

April 14, 1925.

Remarks by the President to the Newspaper Correspondents.

I don't know enough about the fishing possibilities of the Tidal Basin to make any intelligent comment on the suggestion that that Basin<sup>A</sup> should be stocked with fish. I have advocated out of doors life, but whether that would be conducive to any success in that direction, I don't know. Fishing I have always identified more with the sport of children, than that of grown people. I suppose that is more or less because of my own experience. I used to fish when I was a boy, with a good deal of satisfaction. You who were up in Vermont with me remember the brook that runs down through the meadow. When I was a boy that looked to me to be a large and important stream. I used to repair to it as often as I could after school and catch a few fish there. That was about the extent of my fishing experience. Now, other people get a good deal of satisfaction in going to Florida, or into the north woods to fish. Stocking the Tidal Basin wouldn't minister very much to the desires of people of that kind. So that I should think, after a moment's consideration, it would probably appear that about the only good it would do would be to furnish a place for the small boy. If it really would, I think it might be worth while. But I should want to have it carefully investigated by the fish department, either of the Department of Commerce or of Agriculture, or by the committee that has a special interest in out of door sports, to see what could be done.

Right along with that is an inquiry here about the Junior Achievement Club work. That was brought to my attention yesterday by a visit here of some New England people that are organizing that work among children, more especially in the textile industry. I judge that was the industry that was exhibited here. Some of the younger people making certain materials - you saw them present a scarf to Mrs. Coolidge and one to me that was made by them. Now, this Junior Club work, of course, I came in contact with when I was young. I think father organized it mostly in my childhood. That isn't possible for those children that live in cities and whose parents are engaged in the textile industry. Where that is the case, I should think something of this kind was a first-class proposal. It gives those young people an interest, it gives them something to do. They see they are making a real achievement. I should think it would be very much worth while.

Of course when you get into the open country this work is really going on in different farm organizations. The boys have pig clubs, where they raise a pig for market. Now that extends to cattle, and the chicken and egg industry is one that lends itself very well to occupation for the young people, and of course the cultivation of the fields. My grandfather died when I was six years old, and I know before he died I had begun to sow wheat at his instigation. Had he lived, perhaps I would be sowing wheat now. (laughter) It reminds me, perhaps I have mentioned it before, of a very wise old judge in Northampton who thought we might all be better off if we were engaged with a hoe and potato. So I am very much in favor of these Junior Achievement Clubs work, and one form of it would be adaptable to city life, those who are in textile centers, and another form of it would be adapted to life in the open country. I think commendable progress is being made in both cases.

I don't know of any new development relative to the discharge of employees in the Government Printing Office. That is being investigated to see if there have been any errors. If there have been, why of course they will be rectified.

I don't know of any special proposal about legislation to give the President power to transfer and consolidate various bureaus of the Federal establishment. I hadn't given that any special thought, because I had been interested in the reorganization bill which has never been acted on, and which I suppose will come up for action ~~at~~ in the next Congress, which takes care of that kind of work. Now, looked at from its business side, of course the work of the Government has to be constantly supervised and checked up like the work of any business. Otherwise, it runs to seed. I don't know whether any of you happened to hear the story about the sentinel that was posted in the Garden of the European emperors, and finally someone undertook to inquire why the sentinel was posted at that particular place. Careful investigation revealed that more than 100 years before that there had been a rose bush and that bush had a very handsome flower on it and the empress wanted that flower protected. So the sentinel had been posted there to protect that flower, and nobody having looked into the matter the sentinel was still on duty years after the rose bush was gone. Now, unless you keep constant supervision over any kind of business, newspaper

business, or the business of running the Government, it will run to seed and you will have men trying to function when the reason for their functions no longer exists. So that we have to keep constant supervision over the executive department and, of course, at this time we haven't yet finished up all the work of getting rid of our war activities. We ran into a great many activities at that time that are not needed in time of peace. While those are mostly closed up, yet it is a good idea to be constantly watchful to see if we are trying to carry on any activities of government that are no longer needed. While I am constantly engaged in this general idea, I haven't at the present time any specific plan about it, nor am I doing anything more than would be the ordinary routine of the executive department.

