

BACKGROUND NOTES ON THE SIGNING OF THE  
CONVENTION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND  
CANADA FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE HALIBUT  
FISHERY OF THE NORTHERN PACIFIC OCEAN AND  
THE BERING SEA

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The North Pacific Halibut Convention signed in Ottawa today (Monday, March 2) to replace the Halibut Convention of January 29, 1937, is the third revision of the Convention of March 2, 1923, for Securing the Preservation of the Halibut Fishery of the North Pacific Ocean and the Bering Sea.

The signing of the present Convention on this thirtieth anniversary of the first Halibut Fisheries Convention with the United States recalls the fact that the latter was the first formal international agreement signed for Canada by its own plenipotentiary alone. Prior to 1923 several multilateral treaties had been signed by both Canadian and United Kingdom plenipotentiaries on behalf of Canada.

The first treaty in which a Canadian participated as co-signer with a United Kingdom representative was the International Radio Telegraph Convention of 1912, which was signed on Canada's behalf jointly by Mr. G.J. Desbarats of Canada and Mr. H. Babbington Smith of Britain. In 1914 a Canadian again acted as co-signatory when Mr. Alex Johnston, Deputy Minister of Marine, signed the Convention on Safety of Life at Sea.

A further example which has been given considerable prominence was the Canadian co-signature with United Kingdom plenipotentiaries of the Treaty of Versailles. This treaty was signed for Canada by the Hon. C.J. Doherty, Minister of Justice, and the Hon. A.L. Sifton, Minister of Customs, as the second Canadian plenipotentiary, as well as by the Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George and other British representatives on behalf of the British Empire.

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