

U. S. Considers Ban on Armed Merchantmen

Hull Says Decree Similar to That for Submarines May Be Put in Effect

From the Herald Tribune Bureau

WASHINGTON, Oct. 19.—Cordell Hull, Secretary of State, indicated at his press conference today that the government was studying the question of extending to armed merchant ships the provisions of President Roosevelt's proclamation barring submarines of nations engaged in the European war from entering the ports or territorial waters of the United States.

His statement was in answer to questions as to why the President's proclamation, issued last night, had been specifically directed against belligerent submarines and had not made any provision against the use of American ports and waters by armed merchant ships of belligerents.

Mr. Hull said that, while the

Presidential decree, issued under the authority of the neutrality act, dealt only with submarines, attention was being given to armed merchant ships. He said the government believed that a permanent policy on armed merchant ships should be dealt with later, at a suitable time.

The provisions of the neutrality act would allow the President to extend the ban on the use of American ports to merchant ships as well as submarines.

Mr. Hull also emphasized the provisions of the Presidential proclamation against submarines which will not allow any submarine to come into American harbors because it has been damaged in a naval encounter or needs fresh supplies.

Mr. Hull said it was his understanding of the proclamation that a submarine was not supposed to have the ability to create conditions that would justify its coming into an American harbor. He said that if the submarine ran out of provisions it would not be allowed to enter American ports because such matters as food should be taken into account by the submarine commanders in the same manner in which individuals looked out for themselves from meal to meal.

The President's proclamation did not include an exact definition of American waters, but Mr. Hull said

today that he considered the boundary meant in the proclamation to be the three-mile limit. The question was raised because at the recent conference of the twenty-one American republics in Panama a neutrality belt of 300 miles around the Americas was discussed.

According to the present laws, ships of belligerents are allowed to enter American ports but are not allowed to remain in them more than twenty-four hours except under special circumstances.

A move to extend the ban on submarines to armed merchantmen was suggested today by Senator Bennett Champ Clark, Democrat, of Missouri, who said they should be treated as belligerent vessels. He said that during the World War President Wilson recognized an intimate relationship between the submarine and the armed merchant craft.

It was understood in official circles that Latin-American republics might follow the American lead in barring submarines from their waters to reinforce their neutrality, but Mr. Hull indicated today that the United States government had not yet been informed of such a move.

Meanwhile the government announced that six of the Army's flying fortress bombers would be sent

to Rio de Janeiro to take part in the services marking the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the republic of the United States of Brazil. The flight is another indication of the government's good-will program toward the Latin-American nations.

The planes will leave Langley Field, Va., on Nov. 11 and will arrive in the Brazilian capital in time for the anniversary on Nov. 15. Maj. Gen. Dekos C. Emmon, commander of the General Headquarters Air Force, will accompany the flight. The flight personnel will consist of twenty-four other commissioned officers and twenty-four enlisted men. The planes will go to Rio de Janeiro by way of Miami and the Canal Zone, Lima, Peru, and Asuncion, Paraguay.

Jan 14 1966
despatch
C. S. ...
J.F. 23.10