

Friday, October 22, 1926.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

There isn't very much that is new that I can say about the District Commissionership. Mr. Rudolph called on me the other day and indicated that he desired to retire in the near future. He has not set any time for retirement yet, so I do not know when he is going out and neither does he know. But I haven't any one specifically in mind to take his place. It is a good deal of a job to find a person in Washington qualified and willing to serve as District Commissioner, especially with the prospect in view that he may be subject to all kinds of investigations. Then there is another matter of the law that I do not think does any good, which constantly embarrasses me, and that is the provision that the person must be for three years a legal resident of the District. It is well known, I suppose, that there are men, persons that are virtual residents of the District and have been for a long time, their interests may be substantially all here, their business may be all here, their household is here, but if it happens that they have a voting residence in some of the states they are ineligible for service as District Commissioner. I have in mind two or three specific instances of that kind, of men that would be willing to serve, disinterested residents of the District in fact, yet in contemplation of the law they are ineligible. I quite agree that the District ought not to be subject to the control that the Commissioners have over it by persons that might be brought in from outside and I think that the Commissioners ought to be residents in fact.

I don't know that three years is any too long, but they may now be residents in fact in every sense of the term, yet I can't appoint one of them to the vacancy. To indicate something of the amount of work it is to choose a District Commissioner, I think when I chose the last one that we canvassed very carefully over 50 different proposals and names. before we found out one that would serve -- of course many that we perhaps have been willing to take wont serve. As we went into the investigation we found people that were willing to serve, but it developed that they had some connections or something of that kind or a business that constituted a disability.

The Red Cross has sent a cable to the Red Cross in Cuba inquiring what, if any, assistance might be needed down there and has been informed that the Cuban Red Cross is making a survey and would report later. Also, inquiry has been made through the State Department of our Ambassador in Cuba to find out the extent of the damage and the need, if any, for relief.

I have arranged to place Marines on guard over the transmission of valuable mail. Some have already been detailed for that purpose. We have two camps of Marines now, one in California and I don't know where the other is --

Press: Quantico? Paris Island?

President: No, I am not quite certain. We have a camp somewhere in the East that we did not have before the War. I don't know whether it is Quantico or not. It gives us an opportunity to call on the Marine force for emergencies because they are better equipped than they were before the War to take care of an

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emergency of this kind. I am also preparing to purchase and install a considerable additional number of armored automobiles, trucks or vans. Those will be so constructed that valuable mail matter can be carried in them. They are bullet-proof, I believe. It will be very difficult to get inside. And of course there will be ample guards inside to protect the shipments there.

I sometimes have inquiries about what different departments are doing. If I have information about that I am always willing to give it. Oftentimes I do not have information. I would suggest that generally it would be more satisfactory to the press that is inquiring about activities of Departments if they apply right to the Department and find out there what is going on.