

December 9, 1924.

Remarks by the President to the Newspaper Men.

I don't know as I can make any extended comment on the outcome of the general elections in Germany. I don't know as any comment by me would be really appropriate. I understood that it was a general indication on the part of the people of a desire to try and carry out the Dawes plan, and insofar as it is such an indication I think it is a very hopeful expression of opinion. It indicates a determination to take hold and do the necessary work to clear up the reparations situation and abide by the decision which the representatives of Germany made, which they thought was for the best interests of that country.

I haven't given any consideration to membership in the Crispus Attucks Press Association. I don't know enough about that to say much about it. I wish you would take that up with Mr. Slemp and give him the details of that. I would be glad to encourage that association in any way that I possibly can.

I haven't decided about giving David J. Lewis a full term of appointment to the Tariff Commission. At the time I gave him a recess appointment the Commission had not completed its work on the sugar report and I wanted that done by the full membership of the Commission, so I appointed him in order that they might finish up that work. I haven't decided about appointing him for a full term.

I don't think I can make any comment on my recommendation in my message relative to appropriate representation by the various parties on election boards. It is a practice that we have had in Massachusetts for a long time under our state laws, and it has worked very well. It gives a feeling of security to all parties represented, that they have representation at the elections in order that they may see that they do not suffer in any way from the conduct of the election. It is an entirely fair suggestion. It worked so well, as I say, in my home state, that I thought perhaps it might be extended to include all federal elections. It ought to be done by the states themselves.

I am expecting to extend the leave of General Butler for another year, with the understanding that that will be the limit. I took the opinion of the Committee on Naval affairs of the House and Senate. The House/Com. thought it might be well to extend the leave, the Senate Committee thought perhaps it had better not be extended any further. I am interested to read you the following quotation

from Revised Statutes No. 1222, which is an expression of policy in relation to officers in the Army. Now that doesn't apply to the Marine Corps and it doesn't apply to men in the Navy, but it applies to men in the Army. "No officer in the Army on the active list shall hold any civil office either by election or appointment, and any officer who accepts the functions of a civil office shall cease to be an officer of the Army and his commission shall be thereby vacated." There isn't any law like that in relation to members of the Navy or the Marine Corps, so that it doesn't include General Butler. But that is a sort of a statement of the policy that the Congress had adopted and enacted into statute law in regard to the Army and is an indication of what the general feeling is. But I know the difficulty of finding men to perform such services as General Butler is performing, and in case of an emergency I am desirous of helping in any way I can. I have set out more in detail my views on the question, and a copy of the letter will be provided for the use of the press.

I don't think I can make any comment on the celebration that is taking place in Peru today, other than that it is a sort of a 4th of July to Peru. and in celebrating this event they wished us to participate, so that we had sent General Pershing and one or two others in order to participate in the celebration, and especially with a desire of indicating our wish to cooperate with them in anything that celebrates an event that partook of the nature of an extension of human freedom, and also to indicate our interest in South American countries and our desire for <sup>the</sup> most intimate and friendly relations that it is possible to maintain.

I have a report here from one of the Committee on the Coordination of Railroad and Steamship activities. I don't know of any reason why it shouldn't be made public. I haven't yet had an opportunity to examine it so much in detail as I should like to. As you see (pointing to the document on his desk) it is quite an extensive report. There are 125 pages with a supplement and a codicil, and so on. I think that the Department of Commerce will let any member of the press have it that will agree to read it, though he has a summary here which only occupies two pages, and very likely that will give a sufficient indication of the decisions that the Committee arrived at.

I don't think I can say that a decision has been reached as to the exact character of the inaugural ceremony. I thought that we might have something in the way of a parade. The rest of it goes as a matter of course, the Vice President is sworn in in the Senate Chamber and the President is sworn in outside and delivers his address.

