

December 26, 1924.

Remarks by the President to the Newspaper Correspondents.

I hope you all had a Merry Christmas.

Thank you sir.

I am giving my personal attention to the Tacna-Rica boundary case between Chile and Peru, of course with the assistance of the State Department.

There haven't been any further developments in relation to an extra session of the Congress. We shall have to wait, of course, and see what is done at this Congress, and no final decision has been made about that. Of course, in the nature of the circumstances, no final decision could be made. I shall have to keep an open mind on it constantly. It goes without saying that there would be no extra session unless it was considered a matter of very great importance.

There will be some estimates for beginning the work that is contemplated by the passage of the bill increasing, or rather for the purpose of building some new cruisers and gunboats, and so on, for the Navy. The bill went through. Final passage was the other day, although it was substantially completed, if you will recall, at the session which ended last June. The Budget Bureau is investigating that for me, in order to advise me as to how much it will be necessary to appropriate for work that will be done during the coming year.

Mr. President, do you mind going back for a moment to the Chile matter and telling us when you expect to be able to announce a decision.

Naturally I can't tell. I should say - I don't know as I ought to give a date. I should hope to get it out in a couple of months.

I have two or three suggestions here about the evacuation of the Cologne zone. Now, that is a matter that is entirely in the hands of the European governments. It is one in which we have no legal interest. We have a general interest in anything that affects the well-being of Europe, but that is distinct and apart from the legal interest, so that I don't know of anything that would require any formal or official action. Official interest would be better than legal interest. We have no official interest in it. And the only comment that I can make about it is that I have every confidence that the European governments will reach an amicable solution of it. I think we are



warranted in that conclusion on account of the ability to agree on matters of this kind that has been prevalent over there for the last six or eight months beginning at the time when they agreed to refer their financial differences to a Commission of experts which was headed by Mr. Dawes, the carrying out of the plans which that Commission recommended, putting it into execution, and beginning payments under it.

I have heard indirectly from the Department of Justice that such investigations as they have made lead them to the conclusion that Harold P. Williams of Dedham, Mass., is a suitable person to appoint as U. S. Attorney for the Massachusetts district. I haven't had sent over to me the formal recommendation that I might make to the Senate, or a formal appointment, but I expect that that will be sent over so that I can send the appointment to the Senate when the Senate reconvenes.

Here are some interesting speculations about resignations and appointments. I haven't any official notice about those. I have heard some rumors, but as they are only rumors that have come to me I don't think I will make any comment about them.

No further preparations have been made in relation to the inauguration. The Legislative Committee is working on that and I expect to get a decision as soon as the Congress reconvenes.

The Department of Interior has brought to my attention the fact that a subdivision of that Department does what it can to promote safety in the mining industry. While there is very little that the Federal Government can do in the way of legislation in that direction, it does do what it can in the way of administration and through counsel and advice. The mines are for the most part entirely under the control of the various state legislatures. That makes it desirable, if anything is to be accomplished, that we should have a conference, probably of the Governors of the different states that are producing coal in mines. The Department of Interior is working on that program, and I think that they have worked out a program for such a conference. I am expecting that it may be called in the near future, in order that, should any legislation be decided upon, it might be submitted to the legislatures of the states that are about to assemble.



Now, I can't give you any more information about what the Cabinet officers will do in relation to petroleum than that which was embodied in the letter that I sent to each one of them. The general desire is to make certain a sufficient production of petroleum to take care of the needs of this country and it is for the whole of the members of the Cabinet to work out some plan. If they need legislation, why they will let me know about that and we will try and provide it. If they need cooperation with the states, we will try and work that out. I don't know just what method they will adopt for finding out the needs. Of course, there is a good deal of information in the Department of the Interior and in the Commerce Department. I have another Commission looking especially after the interests of the Army and Navy, particularly of the Navy. I am expecting a report from them almost any time. They made a preliminary report and very likely that may be of some assistance to the members of the Cabinet that are working on this larger problem. Some of the members of the naval inquiry brought to my attention that there was need of a consideration of the larger problem of furnishing petroleum not only for naval defense but for commercial and domestic use.

That seems to cover the inquiries of the day.