

September 2, 1924.

Remarks by the President to the Newspaper Men.

I can't go into details in relation to the Railroad Labor Board. What I said yesterday was practically a repetition of the recommendation I made in my message to Congress at the first of December. It is generally understood that the Railroad Labor Board is not exactly satisfactory either to the employees on the one hand or the railroads on the other. I think it is also generally understood that I said yesterday it is a step in advance. It has made a perfectly astonishing number of settlements - I haven't time to go into details - many thousands, I think, adjustments of one kind or another. I believe that while it has been in operation there has been no strike of any consequence except one, the shopmen's strike in 1922. I am speaking offhand here, and my information may not be exactly accurate, but that, I think, is the situation. Now I think that is sufficient warrant for calling it a very large step in advance. Just what adjustments ought to be made, I am not prepared, and I don't know enough about the details of the different desires, to explain them. The impression that I gained from such studies as I made last year was that there ought to be some agreement between the railroad men and the ~~labor~~ railroad management as to what they want, and legislation to be on the foundation of such agreement. I think that might have been worked out last year, had it not been for the fact that a controversy arose in the Senate as to who should be Chairman of the Committee in charge of this legislation. As a result of that it was generally understood that it wasn't possible to get any legislation through.

Mr. President, may I ask if you favor the continuance of a representative of the public on the Labor Board?

Well, that would be my offhand impression if it were left to me here. What I do favor is that the railroads and the men get together and agree on something. Now, if they agreed on something different from that, very likely they might be able to convince me that their agreement is for the best interest of the public. Of course, in all these things the public welfare is paramount. As I stated yesterday the public welfare and public necessity must be protected, but perhaps the public could be better served by not having a public representative, or perhaps it can't. I couldn't decide that until we see what kind of a plan is proposed.

I haven't any plans for any participation in the campaign other than that I am undertaking to administer my office here and will no doubt make an

occasional address, if the occasion requires. My discussion with Mr. Butler this morning was very general. I asked him if there was anything special he wanted me to do. He replied that he found the situation encouraging, and desired me to proceed as I have been proceeding.

There was nothing of importance discussed at the Cabinet this morning, other than the statement made by Mr. Hughes, which has been on paper and which will be given to the press if it has not already been given out, in relation to our participation in an effort to control the sale of arms. That is a different thing, as you see, from disarmament. This is a matter of selling it. We participated in a discussion of it and we have agreed on certain proposals. Then there came a proposal that we should sit in with the League of Nations for discussion, and our reply was that our position had already been made known and we would be glad to participate in an international conference, where of course we can sit in on an equality with everybody else, and ~~not~~ enter into any kind of an arrangement that might seem practical, and on which we thought we would be able to secure legislation to carry it into effect.

I asked Mr. Wallace about the general trend of agricultural prices, which continue to be very fair.

I don't know how soon I may get any report from my advisory committees on shipping. Mr. Mellon told me just before he went away that a part of that was on his desk, and I understood that as soon as he returned he would take up that part that he was working on. It may be that we can get a report in the immediate future, and it may run on for some weeks. I should say at the outside, a couple of months ought to cover it. Perhaps before that. What I want there is a report in adequate season, so that if it is necessary to propose any legislation I can get that out and in my mind before the opening of the Congress.

The only other speaking engagement that I have in mind, other than at the unveiling of the monument in Baltimore, is the address I am to make before the Holy Name Society, and that has already been announced. They are to have a large convention here in Washington - I have forgotten whether it is in the middle of September or October.

September, Mr. President.

It is to be down at the Washington Monument. I don't know whether I shall go to Baltimore by motor or by train. Of course I shall not stay over night. I

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shall go and speak, and return at once. I intend to get out the advance copy of my speech as early as I can. I have some of it in mind, but I haven't put any on paper yet. I think perhaps I can get it started this afternoon, and hope to get it out Thursday or Friday morning.

I haven't reached any decision on the Sugar tariff nor on the personnel of the Agricultural Fact Finding Commission. But I am working on both of them.

Mr. President, may I ask whether the Holy Name address will touch on any political collateral/issues, Mr. President?

I haven't given any thought to what I will say at that time. My offhand impression ~~is~~, and you needn't print it, is that this is a Sunday occasion for a religious body. I don't want this published at this time, but I should judge that any political discussion would be rather inappropriate at that time. There are six days in the week to talk politics, and it is well enough to take Sunday for something else.