

Tuesday, February 3, 1925.

Remarks by the President to the Newspaper Correspondents.

I don't see that the report of the Agricultural Conference in relation to the protective tariff on agricultural products has any particular bearing on the question of the tariff on sugar. It may have some, but it doesn't occur to me that it has any special bearing on that.

I don't know of any recent steps that have been taken by France to start discussions about the American debt. There might have been some taken with the Commission that haven't come to my attention.

The matter of Muscle Shoals is before the Committee on Conference of the House and Senate, and they are in consultation with various members of the Cabinet, so that I am not familiar with the details of what they are considering and therefore can't give any judgment that is worth much about the offer of Mr. Ford to place his resources at the disposal of the Government, other than to say that I think it is a very generous offer and that if circumstances arise so that we can take advantage of it I think we might well do so. Now it may be that my judgment about that is all wrong, because I am not in touch with the circumstances, but it seems to me that that might be very helpful. I don't know just how far that is a justification or an opposition to the theory of government ownership and operation. It might be a matter of comment. It seems to indicate, perhaps, that the Government hasn't at present sufficient resources at its disposal and it was necessary to apply to private sources, but I suppose that is always the case in matters of this kind. Some private sources will be making investigations and experiments and research, and upon those technical questions the Government almost always has to get experts from outside of its own personnel.

There isn't anything I can say about the Child Labor Amendment. My position has already been made plain, I think, in my speech of acceptance.

I haven't enough of the details about the postal pay bill that passed the Senate to be certain about it. There is some claim that that would provide a revenue of \$46,000,000. Some claim that it would be very much less than that. I should very much wish to have more than \$46,000,000 to meet what will ultimately be about \$100,000,000. But that will undoubtedly be taken care of in the House. Now, my statement in my message disapproving the pay bill that

was passed last spring gave my position as clearly as I know how to state it, and it was that there ought to be legislation for revenue that would approximate - I think that was the world I used - the proposed expenditure.

I don't know as I can quite say that I have been assured of any Congressional action on agricultural legislation at this session. The report of the Conference has been laid before the Congress. They will have had at the end of the session about five weeks to act on it, and I think they ought to secure action within that time. The members of the House Committee and Senate Committee that I conferred with the other morning thought that they could secure some action at this session. The members of the Congress, and especially the members of the House and Senate Committees on Agriculture come from the agricultural regions. They are much better informed than I am as to the necessity for present action. If they think that there is an emergency that requires immediate action, why those two committees of course can draft legislation and present it for immediate action of the Congress and the representatives of the agricultural regions can make known to the Congress their position in relation to it and give the Congress information as to whether there is an exigency that requires immediate legislation. If there is an exigency, I am certain that the Congress will be able to pass legislation at this session. Now, if some other action indicates something else, and the committees of the Senate and House entrusted with looking after the welfare of agriculture think there isn't any need of haste and don't show any great interest in trying to get legislation through, I should think that would be a very fair indication to me that there wasn't any necessity for an extra session of the Congress to consider legislation of this kind, and it will have a good deal of influence in determining my action in that respect. That is all right to say in reply to the inquiry that if agricultural legislation isn't passed at this session whether I should think it would be necessary to call an extra session.

I haven't made any decision about either an Ambassador to Germany or a new Secretary of Agriculture.

I am anxious to have some legislation for the protection of Government employees in relation to rent passed at this session.

I am not certain just what the Temple bill is. I think it is for the

examination of lands in the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Great Smoking Mountains as such for a national park. I have had the question of a small appropriation of \$15,000 or \$20,000 for surveys of proposed lands that could be dedicated to park purposes in these regions up before me in connection with the Bureau of the Budget, and the Bureau of the Budget I think has reported that such an appropriation would be in accordance with my financial policy. That was a virtual endorsement of the appropriation to make a survey. I think that probably is what the Temple bill is.

I don't think that any intimation in relation to the Italian debt has come to this Government. If so, I haven't any knowledge about it; though, as I said about the French debt, it might have been made to the Debt Commission without my knowledge.

I expect that there will be a special session of the Senate to meet on March 4th. That seems to have been the universal practice for some time in the past and probably will be necessary this coming 4th of March. It is my present expectation.

I think that some time between now and the first of March I shall be able to finish my studies on the Tacna-Rica boundary dispute, so that about that time I shall be ready to make a decision.

I don't think it is necessary for the President periodically to address the country by radio. The newspaper reporters do very well for me in that direction. I doubt whether I could improve very much on the service that they render at present. There are certain occasions when I am making an address when it is very fine that the country can hear it, by radio, but it doesn't seem to me that there is any necessity, or that there will be any particular value, for the President to undertake any periodic addresses of that kind at fixed and certain times.

Very little came up in the Cabinet meeting today. Nothing except a few routine departmental questions.

There are several names under consideration for appointment to the Ambassadorship to Germany; not any one of them perhaps more under consideration than another.