

Pacific Islands

\* see Mrs. Hayter  
minutes at -/41  
41.

I submit a draft note to the S.D. in accordance with 7.0 instructions on -/30/- Action was delayed in view of Lord Lothian's absence and of the possibility that he and Mr. Tacey had been discussing the wider aspects of the matter.

The steps by which the present position has been reached are:

[91/103/39]  
Fly A

1) On Aug. 16, 1939, the S.D. sent us "a list of [16] islands in the Central Pacific Ocean which, in addition to [7] islands in the Phoenix Group, are claimed by the U.S. and to which, it is understood, G. B. also asserts claims"

[348/23/40]

2) In our reply of June 8, 1940 we said we assumed "that the U.S.G. have now tabled the full list of Pacific Islands the sovereignty over which

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

"which they consider should be  
"discussed" and we asked for  
confirmation that this assumption  
was correct.

3) In their reply of August 10,  
1940, the S.D. not only avoided  
giving this assurance but they  
conveyed the contrary impression  
that they had more claims. It  
is these extra claims which  
W.M.F. now ask them to state  
in advance of the discussions  
so that we all know just what  
we are going to talk about.

[348/26/40]

Perhaps it would not be  
out of order for Mr. Butler or  
whoever takes the note (or aide-  
memoire to the S.D.) to say  
that if ~~the~~ events since August  
1939 have led the U.S.G. to examine  
their claims afresh and they  
now want to claim more islands  
than they originally did we  
can understand it; but that  
it makes things unnecessarily  
hard for us if they do not

tell

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tell us what islands they want  
put on the agenda. We could  
also suggest that it will waste  
less time for them to tell us  
now since otherwise we shall  
only have to refer to London,  
Wellington, Suva and elsewhere  
for details of our title after  
the discussions have begun.

I agree.  
m  
6.1.

(I cannot help thinking that  
the U.S.G. are arguing to themselves  
that they should provide against  
a British defeat and keep their  
claims vague so as to be able  
to take over, with a show of  
legality, any Pacific island that  
they want to keep out of  
German or Japanese hands.  
It might be useful to know  
whether they are showing any  
interest in the French-owned  
islands).

Done  
26/22

Then if that's  
what is in their  
minds, it's  
clearly useless  
to have discussions  
in the middle of  
the war. And if  
we are defeated, the  
fact that we have at this

stage stated our claim to say Fiji, with reference  
to Queensland or the Gaps later on!