I haven't seen any further developments in the rent situation in the District, nor have I any further information from the Attorney General in relation to it. The Attorney General is going to talk with me this afternoon relative to the appointment of - the filling of some judicial positions. Whether he has a report to make to me on the facts that he has ascertained in relation to the Police Court and the Juvenile Court of the District of Columbia, I can't say. I dismissed him this morning in order not to delay the press. I think he is coming in at 3.00 o'clock.

I don't know about the items of the River and Harbor Bill. I thought it had been loaded up so that it carried a larger sum than I felt warranted in indicating I wished to approve. I don't know of any method to proceed in relation to it, except to try and find out what are the more important projects and provide for them and eliminate some of those that are perhaps not so important nor so pressing. If that should be done I should look on the bill with favor. I think it was all at once jumped up from somewhere around \$25,000,000 to somewhat over \$50,000,000. I don't want to indicate that all these projects are not worthy of consideration. I am very well aware that they are. I would like it if we had the means with which to provide for all of them, but I want to take the more important ones and dispose of those, and any that can wait for a little, why let those wait.

I don't think any decision has been made about a Commissioner for the United States on the Austria-Hungary Claims Commission. I can't confirm or deny the report that Judge Parker, I suppose that means Judge Parker of the Railroad Adjustment Board -

Umpire of the German-American Mixed Claims Commission, Mr. President -

That is the Judge Parker. Well, I don't know whether he could finish up his work on that Commission soon enough to take this. Both this Judge Parker and the Judge Parker that is looking after railroad claims are both very qualified to undertake anything of that kind, but I imagine that Judge Parker who is on the German Claims Commission will not finish

his work in time to take up the other. Should he finish his work I should think that he would be well qualified to undertake this other work. But that matter hadn't come to my attention.

There isn't any foundation for the suggestion that the Assistant Alien Property Custodian, Mr. Wilson, will succeed Mr. Miller, if the latter resigns.

As already indicated, I am writing to Mayor Kendrick today and haven't yet been able to get my report drawn on the sugar tariff. I am working on it.

I wasn't able to give the National Republican Club of New York much encouragement about attending the Annual Lincoln Day Banquet. I have been up to New York twice since I have been President. I went up to the banquet last year. While I recognize the great importance of the city and state of New York, necessarily the President goes to New York more frequently than other places because there are various conventions and assemblies like the Associated Press meetings there each year, and the President goes up there to meet people that assemble from all over the nation. While it is a place that is convenient of access, and I like to go there as often as I can, I recognize that other cities also have claims on the President whenever he thinks he can travel abroad. I have been to New York twice, Philadelphia once, Baltimore to speak once, and Chicago. Those are the only expeditions that I have made abroad to speak.

Nothing has come to my attention in relation to the French debt since the last conference. As I have indicated many times, that is all in the hands of the Commission, and if you get your information from them you will get it firsthand and know it's authentic.

Railroad legislation is being considered. I don't know whether they will be able to provide a bill at the present session that looks to be feasible for presentation for passage. I indicated in my message the best I could my views in that respect. I think there might be some arrangement, as indicated here, between the employees and owners, or the employees and managers rather, of the railroads in relation to some legislation along certain lines of the Howell-Barkeley bill. I should be glad to see an effort of that kind made. I mentioned that in my message of 1923. I didn't reiterate it in my message of this year, but I am still of the same opinion. I don't think there is any foundation for the rumor that Mr. Mondell is being considered for the Secretaryship of the

Interior, and I don't know of any indication that Dr. Work is going to retire.

I suppose that I must designate someone very soon as Chairman of the Inaugural Committee. I am waiting to confer with some of the Senators about that. The Congress appoints a committee always, and they have general charge of the official end of it. For that part of the inauguration that takes place on Pennsylvania Avenue and so on I think it is customary to appoint a committee or chairman or something from the District of Columbia. As soon as the Congress has indicated what they are going to do in the way of a committee, why I can take that matter up with them and work out something.