

Telegrams : " SHIPMINDER, WESDO, LONDON,"
Telephone : ABBEY 7711.

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Any further communication on this
subject should be addressed to:-
The Secretary,
(address as opposite)

and the following number quoted :-

M.4071/40.



MINISTRY OF SHIPPING,
BERKELEY SQUARE HOUSE,
BERKELEY SQUARE,
LONDON, W.1.

1st February 1940.

Sir,

I am directed by the Minister of Shipping to refer to your letter, A.8904/7729/45 of 6th January transmitting copy of Despatch No.1380 of 6th December from His Majesty's Representative at Washington, and to previous correspondence on the subject of the discriminatory effect of the United States Neutrality Act, 1939, upon British shipping.

In reply I am to enclose, for the information of Viscount Halifax, copy of a letter and enclosure received from the Chamber of Shipping. I am to state that Sir John Gilmour is in agreement with the views expressed by His Majesty's Ambassador in his telegram of 7th December and subsequently by Sir Ashley Sparks in telegram No.82 of 23rd December and by Mr.Rees of the Ministry's New York Office in a letter of 28th December to this Department,

copy of which is enclosed herewith. It is accordingly proposed to inform the Chamber of Shipping that the Minister is advised that it would not be desirable for

The Under-Secretary of State,
Foreign Office,
S.W.1.

/British

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British interests to press for amendment of the Act. He considers, however, that the position as regards affidavits raised in the final paragraph of the Chamber's letter and in the enclosure should be investigated and I am to suggest that provided Lord Halifax sees no objection, Lord Lothian should be asked to furnish a full report upon the present situation in general and in particular, in collaboration with Sir Ashley Sparks, upon the points regarding the system of affidavits raised in the Chamber's letter; and, if he considers that such action might usefully be taken, to press the State Department to take action as suggested by the Chamber.

At the same time His Majesty's Ambassador might be asked for a fuller and clearer explanation of the amendment regarding the estoppel and transfer of title regulations of the Act which is referred to by Sir Ashley Sparks in telegram Mast No.82 of 23rd December as being the present objective of the American organisations interested in securing an alteration of the Act, and in particular to state what effect, if any, this proposal would have on the position of British as compared with American and other neutral shipping in respect of the transfer of title provisions of the Act.

/The

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The Minister of Shipping would be glad to be kept informed of the progress from time to time of American opinion interested in securing amendment of the Act and of any proposals or suggestions in that connexion which may arise.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
(Signed) T. G. JENKINS.