

by pelagic sealing will be unprecedented, and will, in the opinion of our commissioners, so nearly destroy the value of the seal fisheries as to make what will remain, of so little value as scarcely to be a worthy subject for an international arbitration.

The proposition of Lord Salisbury to prohibit the killing of seals at sea "within a zone extending to not more than thirty nautical miles around the Pribyloff Islands" is so obviously inadequate and so impossible of execution that this Government can not entertain it. In the early part of the discussion of the subject of a *modus* for last year, this method was tentatively suggested among others in conversation between yourself and Mr. Blaine. But it was afterward in effect agreed by both Governments to be inadequate, and was not again referred to in the correspondence. In the memorandum furnished by you with your note of June 6, you say:

Lord Salisbury points out that if seal hunting be prohibited on one side of a purely imaginary line drawn in the open ocean, while it is permitted on the other side of the line, it will be impossible in many cases to prove unlawful sealing or to infer it from the possession of skins or fishing tackle.

This was said with reference to the water boundary of our purchase from Russia, but is quite as applicable to the 30 mile zone which he now suggests. The prevalence of fogs in these waters gives increased force and conclusiveness to the point made by his lordship against an imaginary water line. The President can not agree, now that the terms of arbitration have been settled, that the restrictions imposed shall be less, than those which both Governments deemed to be appropriate when it was still uncertain whether an early adjustment of the controversy was attainable. He therefore hopes that Her Majesty's Government will consent to renew the arrangement of last year with the promptness which the exigency demands and to agree to enforce it by refusing all clearances to sealing vessels for the prohibited waters and by recalling from those waters all such vessels as have already cleared.

This Government will honorably abide the judgment of the high tribunal which has been agreed upon, whether that judgment be favorable or unfavorable, and will not seek to avoid a just responsibility for any of its acts which by that judgment are found to be unlawful. But certainly the United States can not be expected to suspend the defense, by such means as are within its power, of the property and jurisdictional rights claimed by it, pending the arbitration, and to consent to receive them from that tribunal, if awarded, shorn of much of their value by the acts of irresponsible persons.

I have the honor to be, etc.,

WILLIAM F. WHARTON,
Acting Secretary.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES AT LONDON.

Mr. Phelps to Mr. Bayard.

No. 825.]

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
London, September 12, 1888. (Received September 22.)

SIR: Referring to the subject of the Alaskan seal fisheries, and to the previous correspondence on the subject between the Department and this legation, I have now the honor to acquaint you with the pur-