

alteration in side armour or in the size or number of big guns is permitted in respect of the existing battle fleets of the British Empire, the United States, or Japan, but the rule does not apply to France or Italy.

Such are the Treaty's main provisions with respect to the battle fleets of the five Powers. As to their auxiliary fleets, comprising light cruisers, submarines, destroyers, and aircraft-carriers, the American proposal for their corresponding reduction to a fixed ratio has not been found capable of adoption except in the single case of aircraft-carriers: An aircraft-carrier is a vessel whose tonnage exceeds 10,000 tons and which is exclusively designed for carrying on its decks the aircraft attached to the fleet. The Treaty imposes restrictions on the number, size, armament, and construction of such ships. The aggregate tonnage of aircraft-carriers shall not exceed in the case of the British Empire or in that of the United States 135,000 tons, or in the case of Japan 81,000 tons, or in the case of France or Italy 60,000 tons. No such vessel shall carry guns of a calibre exceeding 8 inches, or shall, with certain exceptions, exceed 27,000 tons.

As to cruisers (other than battle-cruisers—which are capital ships and subject to restriction accordingly), no such cruiser shall exceed 10,000 tons, or shall carry guns of a calibre exceeding 8 inches. The Treaty, however, imposes no limitation either on the number or on the aggregate tonnage of the cruiser fleet of any of the Powers.

As to destroyers and submarines, the Treaty contains no restrictions either in respect of their size, numbers, or aggregate tonnage. It was proposed by the British Delegation that the submarine should be abolished altogether and declared an illegal weapon of war. This proposal gave rise to a discussion which excited much public interest, and disclosed a wide divergence of opinion between the Powers concerned. The argument of the British Delegation, based on the experience of the late war, was that the possession of a fleet of submarines leads inevitably to a form of warfare against non-combatants which is inconsistent with the dictates of humanity. These arguments did not prevail at the Conference, but they made a considerable impression on public opinion, and it is not unreasonable to hope that at some future time, before the memory of the "Lusitania" has faded from the public mind, the total prohibition of submarine warfare may find a place in the law of nations. In the meantime, although the unrestricted building of submarines is still allowed, severe restrictions upon the use of such weapons have been imposed by another of the Washington treaties, to which reference is made later in this report.

On the failure of the British proposal to abolish the submarine, it was intimated by the British Delegation that so long as such weapons existed it was impossible for the British Empire to agree to any limitation upon the number of cruisers, destroyers, or other auxiliary craft available for anti-submarine warfare. The fact was disclosed in the course of this memorable debate that although the average number of German submarines operating at any one time in the neighbourhood of the coasts of Great Britain had not been more than nine or ten, it had been necessary for the British Government to maintain an average of not less than three thousand anti-submarine craft to meet the menace so created.

It is a matter for regret that it was not found possible to impose any limitation upon the construction or use of aircraft. The discovery of the art of flying and the terrible possibilities involved in its future development for the purposes of war constitute a menace to the cause of civilization and humanity. In particular it is to be observed that the progressive increase in the power of these aerial weapons is a growing danger to ships-of-war, and renders uncertain the future efficiency of those fleets to which the Naval Treaty relates. The Treaty, notwithstanding all its advantages, is open to the criticism that, while restricting the further development of the battleship, it leaves unrestricted the growth of the most formidable enemy which that ship may have to encounter in the future.

In order to safeguard the national security of the contracting Powers in view of the great reduction in their naval strength effected by this Treaty, it is further provided that within certain defined areas in the Pacific Ocean it shall be unlawful for the British Empire, the United States, or Japan to create new fortifications or naval bases. These Powers are also prohibited within the same area from