

**SURPRISE BY HUGHES
CARRIES CROWD OFF**

So 'Undiplomatic' From
European Standpoint That
It Amazes All.

ENVOYS ARE STARTLED

Removes Cause for Misunderstandings, Says London 'Post' Man.

PEOPLE WILL HAIL PLAN

Stand of British and Japanese Delegations Augurs Well, Writer Believes.

By A. MAURICE LOW,
Correspondent of the London Morning Post.

Special Despatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD,
New York Herald Bureau,
Washington, D. C., Nov. 12.

When Mr. Hughes, as president of the Conference on Limitation of Armaments, announced the proposals that the United States was prepared to make to reduce the naval strength of the United States, Great Britain and Japan he literally swept his audience to its feet.

It was so astounding, so amazing, so utterly undiplomatic, according to the canons of European diplomacy, that the plenipotentiaries sitting about the U shaped table in the body of the hall, their secretaries and advisers a few feet behind, and parallel with them, were no more startled than the occupants of the galleries, which included virtually the entire membership of both houses of Congress, the Cabinet, the Supreme Court and those members of the diplomatic corps whose countries are not participants in the conference.

Since Mr. Wilson invented the phrase "open diplomacy openly arrived at" it has been sneered at and regarded as a phrase merely, but this is open diplomacy so far beyond what any one had expected that it astonished even the most extreme advocates of everything being done in the sight of the public.

Precedent is Established.

In all the long series of conferences never before on the first day has a nation publicly announced its programme with such utter frankness. Mr. Hughes had carefully guarded his plans and his announcement was a complete surprise.

There were perhaps 1,500 persons in the hall. Not more than a score, certainly not more than two score in all, had received the slightest inkling of the nature of Mr. Hughes's address, although in my last despatch I had fore-shadowed it and said that instead of indulging in vague generalities the Secretary would in clear and direct words state the policy of the United States and make it so unmistakably plain that any further misunderstanding would be impossible.

Certainly there is now no longer any cause for misunderstanding. It was interesting to watch the plenipotentiaries as Mr. Hughes, in defiance of all diplomatic tradition, carefully and somewhat deliberately placed card after card upon the table, face up for the whole world to read.

Mr. Hughes is not a magnetic speaker; his manner is that of the American lawyer, which is very different from that of an English barrister and in marked contrast to that of Mr. Balfour, who preceded him. But Mr. Hughes did not refuse the adventitious gifts of oratory to command the undivided attention of his audience.

The Japanese delegates were not in the secret, they frankly admitted later, impressive as ever, they still betrayed their surprise.

The French delegates, M. Briand especially, appeared nervous as if wondering whether Mr. Hughes would be equally frank in discussing limit of armaments, but Mr. Hughes did not discuss that subject. Perhaps he has another surprise coming.

Speculates on the Reaction.

What is the reaction—American, British, Japanese—to Mr. Hughes's declaration of policy? The American reaction we were able to see and feel immediately, and it was unmistakable. Those men and women sitting in the galleries, the 200 men in the press section, showed by their applause, their enthusiasm, their fervor, that Mr. Hughes had said what they all felt, and what Washington is saying to-day the whole country will say to-morrow; but beyond to-morrow I do not go.

To-day Mr. Hughes is the man of the hour, and is loudly acclaimed, but a secondary reaction may be reasonably expected. Already we see signs that the Hearst press is baring its fangs. It declares disbelief in disarmament, anticipates the failure of the conference and urges America to go its own way, dealing just and magnanimously with all peoples, but watchful, ready and armed against any possible attack.

A certain opposition naturally may be expected from shipbuilders and armaments manufacturers and from workers threatened with loss of employment, but the country will approve and back the Administration to the limit.

