

Friday, February 11, 1927.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

I haven't seen the suggestions said to have been made by Representative Fish of New York relative to the acquisition by this country of British and French possessions in the Caribbean, so there isn't any comment I can make about it.

It is too early to have received any response from the governments interested in the note that was presented yesterday relative to a further limitation of naval craft. It will probably be some time before any formal reply is made. It isn't quite correct to call this a new naval conference. There ~~is~~ is a conference on general questions of disarmament already in existence in which we are taking part and this was our formal suggestion as to what might be done by five Washington treaty powers relative to extending the limitation adopted at that conference to the naval craft, to which it does not now apply. The difficulty has developed at this preliminary conference as to which branch of armaments should first be taken up, whether it should be air or land or sea, so that it was suggested in my note and message that it seemed best to take up the naval branch first. We have a formula for that, and when that is disposed of very likely it will be easier to take up the other departments of armament. If naval armament hasn't any relation to land and air armament and we can get a standard adopted for naval armament, why then they can make a standard for the other departments that corresponds. There isn't any standard whatever in relation to land or air. Of course,

I don't know whether the proposal will be acceptable to the other powers, other than that because there is a standard already in existence and it would seem to be a reasonable proposal I had every expectation that it would gain a favorable acceptance.

I haven't made any choice yet of a new Interstate Commerce Commissioner.

I am advised that no marines, American marines, have been landed at Shanghai. I think that appeared in some of the headlines. I was told at the Cabinet meeting that a careful reading of the dispatch didn't bear out the headline. What happened is that some of our marines have arrived at Shanghai and have been partly or entirely taken off the transport which carried them there and distributed among some of the vessels that were already there. In that sense they have landed at Shanghai, but they haven't gone ashore.

There haven't been any developments that indicate any present necessity of landing marines. They are there, of course, as I have said a great many times, to protect American life and property in case these are in jeopardy and undoubtedly the greatest danger from that is not from any organized military forces, but the danger of mob violence breaking out in case the town is taken and the present government authorities are superseded by some other. The peculiar danger would come during that transition period and when the old authority breaks down and the new authority is not yet established. In order that we may be able to meet a contingency of that

kind we have sent our marines there and some of our naval forces entirely in accordance with a well established practice that marines and sailors land in foreign ports from time to time when American interests there are in jeopardy to furnish them such protection as is necessary.

Press: Have there been any replies to our note to China?

President: No, I don't know of any formal reply coming. The only thing we have is, I think, some reports from Mr. MacMurray stating that he had presented the notes to the various interests in China.