

Tuesday, February 15, 1927.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

I have here a question as to whether the Canadian and Australian navies are part of the British navy. That is more or less a question involving a technical construction of the unwritten British constitution, the relationship of the Dominions to the British Empire. In so far as it is a question of considering what ought to be done in relation to naval disarmament, it is a technical naval question. I should assume that any ships that fly the British flag were British vessels. Just what action would be taken in relation to their consideration in determining the quota, as I say, would be a technical question for the Navy to consider. I should think it would all revolve around the fact of my understanding of it, that a ship that flies the British flag is a British ship, the same as one that flies the flag of the United States is a United States ship.

I haven't made enough of a study of what effect a 5-day week would have on the welfare of the people of the United States, so that I could give an opinion on it that would be worth anything. It will be interesting to see how it works out in Mr. Ford's factories and the results secured there may throw a good deal of light on what might be possible in other industries, though of course it is recognized, I think, that he has an industry that is very peculiarly circumstanced and which doesn't afford a standard of judgment for much of any other of our industrial activities.

I think the State Department has not yet received any replies to

the suggestion made for further consideration of naval disarmament by the five powers signatory to the Washington treaties, and until those replies come in officially I can't anticipate by undertaking to make any comment on what they may possibly be or the possible results that would accrue from them when they are received. I suppose the press has it in mind that this is not a new or separate conference that is proposed. It is simply a suggestion that when these five powers return to the Geneva conference, which is going on, that they be empowered to negotiate treaties or a treaty among themselves on the general theory or the general standard of the 5-5-3 basis. It is not exclusive of what the League is trying to do, merely supplementing the action that is to be taken. I think it must be perfectly evident, I do not think that is too strong a term, that it is impossible to secure agreement among a lot of small countries, some of which have no navy at all and others of which have almost none, in matters that affect the five powers that signed the Washington treaties. It is for that reason that I have made a suggestion that we segregate that question, consider it as a separate question, which I think is the only practical method of approach. All I have suggested is that we have a conference about it and undertake to determine whether we can not reach some further practical conclusion in relation to it. I have made that proposal because I can see no other method of securing any result.

I am informed that Admiral Latimer is to have a conference today

3.

with Dr. Sacassa for the purpose of considering plans to prevent further strife and bloodshed in Nicaragua. I am very hopeful that something in the way of a settlement may come out of that conference, and until I know what the results of it are there isn't any other matter in relation to Nicaragua that I think it would be helpful to discuss.

It is very difficult to find out what conditions are in China. It is a vast territory having a vast people. We have Americans scattered all over it. I don't know of anything that has occurred lately that would indicate that American lives and property are in any greater jeopardy than would naturally be supposed from the warfare that has been going on there now for several years. What we are trying to do in relation to that situation is to be there and be ready to take care of our people as best we can in case necessity arises. It is a country that is far away, which we can not reach in a short time, so that on account of the situation which has developed we are keeping forces in the locality that will be able to land and protect our people and their property from outbreaks of mob violence.

I have several questions here as to what may be done about naval disarmament in case France or some other country doesn't desire to participate. The only thing I can say about that is what I have already said, that I don't care to anticipate that subject or that situation. I will see what replies are made by the different countries and then see what hopes we have from those replies of getting further limitations.

There isn't any present need for the use of marines in China.

01258

4.

I have not yet reached any final decision about a member of the
Interstate Commerce Commission.

01259