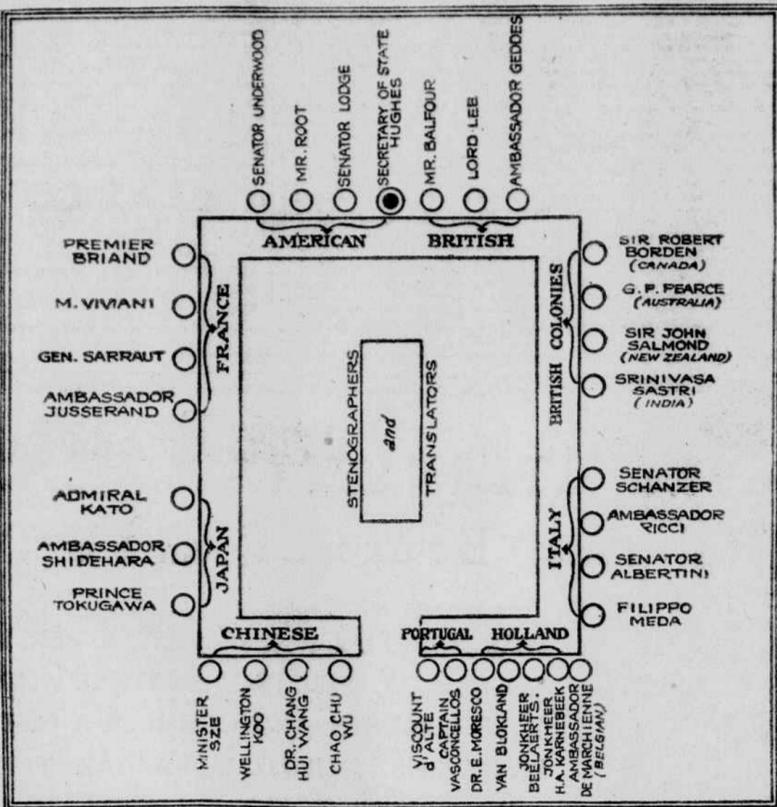
Usually the country is ahead of Congress. Whether there will be opposition in Congress is to be determined later, but Congress, the Republican members especially, know that what Mr. Hughes advocates is popular, and if the programme goes through it may save their majority, now unpopular, from defeat at the election next year.

No less astonishing than Mr. Hughes's open diplomacy is the surprising frankness of our own people and the Japanese. It might reasonably have been expected that the Japanese would hide behind their customary reticence and only cautiously express themselves after mature consideration, instead of which Admiral Kato announced this afternoon on behalf of his delegation that the American proposals were absolutely acceptable to his Government as a basis for discussion. His experts had not yet had time to subject the proposals to technical examination, but in principle no objection could be found to them.

I may go even further than that and make the positive statement that the Japanese will accept. There may be details and minor questions to arrange, but Japan is ready to go as far as the United States cares to lead.

Our delegation has made no formal statement as yet, but I am in a position

Diagram Showing Seating of Delegates at Conference



to say it regards Mr. Hughes's proposals as bold and farseeing statesmanship which the British Government will cordially accept, believing they will have the support of the British people. Our experts have not had time to pass upon the technical issues involved, which will be elaborated by the Committee on Limitation of Armaments, but from a hasty consideration of the subject it is estimated that if the programme is carried through it will mean a saving to the British taxpayer of approximately \$50,000,000 a year.

The reception given to Mr. Hughes's programme by the British Empire and Japanese delegates insure its acceptance in substance, subject, of course, to such modifications as may be found to be necessary when the details are worked out. The fact that a ten year naval holiday will result in practically dismantling the great shipyards and munition factories, that it will be a serious blow to the art of shipbuilding, does not disturb our delegates or the Japanese, who say that all nations will be in the same position and while sacrifices have

to be made no nation will have to make greater sacrifices than any other. With an agreement seemingly assured on naval armaments hopes to-night are high that the questions of the Far East can be equally as easily arranged.

This is the hope in American circles, but I do not find it confirmed in Japanese quarters, to whom the political questions of the Far East are of higher importance than they are to Americans.

The Japanese, I understand, regard the political questions of the Far East as quite apart from naval reduction, and China as the heart of the whole problem because of the internal conditions now existing. They want to see what proposals America has to offer, and the nature of those proposals will determine their policy.

Nevertheless the feeling in Washington to-night is that the Washington Government has done a great day's work, that the air has been cleared of suspicion and that the intricate problems the conference has still to face will not yet determined, will be made easier of solution because of the frankness and sincerity shown by Mr. Hughes.

**PEACE PROCLAMATION
READY FOR SIGNATURE**

Berlin Completes Ratification of Treaty With U. S.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 12 (Associated Press).—The draft of a proclamation declaring the United States at peace has been submitted by the State Department to President Harding for approval and signature and its promulgation is expected early next week.

This was learned to-day coincident with announcement by the State Department of the exchange of ratifications of the treaty of Berlin, effected yesterday at the German capital.

Although official opinion appears yet to be divided as to the necessity for a proclamation, it was asserted that a proclamation was considered necessary to make imperative certain acts of Congress predicated upon a state of war, and that it might be regarded in the nature of an added precaution to insure peace.

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