

March 24, 1925.

Remarks by the President to the Newspaper Correspondents.

I think I can appoint the Commission on Muscle Shoals very soon. I have to look up some engineers and take a little time to do that, and find out whether they will be willing to serve. I think that work is practically completed. I think the Commission will be made up of five or six individuals, and I expect that some of its members will be persons connected with the administration, perhaps some of the members of the Cabinet. That isn't entirely decided yet, but that is what I have as a hypothesis that I am trying to work out.

Now this - I have two or three inquiries here about resignations. That rumor didn't originate in my office and you can get the best information by direct inquiry of persons affected. If they have any such intention, it hasn't been revealed to me. As I have already suggested, I think you will be most likely to be correct if you consider that the affairs as they are are going to remain as they are, though I know that that would reduce the news value and the interest of your readers, perhaps, in what you might report.

Not anything special came up this morning in the Cabinet meeting. I made some inquiries about the general business situation. Secretary Davis says there is some unemployment, apparently about the normal amount. What he is especially gratified at is the apparent inclination on the part of employers and employees to agree on wage scales whenever present contracts expire and to go on on substantially the present basis, and those agreements are being made without a great deal of difficulty. Mr. Mellon reports that insofar as he can observe there is a very general and healthy condition of good business. Those industries that are supposed to be barometers or indicators of what the general business condition is throughout the country all seem to indicate that it is fairly good. There has been some speculation in securities that seems to have been somewhat overdone that has caused a reaction in speculation, but it hasn't seemed to have any result in diminishing the general business activity.

I have got on my desk the invitation to attend the Commencement exercises at the University of Michigan. I think I already indicated that I was going up there more or less on account of Dr. Burton, who has passed away, and that will

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make some difference in my desire to go, so the matter is undecided.

I don't think I have made any appointments yet on the Commission to represent the United States in the Exposition at Seville, Spain. I want to get that cleaned up and all these appointments that are required by acts and resolves of the recent Congress out of the way as soon as I can.

I haven't reached any decision about the member of the Boundary Commission in the Tacna-Arica case. I am looking for a competent engineer. I understand that what you have in mind in this question is the member of the Commission that is to run the boundary line. General Pershing has been designated to be the person who is to take the plebescite. The engineer that is to run the boundary commission hasn't yet been selected.

No decision has been made about diplomatic posts, other than those which have already been announced. I am going to take that up with the Secretary of State right away.

I am waiting until Secretary Weeks gets back before making a final decision about the Lexington-Concord celebration. The Vice President has arranged to go up and Secretary Weeks represents me, so I am not certain whether I shall go or not. I should think I would be present either at that celebration or the Bunker Hill celebration in June, though there is a celebration on the 3rd of July in Cambridge, celebrating the anniversary of the date of taking command of the Continental Armies by General Washington that is equally important.

I am uncertain about the resignation of Minister Washburn, at Vienna. Whether he is expecting to retire or not, I don't know.

I think that the two Senators from Indiana suggested the name of Harry Bassett as a member of the United States Employes Compensation Commission. I am not certain about that name, but I think that was the name they suggested. The matter is under consideration.

No final decision has been made in relation to Merrill Otis, of St. Joseph, Mo., to fill the vacancy that will occur when Judge Van Valkenberg will go to the Circuit bench. He has been recommended to me by Senator Spencer and Dr. Clement, who is the National Committeeman from Missouri. I think Senator Spencer has also indicated that he will be agreeable to the appointment of some other man in

Missouri, but I rather expect that Mr. Otis will be appointed. He is here now in the Dept. of Justice and has been at work for some time. He has had a notable legal career in Missouri and served, I think, as Chairman of the Public Service Commission out there.

I haven't decided yet about giving Mr. Woodlock a recess appointment. I am expecting to get in contact with him to see whether he will be willing to accept a recess appointment.

I can't give you any further information about the linseed oil tariff, other than to say that it is being investigated.

No decision has been made about a successor to Colonel Miller. He will remain as the Alien Property Custodian until his successor is appointed and qualified, under the arrangement that was in existence the other time when he was away. Director Abbott and General Counsel, Judge Wilson, have my authority to act in his absence.

I don't know whether it is going to be necessary for General Pershing to be relieved as Chairman of the Battle Monuments Commission because of his going to South America. I didn't imagine that it would be necessary. My inclination would be to do whatever he wished to have done. He said nothing about that and as I don't see any conflict in the two positions I should expect that he would stay on as Chairman.

I haven't had any conference with Secretary Kellogg, either on the Mayflower or anywhere else, relative to a further Arms Conference except the general suggestion that he look into the question and see what would remain to be done to carry out some plans that were proposed at the last conference, and whether it would seem feasible to make suggestions to foreign countries as to whether they would desire to entertain any suggestions about it at this time. So all that is doing in relation to the Arms Conference, or a proposal for one, is being done in the office of the Secretary of State to check up and see what there is.

I haven't any information other than this question about what change Mr. Owen J. Roberts, who is one of the counsel prosecuting the Teapot Dome case, has made in relation to Admiral Robison. Quite naturally I was waiting to see what might happen there before recommending the Admiral for further promotion. I

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don't want that understood as any reflection on him whatever. It is merely a neutral position, waiting to see if anything developed that would in any way interfere.

That seems to cover the questions this morning.