

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: Oct 12

SUBJECT:

PARTICIPANTS: Mr. V. A. L. Mallet, Counselor of the British Embassy;
Mr. Pierrepont Moffat, Chief, Division of European Affairs.

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My Lord
with reference to my tel no. 581 of Oct 5th J. L. The k.
to inform you
During a conversation today with Mr. Mallet, the
Counselor of the ^{this} British Embassy, Mr. Moffat referred
to the inquiry ^{which} made by the British Ambassador of the
Secretary of State on October 9 regarding the willing-
ness of ^{the U.S.} this Government, in the possible event of a
rupture of diplomatic relations between ^{H.M. Govt} the British and
Soviet Governments, to undertake the representation of
British interests in Moscow.

the U.S.
Mr. Moffat informed Mr. Mallet that this Government
was quite willing, provided the Soviet Government would
give its assent, to take over British interests in the
Soviet Union in the event of a rupture of diplomatic
relations between Great Britain and the Soviet Union.

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He stated, however, that it was possible that the Soviet Government would not agree to the interests of one government in the Soviet Union being represented by another government. On several occasions in the past when the American Embassy in Moscow had made inquiries of the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs regarding the welfare of citizens of countries which had no diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, ^(for instance Holland) it had been informed categorically that the Soviet Government was unwilling to discuss with the Embassy matters concerning the protection of citizens or interests of a third country.

Mr. Moffat also pointed out that even if the Soviet Government should in principle assent to the representation by the ^{U.S.} American Government of British interests in the Soviet Union, conditions in that country were such that the Embassy would be seriously handicapped in its efforts to protect such interests. ^{U.S.} The American Embassy at Moscow at the present time found it extremely difficult effectively to protect American citizens and interests in the Soviet Union, and it seemed likely that it would encounter even greater difficulties in representing the interests of another country.

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