

Friday, August 28 1925.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

I didn't have a chance to have so long a visit with Mr. Madden as I should have been pleased to have. He made some arrangement in Washington that will necessitate his going to Washington on the night train. I believe he wasn't able to get a reservation on the Federal, so he has to take a 5:00 o'clock train over to New York and then go on to Washington, and therefore I didn't have a chance to talk things over much with him. We did talk slightly - altogether the discussion was about the national finances, as to the coming appropriations and the expectation of tax reduction, but only in the most general way. We had such a short time that we didn't arrive at any decision about anything. I did get some information from him. They are going to start, probably in September, to prepare the appropriation bills, lay a foundation for them, and be ready to present them very early in the session. I think that is about all we talked about. He mentioned the fact that his son-in-law, Colonel Henderson, is leaving the service today to engage in the airplane business, both in the manufacture and in the use of airplanes for the transmission of materials; I mean by that carrying express matter and possibly later carrying mail.

I haven't any trips in the near future that I know of. I expect to go back to Plymouth and stay two or three days with my father some time during August. I don't know just when.

I don't know of any poll of the Senate that has been made that

throws any light on how the Senate stands in relation to the World Court, other than what I have seen in the newspapers.

My boy is going to the Citizen's Military Training Camp the day after tomorrow. It is a pretty hard thing, you know, to be the son of a President. It doesn't give a boy very much chance to have the same kind of a life that an ordinary boy ought to have. So that I rather hope that the press will understand that he goes up there just as any other boy might go.

Question: Is that Camp Devens, Mr. President?

Yes. Undoubtedly a great many boys would like to go up there that don't have an opportunity to do so. I hope the press will not give him any more attention than they will give other boys. I think it will probably be a favor to him if he can be left alone up there and be made to do the work that comes to the boys in the camp without any more comment that comes to other boys.

Question: Will you go up there, Mr. President?

Answer: Yes, after they get started. I mentioned that to Mrs. Coolidge. I don't really like to speak about that, but I know there is an inclination always to write stories about the son of a President. My boy John is just as easily spoiled as a good many other boys and a good deal easier than some, so I am exercising that discretion that all parents do in trying to protect their children.

I don't think that the State Department has arrived at an under-

standing yet with all the powers interested in China, though they may have. My last information was that they hadn't all agreed on just what ought to be done in different particulars. I think there was a very substantial agreement in principle, but in details they hadn't all agreed.

Question: Mr. President, does that include the minor Powers?

Answer: Yes. But they were so close to it that possibly this Washington report that suggests they have arrived at an understanding is correct. I shouldn't be surprised if it was, but I have no information that it is. My last information I think arrived yesterday and indicated that they were making such progress that it seemed almost certain that they would arrive at a substantial agreement.

Question: Does that include an agreement on the resolution on extraterritoriality?

Answer: Well, the whole situation is what I meant to cover. The extraterritoriality and the finances and all. Now, as I say, I haven't any information and this Washington report may be correct. I wouldn't be surprised if it was correct.

I haven't made any formal decision about the reappointment of Major Peyton Gordon to be U. S. District Attorney for the District of Columbia. He is in and will continue to stay in until some one is appointed to take his place, and it is my expectation that he will be reappointed. Now I am not certain about that, because I always reserve the right to take such other action as may be necessary in the circumstances, but I expect that the Dept.

of Justice will recommend his reappointment and that I shall reappoint him.

I haven't done anything especially about appointing a successor to Ambassador Bancroft. I haven't thought of discussing that with Senator Pepper, though it would be quite natural that any one like Senator Pepper who came here I would inquire of if he had any one in mind that would seem to fill the requirements. I haven't any particular specifications. I don't know - the only desire I have is to get an outstanding man that will commend himself to the people of this country and also commend himself to the people of Japan. We have constantly rather delicate questions in the East, especially at the present time, so that I am naturally solicitous to get a first-class man to send over there. I haven't given any particular thought to whether it ought to be a man from the service or a man from outside the service. A good man that I could find from the service or outside the service will not make any particular difference. Of course Mr. Bancroft was from outside the service, though a very experienced man in legal and public affairs.

I don't think there can be any basis for the Washington dispatch - where is that dispatch that the Bureau of Mines has a plan for the Government to seize the mines in case of a coal strike?

Newspaper man: It was printed in Boston last night.

The President: Yes. Well they may have plans there that contemplate something of that kind, the same as the Army and Navy have plans for repelling all kinds of attacks and making all kinds of attacks, but I haven't heard anything about it, very likely shouldn't hear anything about it. They had a

bill that was drafted and a report that was made, which was public. Whether there was anything in that referring to the seizure of mines, I don't know. There is no authority on the part of the Government to seize coal mines, so far as I know, except that extreme authority of trying to protect the Government. I haven't been advised of any such plan and I don't expect that Mr. Hoover is coming back to discuss any such plan.

I haven't any information at all about tests with anti-aircraft guns. The only information I had about that was that the tests that were made very early in the spring or very late in the winter, I don't know which, were not satisfactory, and that they didn't reveal the full defensive force of aircraft guns and were not well carried out. I haven't had any information about that since then. I suppose those tests constantly go on like the tests of heavy artillery on armor plate. The aircraft people are trying to devise means to escape the hazard of the aircraft guns, and the guns are experimenting to become more efficient in making a defense against aircraft.

I don't know when I shall go back to Washington. I haven't in contemplation any trip to the Institute of Politics at Williamstown.

I have already spoken about going to Plymouth. That seems to cover the questions of the day.

Question: Mr. Madden said he was in favor of reducing the combined surtaxes to 20%. Mr. Winston published a letter yesterday proposing the same thing?

President: Well, I don't know what the figures will show. I can't say offhand what reductions can be made. I should have to depend in the first

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instance on the Treasury to give estimates of what certain schedules will produce in the way of revenue, to see if they will produce enough revenue, and then in the second instance the Constitution provides that the House of Representatives shall originate revenue bills, rather than the President. While it would be perfectly proper for the President under that provision that requires him to keep the Congress informed as to the state of the Union to make suggestions on a matter of that kind, I wouldn't want to make any suggestion without first conferring with the men in the House that are on the Committee and have charge of the tax bills to see what their studies have indicated. They are going to work on the question of a tax bill early in September, I think Chairman Greene told me, and the only suggestion I can make is that which I have already said, that the estimates of the Treasury will show what the result of the schedules are and then find out from those who have looked into the question in the House what they think is available and wise, and then get the result of the concensus of opinion to see how much we can reduce taxes.

Question: Mr. Madden also told us that he favored the blanket provision for rebating the surplus.

Answer: Well, that is an idea that he has had in mind for some time. I don't know whether that could be worked out or not. Of course that could apply only to income taxes. Now it might be when you came to study the whole question that you think if you could reduce taxes safely \$1,000,000

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that that ought to be taken off admission taxes instead of the income. If that is the case, why if we had \$50,000,000 to spare we would want to pass a new bill and take it off somewhere else. There is a good deal in his suggestion of giving authority at the end of the year to take such an amount of surplus that you have in the Treasury and apply it in the nature of a rebate in the next year's taxes.