

October 5, 1939

My dear Ambassador:

The enclosures cover our conversation this morning.

Yours sincerely,

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

We quite understand natural desire of United States to keep belligerents out of their waters. We like the idea of a wide limit of say 300 miles within which no submarines of any belligerent country should act. If America requests all belligerents to comply, we should immediately declare that we would respect your wishes. General questions of international law would of course remain unprejudiced. More difficulty arises about surface ships, because if a raider operates from or takes refuge in the American zone, we should have to be protected or allowed to protect ourselves. We have mentioned several other instances to Mr. Kennedy. We do not mind how far south the prohibited zone goes, provided that it is effectively maintained. We should have great difficulty in accepting a zone which was only policed by some weak neutral. But of course if the American navy takes care of it, that is all right.

Thirdly, we are still not sure whether raider off Brazil is SCHEER or HIFFER, but widespread movements are being made by us to meet either case. The more American ships cruising along the South American coast the better, as you, sir, would no doubt hear what they saw or did not see. Raider might then find American

waters rather crowded, or may anyhow prefer to go on to sort of trade route, where we are preparing.

We wish to help you in every way in keeping the war out of Americas.