

September 23, 1924.

Remarks by the President to the Newspaper Men.

I do not think that the report of General Wood that the Philippine sugar crop is 34% greater than last year would have any particular effect on the decision in relation to sugar duties. That indicates, I assume, the greater domestic production. I do not see that it would make any difference in the decision.

There is no change as to my attitude towards Commissioner Gaskill of the Federal Trade Commission. I haven't taken that matter up. I haven't made any decision about it. I understand he is a very good man. When a man is in office you can usually consider that he will be reappointed until the contrary appears. It is always liable to appear until the appointment is made. (laughter).

I haven't made any speaking engagement and unless, as I stated I think some time ago, you have official announcement from the office here about my intention to speak anywhere, you will be pretty safe in denying any report that I am going out anywhere to speak. I have no plan about it. I think I have indicated to the conference a number of times that until you get some real information that I have changed my position on questions, changed my plan, or changed my mind, you will be safe in hazarding that it is just the same as when it was previously announced, and if you are going to make a guess you will make more correct ones by going on that theory than any other. You will miss out once in a while that way, but not so often.

I am working on this sugar report, which I have here on my desk, but there isn't anything that I can announce about it.

I don't know of any plan to increase the scope of the proposed aviation board to include not only the navy but the army, or a civilian membership. What I am particularly interested in here is the relative value between aviation, surface vessels and submarines. That is pretty purely a naval question. I haven't had a chance to talk or discuss it with the Secretary of War. I shall want to do that. My own impression is that perhaps this could be handled by the general navy board by their taking advantage of any testimony that they could secure from the army. It may be that it would be desirable to join the army as a member of the board. But my first impression is that that wouldn't be necessary;

that they could get all the information that the army might have through testimony from the army, and keep the two services separate as they are now. But I shall want to talk with the Secretary of War about that before making a decision. The aviation situation was not discussed at the Cabinet meeting this morning. None of the members of the Cabinet had anything to bring before the meeting, so it was very short.

Mr. President, is Secretary of Wallace in bed yet?

No. I had an inquiry made at his house. He is sitting up. But he has rheumatism which recurs from time to time and it is exceedingly painful. Mrs. Wallace thought he might be at the office within three or four days.

I don't know just what is going to be done about Navy Day. Of course we have just had Defense Day. Whether it is necessary to have a special Navy Day or not this year, I am not quite certain. That would be mostly determined by the Navy Department and the Navy League. I should expect to cooperate in anything they might want.

There hasn't been any development relative to the League of Nations disarmament, so that I could make any comment on it. My position on that stands until further notice.