be made to the Imperial Government, with a view to negotiations with the United States Government being entered upon for a distinct arrangement with reference to this Colony as regards the fishery questions and trade relations.