

1817  
Rush-Bagot Agreement  
Naval Force To Be Maintained On The American  
Lakes  
Charles Bagot, Richard Rush

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The following letters contain the standing agreement between Great Britain and the United States as to the naval force to be maintained by either country in the Great Lakes.

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Mr. Bagot to Mr. Rush. Washington, April 28th, 1817.

The undersigned, His Britannic Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, has the honour to acquaint Mr. Rush, that having laid before His Majesty's Government the correspondence which passed last year between the Secretary of the Department of State and the undersigned upon the subject of a proposal to reduce the Naval Force of the respective countries upon the American Lakes, he has received commands of His Royal Highness, the Prince Regent, to acquaint the Government of the United States, that His Royal Highness is willing to accede to the proposition made to the undersigned by the Secretary of the Department of State in his note of the 2nd of August last.

His Royal Highness acting in the name and on the behalf of His Majesty, agrees, that the Naval force to be maintained upon the American Lakes by His Majesty and the Government of the Unites States shall henceforth be confined to the following vessels on each side. That is: -

On Lake Ontario to one vessel not exceeding one hundred Tons burthen and armed with one eighteen pound cannon.

On the upper lakes to two vessels not exceeding like burthen each and armed with like force.

On the waters of Lake Champlain to one vessel not exceeding like burthen and armed with like force.

And His Royal Highness agrees that all other armed vessels on these Lakes shall be forthwith dismantled, and that no other vessels of war shall be there built or armed.

His Royal Highness further agrees that if either Party should hereafter be desirous of annulling this stipulation and should give notice to that effect to the other Party, it shall cease to be binding after the expiration of six months from the date of such notice.

The undersigned has it in command from His Royal Highness, the Prince Regent, to acquaint the American Government, that His Royal Highness has issued orders to His Majesty's officers on the lakes directing that the Naval force so to be limited shall be restricted to such services as will in no respect interfere with the proper duties of the armed vessels of the other Party.

The undersigned has the honour to renew to Mr. Rush the assurances of his highest consideration.

Charles Bagot.

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Mr. Rush to Mr. Bagot. Department of State, April 29th, 1817.

The undersigned, acting Secretary of State, has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Bagot's note of the 28th of this month informing him that, having laid before the Government of His Britannic Majesty, the correspondence which passed last year between the Secretary of State and himself upon the subject of a proposal to reduce the naval force of the two countries upon the American Lakes, he had received the commands of His Royal Highness, The Prince Regent, to inform this Government that His Royal Highness was willing to accede to the proposition made by the Secretary of State in his note of the second of August last.

The undersigned has the honor to express to Mr. Bagot the satisfaction which the President feels at His Royal Highness, The Prince Regent's having acceded to the proposition of this Government as contained in the note alluded to. And in further answer to Mr. Bagot's note, the undersigned, by direction of the President, has the honor to state, that this Government, cherishing the same sentiments expressed in the note the second of August, agrees, that the naval force to be maintained upon the Lakes of the United States and Great Britain shall henceforth, be confined to the following vessels on each side - that is:

On Lake Ontario to one vessel not exceeding One Hundred Tons burden and armed with an eighteen pound cannon. On the Upper Lakes to two vessels not exceeding the like burden each, and armed with like force, and on the waters of Lake Champlain to one vessel not exceeding like burden and armed with like force.

And it agrees that all other armed vessels on these Lakes, shall be forthwith dismantled, and that no other vessels of war shall be there built or armed. And if further agrees, that if either party should hereafter be desirous of annulling this stipulation and should give notice to that effect to the other party, it shall cease to be binding after the expiration of six months from the date of such notice.

The undersigned, is also directed by The President to state, that proper orders will be forthwith issued by this Government to restrict the naval force thus limited to such services as will in no respect interfere with the proper duties of the armed vessels of the other party.

The undersigned, eagerly avails himself of this opportunity to tender to Mr. Bagot the assurances of his distinguished consideration and respect.

Richard Rush.