

E 2/440

*Le Ministre de Grande-Bretagne à Berne, Ch. A. Murray,
au Conseil fédéral*

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Berne, April 13th 1854

The Undersigned, Her Britannic Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary, has received orders from his Government to make to His Excellency the President of the Swiss Confederation and to the Federal Council the following communication.



Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, and His Majesty the Emperor of the French, being compelled to take up arms for the purpose of repelling the aggression of His Majesty the Emperor of Russia upon the Ottoman Empire, and being desirous to lessen as much as possible the disastrous consequences to commerce resulting from a state of warfare, their Majesties have resolved, for the present, not to authorize the issue of letters of Marque.

In making this resolution known, they think it right to announce at the same time the principles upon which they will be guided during the course of this war, with regard to the navigation and commerce of Neutrals.

Her Majesty, the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland has accordingly published the accompanying Declaration¹, which is identical with that published by His Majesty the Emperor of the French.

In thus restricting within the narrowest limits the exercise of their rights as Belligerents, the allied Governments confidently trust that the Governments of Countries which may remain neutral during this war, will sincerely quest every effort to enforce upon their citizens the necessity of observing the strictest neutrality.

Her Britannic Majesty's Government entertains the confident hope that the Swiss Federal Government will receive with satisfaction the announcement of the resolutions thus taken in common by the two allied governments, and that it will, in the spirit of just reciprocity, give orders that no Force, under Russian colours, shall be equipped or victualled in the Cantons of the Swiss Confederation; and also that the citizens of Switzerland shall rigorously abstain from taking part in armaments of this nature, or in any other measure opposed to the Duties of a strict neutrality.

The Undersigned expresses a hope that the Federal Council will send in reply to the foregoing notification, such assurances as will prove satisfactory to Her Britannic Majesty's Government, [...].²

1. *Déclaration du 28 mars 1854, non reproduite, publiée dans FF 1854, II, p. 226.*

2. *Propositions de la main de F. Frey-Hérosé: 1. Mittheilung durch das Bundesblatt, mit der Einladung, dass niemand den Handel mit verbotenen Kriegsgegenständen nach dem und für das Ausland betreiben möge, wiedrigenfalls man sich den Schaden selbst zuzuschreiben habe, und von den schweizerischen Behörden keinen Schutz finden könne. 2. Mittheilung an H. Murray. Ces propositions ont été adoptées par le Conseil fédéral le 15 avril 1854 (E 1004 1/17, n° 1566). La note de Murray et la circulaire du Conseil fédéral la communiquant aux cantons (15 avril 1854) sont publiées dans FF 1854, II, p. 223—225.*