

maintenance of peace which are now under discussion, His Majesty's Government feel that, while for the continental Powers concerned the conclusion of the suggested arbitration treaties forms, as is stated in the French draft reply, the natural complement of a Rhineland Pact, this is not equally the case with Great Britain.

9. For the same reasons, while His Majesty's Government are of opinion that it would be in the best interests of peace if the Rhineland Pact and the various arbitration treaties between Germany and her neighbours were to come into force simultaneously, yet they cannot support the proposals made in section VI of the French draft that all such arbitration treaties of the Rhineland Pact should form an indivisible whole and be co-ordinated in one general convention.

10. Nevertheless, though His Majesty's Government are not prepared to go so far as the French Government suggest, yet they are prepared *in principle* (and, of course, subject to a careful examination of the actual terms ultimately proposed) to give a guarantee, flowing logically from the territorial guarantee of the Rhineland, of arbitration treaties which may be concluded between Germany and her western neighbours, signatories of the pact. The type of guarantee which they have in mind would operate in the event of a failure on the part of one of the parties to refer a dispute to arbitration (using the term in its widest sense to cover both judicial awards and conciliation tribunals) or to carry out an award, if such failure were coupled with a resort to hostilities. The guarantee would be, so to speak, defensive; it would not entail upon His Majesty's Government—as they conceive it—any obligation to resort to force elsewhere than in the areas covered by the proposed Rhineland Pact; and would not operate in any event in favour of the party which had refused arbitration or had refused to give effect to an arbitral award.

11. It is clear from the four preceding paragraphs that the French draft as it stands cannot be accepted as accurately conveying the extent and character of the obligations which His Majesty's Government are ready to assume and that its terms require amendment if they are to express not merely the views of the French Government but, as the French Government suggest, the common policy of the Allies.

12. His Majesty's Government do not desire to suggest that the form of the note should be changed so as to make it clear that it commits the French Government alone to the views and proposals which it contains. Rather, recognising to the full the great value and importance of an agreed statement of views common to the Allied Powers, they would strongly recommend that an effort be made so to amend the draft as to achieve agreement.

13. With that object in view, His Majesty's Government have ventured to remodel the French draft in such a way as to confine it to such a statement of policy as they believe is common to both countries and thus to avoid raising particular points of principle in which this country cannot *ab initio* concur. A copy of this recast draft is enclosed (printed side by side, for convenience, with a translation of the original French draft), and, in communicating it to M. Briand, I request that your Lordship will lay emphasis on the fact that my object has been to produce a statement of general principles without in any way committing either His Majesty's Government or their allies to exact phraseology or to particular proposals whose exact shape can only be determined when the time is reached for considering a draft instrument to give effect to these general objects.

14. Having said so much as regards underlying principles, it only remains to deal in detail with the French draft paragraph by paragraph, explaining where necessary the views of His Majesty's Government and giving the reasons for such alterations in the original draft as are now submitted to the French Government.

15. The preamble and the first three sections of the French draft remain unaltered in the revised version. But while accepting them as they stand, His Majesty's Government feel bound to point out that they are couched in terms so wide that His Majesty's Government must reserve their liberty to define more precisely at the proper time the interpretation which is to be placed upon them. This of course necessarily applies to the whole document; with this general reserve, His Majesty's Government only desire to make two specific remarks concerning the first three sections.

16. First, it is understood that the effect of section I is that Germany's entry into the League is an essential but not a prior condition of the agreement contemplated. The agreement would, however, be so framed that it would only become operative on Germany joining the League.

17. Secondly, His Majesty's Government desire specifically to endorse the observation in section III that Belgium ought to be a party to the pact as a State directly interested. Without her inclusion the proposed pact would obviously be incomplete. This is so self-evident that the omission of Belgium's name from the German proposals can only have been due to an oversight, as, indeed, the German Government have since explained.

18. In section IV the first paragraph of the original French draft remains unaltered, it being simply a summary of a portion of the German proposals themselves. The broad reasons for the amendments made in the remainder of the section will be apparent from the exposition of principles contained in the earlier part of this despatch. The second paragraph has been considerably modified and amplified. In the first place, as it reads in the revised version, it refers only to a possible Franco-German arbitration treaty, thus leaving the other Allies free to decide whether or not to conclude a similar arbitration treaty with Germany. At the same time, the hope is expressed that Belgium will be disposed to enter into a similar treaty. If, as His Majesty's Government feel should be the case, the draft is submitted to the Belgian Government before despatch and is subsequently sent with the approval of that Government, it will no doubt be possible to redraft the phrase regarding Belgium in a more positive sense.

19. Next, the latter half of the second sentence in the second paragraph of the same section has been redrafted in such a way as to make clear the meaning which, according to the explanations offered to me, the French Government attached to it.