

Friday, January 28, 1927.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

I was not aware that there was any secrecy surrounding the appointment of men to public posts in the District of Columbia. My own procedure has been almost to approach a point of giving public hearings in relation to suggestions, perhaps not quite, but every one so far as I know of that has wanted to come to me and talk with me about appointments in the District of Columbia has come and such suggestions as have been made have been taken and considered. A careful canvass of the names that have come in who are thought to be worthy to hold appointment, or who have appeared to be persons that I could secure, has been made. The method has been to make very careful inquiry among a great many people in the District concerning qualifications of persons that were proposed and then the selection has been made in accordance with the apparent merits that have been disclosed as a result of those inquiries.

I haven't chosen any one yet for the Public Counsel for the Utilities Commission. I would like a man of experience and outstanding legal attainments. It is very much easier, of course, to stand here and draw the specifications of a person that I should like to appoint than it is to go out into the city and find such a person. There is the handicap that has been put on by the legislation that makes it all the more difficult to get a man of experience and outstanding ability because he may within a certain specified time have owned some securities that

disqualify him. There is some question as to whether if a person has entered into a contract for the use of a telephone he may not be disqualified. I am not going to assume that that is so, but a literal interpretation of the statute might give basis for an argument that that was a contract and if any one has had a contract with any public utilities in the city, why he is disqualified from serving. I don't know whether the purchase of some tickets on the street railways, which I suppose would be a contract between the person purchasing them and the street railway to furnish him with transportation, would disqualify or not. It would on a close interpretation or literal interpretation of the statute. I merely mention these as showing the length to which the Congress has proceeded in tying up the situation in making a selection of any persons who undoubtedly would be willing to serve, who have had experience and ability, and outside of this statute are recognized as persons of character.

I should doubt very much if it would be at all practicable for the President of the United States to go into conference with the President of Mexico. International relations are not conducted by that method. I think every since some one attempted to conduct negotiations directly with George Washington, which he refused to do and referred them to the Secretary of State, it has been recognized that the foreign relations of this country are to be conducted through that avenue.

I have the report of the Tariff Commission on cotton hosiery.

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There are so many different angles to it and such a lack of agreement on the part of the members of the Commission/<sup>on it</sup> that I haven't been able to come to any conclusion on it.

I haven't decided on any one to take the position that is vacant on the Interstate Commerce Commission.

No final decision has been made on filling the vacancy on the Municipal Court of the District. I have several names under consideration and there again I shall proceed in the same way that I mentioned, take different names that are suggested and such names as may be suggested by myself, and make inquiries among people that are informed of the suggestions to determine those who are qualified to hold the position.

I haven't made any final decision about where I shall live when I have to vacate the White House for the repair of the roof. I have several houses in view. No final decision has been made.

This country has about 4,000 of its citizens in Shanghai. without doubt in obedience to the law. They are there lawfully and as long as that is the condition I don't know of any reason why they should be asked to leave their property and their business. There is a great deal of commerce with China that centers in Shanghai. If all the foreigners should leave there, the commerce that they minister to would be ~~po~~ prostrate and the results would be very disastrous to the Chinese people that are dependent on that commerce for their existence. What we are attempting

to do is to forestall the recurrence in Shanghai to our citizens there of any such experience as took place, I think it was Hankow, you may have seen some pictures in the paper within three or four days showing the results of the rioting that took place there. Now, I am perfectly aware that the Chinese Government doesn't approve of anything of that kind and undoubtedly would do what it could to prevent it, and I am convinced is doing what it can to prevent the recurrence of anything of that nature in Shanghai. I have every reason to suppose that they will be able to prevent the breaking out there of any riots, but our purpose in having Marines and ships near there is to take care of our people the best we can. I haven't given any consideration to the statement issued by the Chinese Minister. The American position was stated at considerable length, and I thought with as much ~~cl~~ clearness as possible, by our Secretary of State within a day or two. That may be taken as the authoritative position of the United States until some other authoritative position is stated. There was a press report that some of the Chinese interests had given a statement to our Consul General, I think at Shanghai. We have had no report of anything of that kind yet. I think that statement appeared in the press of yesterday morning. So we are not advised as to whether the press report was correct. Mr. Kellogg has indicated that this country would be perfectly ready to enter into negotiations with the government and people, the governments representing the different sections of China, if that could be agreed upon, and that is the American position.