

Friday, May 22, 1925.

Report of Newspaper Conference.

There aren't any reports that come from me or from Ambassador Herrick to the effect that he is planning to retire, so I think that report is without foundation.

General Pershing is going on the Commission to take the plebiscite in the Tacan-Arica Boundary dispute, so I don't see how he could take Ambassador Herrick's place if he was proposing to retire. I think that must also be without foundation.

I don't know who to appoint District Commissioner. I would be glad of any suggestions that any of you men may have in that respect, and I am indifferent as to whether he be a Democrat or a Republican. I think I would a little prefer to appoint a Democrat if I could find a fit person; mainly because Captain Oyster was a Democrat, perhaps it is reasonable to have a Democrat on the Board. I don't know what the politics may be of the Army member of the Board. Mr. Rudolph of course I know is a Republican. I don't think it is material, through, whether the third member be a Democrat or a Republican. I am willing to appoint any satisfactory person, pretty much regardless of his politics.

There is a difference, and I think they are on a different contract, between the debts of some of the nations that were contracted prior to the Armistice and those that were contracted after the Armistice for relief purposes. I think that applies to Belgium, but I don't know whether the statute setting up the Debt Commission makes any distinction. I am inclined to think that there is no distinction. If there is that distinction in the contract it might be possible to make a distinction in the settlement between those debts contracted before the Armistice and those contracted after the Armistice, which were for relief purposes. This was brought to my attention by an inquiry relative to the debt of Belgium.

I haven't made any appointments or decided upon any others than those that have been announced. I ~~am~~ made an appointment, the third appointment that I made of the judge in New Jersey, yesterday. I think this third one will stick. Senator Edge gave me a list of names before he went abroad, and I appointed one of them, and he afterwards sent me word that his health was bad and he couldn't



serve. I investigated and appointed another one, and I was informed that he had sent a telegram to the Department that he couldn't serve. That was Mr. Emory. So yesterday morning I got a telegram from Senator Edge that he would recommend the appointment of William Clark. That was satisfactory also and he was appointed. I understand he is willing to serve. He is a very excellent man and I am much pleased to make an appointment of that kind.

I haven't any information about the intention of the Department of Justice to appeal from the decision setting aside the consent decree that was entered in the packers case, by which they agreed to discontinue the shipment of groceries and canned goods, I think. I don't know what the intention of the Department of Justice is about that, or whether they have ever reached any decision, so if any one is particularly interested they better make their inquiry there. It might be a perfectly plain case and no reason for appeal. It may be that something has occurred that they are very much opposed to, and that they are going to make an appeal.

I don't know just when Assistant Attorney General Wells is to leave the Department, so I don't know just how soon it will be necessary to find a successor for him.

I haven't any information about any communications that may have been received at the State Department, either formal or informal, relative to our foreign debts. Nothing of any important nature has been received, so far as I am aware. I think I should have been informed if anything much had been received.

I think I can have press copies of my Minneapolis address about a week in advance, and my Memorial Day speech is substantially ready. I have been ~~working~~ working on it two or three days. I want to go over it once or twice more. I think I shall be able to sent it to the printer tomorrow.

I have already spoken about a Commissioner for the District. I haven't any special name under consideration now. I don't happen to know Mr. Townsend. I think very likely I have met him, but I can't recall him now. I am quite certain that John Hays Hammond is not a resident of the District within the meaning of the statute. It would be a fine thing to get a man of the type of Colonel Hammond, but I am afraid he is not eligible. I should be very much surprised if he would be willing to consider a position of that kind.

I have received from Senator Ball a suggestion about some building projects for the accommodation of those who work here in the District. I think his suggestion has a good deal of merit. There may be some other suggestions that would also have an equal or greater merit, but his suggestion of a plan for building and financing buildings seems to me to be entirely feasible and workable, and would result in bringing rents within reasonable requirements. I am going to take the matter up more in detail with Secretary Hoover to see if we can work out anything in relation to it.

I notice that the ladies got ahead of us in getting entertained on the Mayflower. I don't know whether the men present would be interested to go down on the Mayflower with me some day. You can talk that over among yourselves. If you think you will, let me know and we shall try and arrange an excursion some afternoon.