

the Pribyloff Islands, a reservation which seems to me seriously to detract from the equality and simplicity of the original proposal. As regards Mr. Blaine's narrative of what passed between us in relation to the proposed *modus vivendi*, your Lordship will perceive from my despatch of yesterday's date that he appears to have forgotten that the reason why I did not telegraph to your Lordship his alternative proposal for a *modus vivendi* was that it had been arranged between us, at my suggestion, that he should make the proposal concurrently with his reply to your Lordship's despatch of the 21st February, for which I had so urgently pressed him.

I cannot call to my mind that the President's name was ever mentioned in the course of our two interviews, which Mr. Blaine correctly describes as "a conversational exchange of views."

If the President was so anxious that the alternative proposal should be telegraphed at once to your Lordship, it is to be regretted that Mr. Blaine did not apprise me of the President's wishes, as I should have certainly complied with them.

Mr. Blaine's reply to your Lordship's despatch of the 21st February was not delivered until the 14th April, and then it was not accompanied by the proposal for a *modus vivendi*. But fortunately I had informed your Lordship of the proposal by letter a few days after it was made, and I received a prompt reply by telegram which I communicated to Mr. Blaine on the 20th April.

Mr. Blaine, therefore, cannot justly complain of any delay on my part, or on the part of Her Majesty's Government, in relation to this matter.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

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Inclosure in No. 10.

Mr. Blaine to Sir J. Pauncefote.

Sir,

Washington, May 4, 1891.

DURING the month of March last, a few days after the adjournment of Congress, acting under the instructions of the President, I proposed to you that a *modus vivendi* be agreed upon touching the seal fisheries pending the result of arbitration of the question at issue between the two Governments. The President's first proposal which I submitted to you was that no Canadian sealer should be allowed to come within a certain number of miles of the Pribyloff Islands.

It was, however, the conclusion of the President, after reading Lord Salisbury's despatch of the 21st February, that this *modus vivendi* might possibly provoke conflict in the Behring's Sea, and to avoid that result, he instructed me to propose that sealing, both on land and sea, should be suspended by both nations during the progress of arbitration, or during the season of 1891. On both occasions it was a conversational exchange of views, the first at my office at the State Department, the second at my residence.

The President was so desirous of a prompt response from Lord Salisbury to his second proposition, that I ventured to suggest that you request an answer by cable if practicable. Especially was the President anxious to receive an answer, which he trusted would be favourable, before he should set out on his tour to the Pacific States. He left Washington on the night of the 13th April without having heard a word from your Government. It was then a full month after he had instructed me to open negotiations on the question, and the only probable inference was that Lord Salisbury would not agree to his proposal.

The silence of Lord Salisbury implied, as seemed not improbable, that he would not restrain the Canadian sealers from entering Behring's Sea, and as all intelligence from British Columbia showed that the sealers were getting ready to sail in large numbers, the President found that he could not with justice prevent the lessees from taking seals on the Pribyloff Islands. The President therefore instructed the Secretary of the Treasury, who has official charge of the subject, to issue to the lessees the privilege of killing on the Pribyloff Islands the coming season the maximum number of 60,000 seals, subject, however, to the absolute discretion and power of an agent appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury to limit the killing to as small a number as the condition of the herd might, in his opinion, demand.