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Memorandum From Francis Mairs Huntington-Wilson to Alvey A. Adee, November 16, 1909

Francis Mairs Huntington-Wilson

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OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY.

MEMORANDUM.

November 16, 1909,

Dear Adee:

I take the view that in a diplomatic house here the Assistant Secretary of State (as Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs) takes precedence over Ministers; that in an American official house Ministers take precedence over him and that in an American private house, by a broad principle of hospitality, the foreign Minister may be given precedence over him, ~~although it may be either way.~~

I also maintain that American Ambassadors, when on leave in Washington, should make the first call upon the Assistant Secretary. I also maintain that as they leave their representative character behind them in the countries to which they are accredited, when they are here on leave ^{they} do not take precedence over the Assistant Secretary of State except in the Embassy of the country to which they are accredited (which is territory where their representative character may theoretically revive) or at dinners where they are guests of honor.

Will you please write yes or no opposite these points according to whether you agree or not with my views?

Assistant Secretary.

1. Yes, Before for. Ministers but after Ambassadors. *In your dinner I have attended in a diplomatic house I have had precedence over for. ministers, so that the reverse extends to all the Assistant Secretaries, even of other Departments. I have seen Gen. Oliver and Mr. Newberry placed above the hosts' colleagues.*
 2. Yes. Rule 1 is reversed, following the doctrine of colleagues of the host ranking after guests.
 3. By the usage of courtesy a foreign minister generally ranks an Assistant Secretary.
 - 4 and 5. Mr. Hay decided that American Ambassadors and Ministers, when in the U. S. on leave, have no personal rank by reason of their foreign service but are simply distinguished citizens — the exceptions to this ruling being those you mention.
- In all foreign capitals, the Under-Secretary of State has the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary.*
- all*

Hilvey A. Adee