

The following information from the Registry of the International Court of Justice has been communicated to the Press:

The Court to-day (May 17th, 1952) held a sitting in the course of which Sir Eric Beckett, Q.C., and Professor Rolin delivered the final addresses, on behalf of the United Kingdom Government and the Hellenic Government respectively, on the Preliminary Objection in the Ambatielos case, and presented their final submissions which were as follows:

For the United Kingdom Government:

The formal conclusion of the United Kingdom is that the International Court of Justice has no jurisdiction to deal with the claim brought against the Government of the United Kingdom by the Hellenic Government in respect of the treatment of Mr. Ambatielos.

For the Hellenic Government:

In the light of the submissions of the Parties:

Having regard to Article 29 of the Treaty of Commerce between the United Kingdom and Greece, signed in London on July 16th, 1926, and, in so far as it may be necessary, to the Declaration of the same date,

May it please the Court: to decree, in accordance with the submissions of the Hellenic Government:

1. that the complaints formulated by that Government in its Memorial, relating to the breach of the contract of sale of the ships, to the unjust enrichment, to the non-production at the trial of certain documents of which M. Ambatielos was unaware and to the improper administration of justice (denial of justice stricto sensu), all have, as it has submitted, a legal foundation in Articles I, X, XV, paragraph 3 of the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation of November 10th, 1886, and likewise in Articles 1 and 3 of the Treaty of July 16th, 1926, which are in identical or equivalent terms to the first two provisions referred to above.

2. that the British Government has, through its counsel, Sir Eric Beckett, expressed its willingness that the Court should, in the event of its holding that it has jurisdiction to decide whether the Greek claim should be submitted to arbitration, as provided for by the Protocol annexed to the Treaty of 1886, and in the event of the Court's giving an affirmative decision on this point;

In such case, for the reasons indicated in the Hellenic Observations and enlarged upon by counsel,

to hold that it has jurisdiction to deal with the merits of the Hellenic claim, and accordingly to fix time-limits for the filing by the Parties of the Reply and the Rejoinder on the merits;

In the alternative, if the Court should hold that it cannot reach a decision as to its jurisdiction without going into the merits, by application of Article 62 of its Rules, to join the objection to the merits.

In the course of the proceedings Judge Hsu Mo addressed a question to the Agents of the Parties. This related to the question whether the United Kingdom Government had ever ratified the Declaration made by the Parties on July 26th, 1926. Provisional replies were given by Mr. V.J. Evans and Professor Rolin.

The oral proceedings on the Preliminary Objection are now concluded.

The Hague, May 17th, 1952.