

Tells Scope of MacDonald-Hoover Parley

The following article by Edward Price Bell is taken from the *Chicago Daily News* and is of particular interest because Mr. Bell is the newspaper man who brought about the very conference, between Premier MacDonald and President Hoover, of which he outlines the scope. London man for the *News* for twenty-five years, during the past ten years Mr. Bell has devoted himself to world problems affecting peace; and in this capacity visited the Philippines five years ago, obtaining interviews with Leonard Wood, Sergio Osmeña and Manuel Quezon. While the conference has already been held, it is being followed by diplomatic negotiations no doubt very largely based upon what Mr. Bell says here.—Ed.

"Bigger things than even a British-American naval adjustment on the basis of parity and non-competition in warship building, with a corresponding arrangement affecting all maritime nations, will be discussed by Premier MacDonald and President Hoover in their prospective conversations in Washington and perhaps at the president's summer camp on the Rapidan river.

"The whole problem of the relations between the British commonwealth of nations and the United States of America will come under review. The prime minister and the president will ask themselves this question: 'How are we to make certain that no warlike eventuality, from whatever quarter it may threaten, shall imperil the peace of the English-speaking world?'"

To achieve British-American naval parity or approximate parity is excellent. To put an end to British-American and general naval competition, with prodigious economic and moral advantage to the world, is better. But these accomplishments, assuming that they are made effectual, are far from exhausting the beneficent possibilities of the British-American or the world situation.

When the British and American navies are substantially equal in combat strength, and when rivalry in warship building no longer casts a shadow over civilization,

challenge the whole position suggested by the 'freedom of the seas.'

"Already in these dispatches it has been stated that America's classic doctrine of neutral maritime rights is likely to be reversed. That this statement will have its verification in due time scarcely needs to be doubted. The moment of verification depends upon events. Just now the 'freedom of the seas' is not to the front officially in Washington. Senator Borah has striven to make it the uppermost topic—to put it ahead of naval dimensions in British-American and world politics—but he has failed. Both Washington and London are agreed that the traditions,

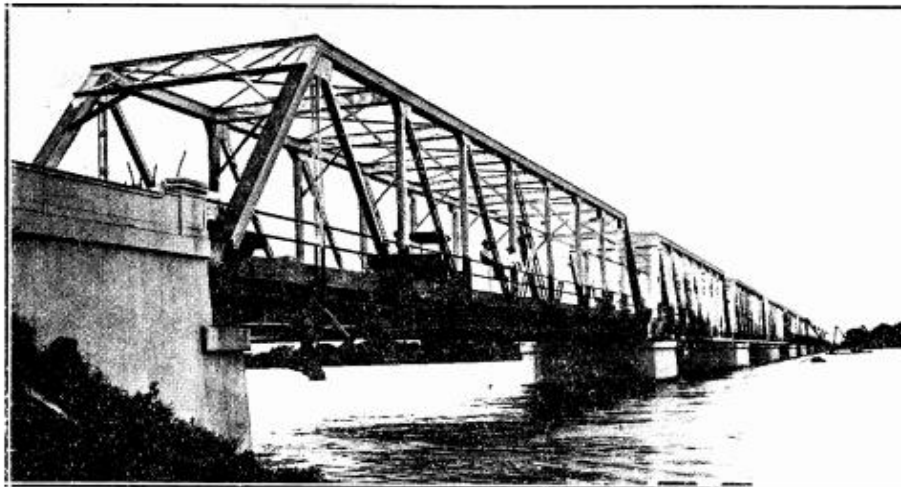
bound up with friendly and trustful connections embracing the other nations.

"The premier and the president will seek to erect their peace structure upon the corner stone of the Briand-Kellogg pact. It is accepted by both statesmen as the world's new political starting point. Both regard prepaet international political thought as either obsolete or in want of review. This standpoint applies particularly to the 'freedom of the seas.' Many persons reason about this and other international questions as if the Briand-Kellogg pact (not to mention the league of nations covenant or the treaties of Locarno) did not exist. But not MacDonald or Hoover. Neither is befogged, nor so politically unreal, as this.