The Assistant Secretary of Labor, Mr. Henning, is one of those under consideration for appointment in the Southern District of California. I think there are quite a number of other names suggested. I don't want to mention him to the exclusion of any others, but he is the only one that is inquired of here. It is a fact that that name is under consideration, but perhaps not more so than quite a number of other names.

I don't know of any foundation for any report that Mr. Butler is to retire as Chairman of the National Committee, and I am very certain that he has never mentioned that to me and feel quite certain that he doesn't intend to retire. I think we will have to revert to the old rule that I have mentioned, which is analagous to that rule in physics that a body at rest remains at rest and a body in motion continues to go forward in a straight line until acted on by some outside force. I have forgotten whether that is one of Newton's, or some rule of that kind. But it is applicable especially to people holding office, and any suggestion of resignation from office you are always warranted in viewing with suspicion.

Now, I have just had presented to me this morning by the Police Commissioner of New, Senator Wadsworth, and one or two other people, Mr. Enright is Commissioner of Police, and I have forgotten who else came in, a very ~~handsome~~ handsomely engraved invitation to attend the International Police Conference which is to be held at the Waldorf-Astoria, at 7.00 o'clock on Thursday, the 14th day of May next. I think it is rather doubt-

ful whether I will be able to go up there. I am interested in this conference and the work which they are doing. I have been interested in some legislation that Mr. Enright proposed and which I mentioned in my message to the Congress. last December, relative to having some central agency for criminal records - instead of it being scattered over 48 states and different cities try to have one central agency where if a person has a criminal record it can be ascertained.

Here is a suggestion that instead of shaking hands with people that come here to the White House, that they be assembled out on the lawn and I go out and make them a speech. I don't view that with much approval. I do not at all dislike shaking hands. It brings me into a personal contact which you can't get any other way. I am sure that the people that come to Washington are much more pleased with an opportunity to pass through the line and shake hands with me, even though it is a rather formal and distant method of greeting, than they would be to gather anywhere and have me say a few words to them. I also know that it takes me less time and is easier for me. I rather like the handshaking. I can't give up more than 15 minutes or half an hour each day to it, but I can take care of a good many people here in that length ~~ordinar~~ of time.

I have, I think, received a telegram from some one in Syracuse relative to the U. S. Attorney. I believe it was quite a long communication, as I recall it, and related to an official of the Department of Justice that was sent over there. I noticed one statement in it that would perhaps bear investigation. The suggestion was that the amount of fines collected were not commensurate with the amount of fees that used to be secured from licensing the sale of intoxicating liquor. That was rather a novel proposition to make. Of course it is not the business of the United States District Attorney to collect as much in fines as used to be secured in fees for licensing the sale of intoxicating liquors, but the communication has gone to the Dept. of Justice for such action as they find is warranted upon investigation.

There was nothing particularly developed in the Cabinet meeting this morning, other than the report from Secretary Hoover, which I presume will be given to the press, relative to our exports and imports. The last month I think they were the largest of any during peace time, and if they were reduced to the same value in dollars and cents it would be - so as to have them the same as would be represented by prices before the war - they showed that our exports and imports are about 50% larger than they were in 1914. Now, no other countries that were engaged in the Great War have been able to make any showing like that, and I think substantially all of them have exports and imports nowhere near what they were before the war; some of them very much less. But those of Great Britain, I think, are just about even. That is larger than what I thought their increase had been. My last investigation I think showed that figure not more than 25%. Now that is not a  $\nabla$  for a long period, just a short period, but that amount ran about 50% larger when reduced to the same ratio price, which is an encouraging sign of the business activity of the country.

Thank you.