

Pacific Islands (containing) 348/41/40

No. 902.
(A 4938/9/45(2))

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

19th December, 1940.



Sir,

* not rec'd.

With reference to my telegram 2393 of the 29th September last, instructing His Majesty's late Ambassador to point out to the State Department that His Majesty's Government felt entitled to request them definitely to specify all the Pacific Islands to which they purported to have claims, I transmit herewith a copy of a letter from the Colonial Office emphasising the importance of obtaining a complete and final list of the United States claims and expressing the opinion that every effort should be made to ensure that the eventual oral discussions take place in London. A copy of the report on the question of British sovereignty in the Phoenix and Line Islands to which reference is made in the first paragraph of the above-mentioned letter is also enclosed herein for your information.

2. Whilst I concur in the attitude of the Secretary of State for the Colonies as defined in the letter under reference, Lord Lothian recorded the impression, during his visit here in October, that the State Department were content to defer consideration of this problem for the time being. His Majesty's Government for their part have no wish at all to do anything which might encourage the United States Government to suggest an early date for the eventual oral discussions. In these circumstances I am content to leave it to your discretion to decide at what moment the opportunity should be taken to address representations to the United States authorities in the sense desired.

I am, with great truth,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,
(For the Secretary of State)

Separate minute

W. J. 4/2

John Balfour

N.M. Butler, Esq., C.V.O.,
etc., etc., etc.,
Washington.