"Under the pact (again forgetting the covenant and Locarno) Britain may not attack America, nor America Britain. Indeed, under the pact there can be only

Who Is Aggressor? one kind of war in the future—a war between an aggressor and the rest of the world. Such a war would be between a lawbreaking nation or nations and law-abiding nations. Neither Britain nor America will commit aggression, will break the law.

"What MacDonald and Hoover have to consider, and if possible to decide, is how, in the event of an attack threatening the peace of the world, they are to determine who is breaking the law and who defending it, in order that their fleets may be in no danger of being ranged on opposing sides. No war, if Britain and America can prevent it, no collision between their fleet if they cannot—this is the principle in this problem, which will engage two of the most serious, honest and capable minds in the world when MacDonald and Hoover get together in Washington or in the woods of Virginia early



Antonio Luna Bridge over the Rio Grande at Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija

Public Works Photo.

Problem of Fleets in War the question of how peace is to be maintained still will remain. Britain and

America and other sea powers, having decided upon the relative proportions of their navies, will be compelled to proceed to the further and yet more vital conclusion of how their fleets are to be used in the event of unpreventable war.

This question is wide open today. Sea law is in the melting pot. Almost no views concerning it have been formulated. There continues to be talk of the 'freedom of the seas'—whatever that nebulous and variously interpreted phrase may mean—but vigorous thinkers, abreast of the advance of international law, are beginning to

prejudices and perplexities of sea law must await naval agreement looking to acceptable relativity, noncompetition and economy.

"But the time is near when the larger problem must be faced by Britain and America. It will be faced by MacDonald and Hoover. Their ideas may or may not be made public prior to a more mature development of the international naval situation. Nevertheless they will understand each other, as, before their conversations are finished, they are virtually certain to understand each other with reference to every other matter of importance to the harmonious functioning of the English-speaking states in their own interests, which, of course, are indissolubly

in October.

"It is a stupendous question, crucial, fraught with weightier human interests than any other now confronting statesmanship. Between law-breakers and law defenders there can be no ethical hesitation as to choice. In outbreaks of war, however, the aggressor, some contend, cannot be distinguished. They argue, that is to say, that there can be no decision in such cases as to who are lawbreakers and who law defenders. If this difficulty were insuperable, the outlook verily would be dark for any system or method of marshaling the major force of civilization against war.

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"But is this difficulty insuperable?

MacDonald and Hoover think not. It is highly honorable to their statesmanlike temper that they think not. They will not accept as insuperable any difficulty which blocks the path of international peace. They may not win through. They may fail. The goal they aim at may be for other and later statesmen to attain. But at least the great Scotsman now at the head of the British government and the silent, thoughtful, informed, stiffwilled man now at the head of the American government will not lie down or run away because somebody lifts the shout, 'Insuperable.'

"The probability that the doctrine of the 'freedom of the seas' will be reversed or disappear arises from the Briand-Kellogg pact. It means that neutrality in widespread war is coming to be conceived of as impossible. It means,

too, a feeling amounting to practically a conviction that any imaginable great war will find the majority, if not all, the sea powers on the side of the resisters of aggression. In this event, naturally; navies would wish to exercise the fullest belligerent rights in terminating the activities of the aggressor or aggressors at the earliest possible moment. It belongs to this point of view that 'contraband,' whether 'conditional' or 'unconditional,' has become a meaningless term and that 'blockade' as historically used falls under the same description.

"Premier MacDonald and President Hoover, informally, at any rate, will explore the problem of extending the Canadian-American peace to the relationship of the whole British commonwealth with the United States. Canada and America are frequently disputatious but never warlike. The effort will be to effect an identical situation covering the whole English-speaking

world. This effort or idea well may contemplate the demilitarization of the British islands in the Caribbean, with perhaps strategic and financial concessions to Britain.

"These latter are still quite 'in the air,' but by no means absent from progressive speculation relative to a permanent British-American accord. We have not only the peaceful Canadian-American frontier, confirmed by generations of reciprocal friendship, but the nonfortification clauses of the Washington Pacific treaty, deemed a virtual impregnable safeguard of peace on the premier ocean of the globe.

"Why not extend these examples of political goodwill and sanity to the entire British-American frontier and thus lay the surest foundations yet devised of an international peace of justice, the only kind of peace which can endure?"
