

Sir Robert Borden said that, before considering these amendments, he had a serious question to raise in respect of Canada's attitude, not only regarding representation on the proposed permanent International Commission, but regarding the whole draft Convention. The effect of the proposals had been discussed with his colleagues and particularly with the Minister of Customs, who had made strong representations concerning difficulties which might be anticipated in connection with the Customs Administration along the Canadian boundary line. At the previous meeting he (Sir Robert Borden) had pointed out the importance which international flying might assume in the Western Hemisphere, and the difficulties which would ensue if this traffic were in any way regulated by a body on which Canada did not have a voice equal to that of the United States. With a boundary line 4,000 miles in length, more thickly inhabited on the United States side than the Canadian, there were already sufficient difficulties in connection with the Customs and Immigration administration, and these would doubtless be accentuated by the development of commercial flying. The proposed technical regulations had doubtless been carefully considered, but it was impossible for him to anticipate their effects upon the Canadian position, nor would the Canadian Parliament accept an arrangement which empowered a body of people sitting in Europe to make regulations governing traffic between Canada and the United States. After such consideration as he had been able in the short time at his disposal to give to the matter, he therefore had reached the conclusion that the arrangements between Canada and the United States should be determined by a special Agreement or Convention between those countries. That right might be properly reserved to them by this Convention, which should contain a special reservation to that effect. He thought, therefore, that it should be left to Canada and the United States to make between themselves any necessary arrangements governing their own international aerial traffic, since this could be better done by persons on the spot able to understand North-American conditions. It would be admitted that Europe would be unwilling to submit to a Convention drawn up in North America solely with reference to North-American conditions, and from that new point the British Empire Delegation would readily understand what he had in mind. He would be the last person to suggest any course that would delay peace, but no such consideration was involved, since the proposed Convention had nothing to do with the conclusion of peace.

General Sykes pointed out that the regulations to be made by the International Commission under Article 34 could only affect technical details and even in this respect would not be effective unless there were unanimity.

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General Sykes explained that there were urgent reasons for concluding the Convention as quickly as possible, since the large industry built up in England during the war would be unable to develop unless some arrangement opening up international traffic were made. He pointed out that this industry had served the Empire as well as the United Kingdom and that it was hoped