

view of the South African Government that all of these treaties should be revived as regards Great Britain only and not as regards other members of the Commonwealth. On the first point if any are to apply we do not see force of objection to method of exchange of notes which would appear to be more flexible than direct participation in the main convention, permitting any Dominion to accept only such parts of Convention as were considered applicable, for example revival of old treaties.

With reference further to your telegrams of 19th and 21st March on draft commercial *modus vivendi*, provision in Article four makes accession by any Dominion optional and is in keeping with usual provision in British commercial treaties. It would therefore not seem to be open to objection unless whole practice of optional accession is to be questioned. As to notice of termination provisions in Article six constitute a concession extended by Soviet Union and therefore presumably terminable at its will. If mutual concessions are arranged under Article four they would presumably be terminable by each party with the same notice.

Please advise South African High Commissioner no reply made by Canadian Government to Dominions Office to circular telegram B. 211 or despatch No. 991. We should like to have further observations of South African Government before making reply.

991.

*Le secrétaire, Haut commissariat, au secrétaire d'État
aux Affaires extérieures*

*Secretary, Office of High Commissioner, to Secretary of State
for External Affairs*

TELEGRAM 77

London, April 8, 1930

Your telegram March 28th, No. 42, regarding Russian Treaties. South African Government through their High Commissioner have sent me following message in reply. Begins. Union Government do not object to principle of accession by exchange of notes direct between a Dominion and Russia and such members of the Commonwealth as may desire to do so. As these treaties are of little importance to us, and as we feel it would not be in the interest of the Union to enter into a trade treaty with Russia at present, we consider it inadvisable to do anything which might give Soviet Government impression that we are anxious to enter or that there is any possibility of our entering into such treaty. This we feel must necessarily be impression that would be created if we consented to an accession clause comprising Union of South Africa also in treaty between the United Kingdom and Russia. It will be remembered in negotiations regarding extension of Article 16 of 1924 draft treaty between Russia and United Kingdom, Russian Government refused to exchange notes with any Dominion before its relations with Russia had been placed on regular footing and that procedure then adopted resulted in peculiar triangular arrangement under