

Friday, November 26, 1926.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

Here is a suggestion that the District of Columbia ought not to be under the Budget Bureau and the Comptroller General, but ought to have a budget bureau of their own and a comptroller of their own. That is a novel proposition to me. But of course I haven't had time to consider it in all its implications. I don't know just what reason there is for wishing to have a budget bureau of their own, or whether they are the same reasons that any other department of the Government might advance. I think each of the members of the Cabinet would like to have a budget bureau of his own and I am quite sure that each member would like to have a comptroller general of his own. But I don't know how the budget bureau of the District would be established or how the comptroller would be established. Such expenditures as the rest of us make have to be submitted to the Comptroller General for his approval and there doesn't any reason occur to me offhand why the expenditures of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, who are Federal officers appointed by the President, shouldn't have their expenditures submitted to the Comptroller General. Washington is a Federal city governed entirely by the National Government. There are various angles to this that would come to one's mind as he thought it over. Now, there may be some very excellent reason for making changes of this kind. I don't know what the reasons are that have been advanced. It is suggested here that because the Federal

Government only contributes a lump sum to the local government it shouldn't be concerned as to how much is added by the locality and I suppose by how the money of the District is expended. I don't imagine that there is any very great good that could be brought about by making a change of this kind, but if some one will explain to me all the implications of it I perhaps might change my opinion.

I haven't any information about the bill to authorize the Government to develop the Great Falls water power nor a proposal for a local bond issue for the purpose of acquiring park tracts and enlarging the sewer system. I supposed that the park tracts in the District were all acquired by the Congress. I don't know what the practice has been. That is my understanding. The sewer system, I assume, is paid for by the District administration. I am not sufficiently informed about the need for additional drainage, so that I could give any opinion about that.

The Geneva Protocol is as you men of the press no before the Senate. It is the result of long careful study by experts. I think our chief representative was ex-Senator, now Representative, Burton. The provisions of this treaty are substantially the same as were ratified by the Senate in the treaties of Washington that came out of the Washington Conference in 1921-22. I don't understand there is really any new principle involved here, but simply a carrying out of the principle to which the United States is already committed with most of the other great powers.



As I recall it, France has not yet ratified. I have forgotten the reason that has been advanced, if any, for their failure.

I had no information that Mr. Charles B. Warren was coming to Washington. Very likely he may be. Very likely he may not be. I have no information about it. When he is here, I think I almost always see him.

Here is a pertinent inquiry about which I had thought of making comment even if the inquiry had not come in. A notice was published in the press that I was about to employ Senator Fess as my special representative or had employed him as my special representative in the Senate. I think the report must have been circulated by some one who hadn't had the experience of attending conferences that have been held between myself and the press. I have explained a great many times that I do not employ any special representative either in the House or the Senate, never had any, no one up there has ever been authorized to say he represented me. I don't expect that any one ever will be. When I have any business to transact with the House or Senate I transact the general business with the leaders that the members of the House and Senate have chosen to take the lead there. Sometimes when a matter is pending before a committee, I call in the Chairman of the Committee, inquiry about it, and confer with him in relation to it. My usual practice about the Senate has been to confer with Senator Curtis about all matters and with Colonel Tilson and Speaker Longworth of the House. I don't expect to change that practice. I think it is rather

unfair to Senator Fess to put him in the position of having to deny or having it assumed that he is my special representative when he isn't, and I think it is unfair to Senator Curtis who was chosen by the Senators to act as their leader. I don't like to have any suggestion made that I am disregarding him and using some other person for that purpose. Such policies as I have are general policies that I expect to have taken up and considered by all the members of the House and all the members of the Senate. I haven't acquired and don't expect to acquire the services of any special representative. Now, I don't want to be understood as making any criticism of Senator Fess' ability, loyalty and devotion to his duties. They are very high. But the Senate has chosen Senator Curtis. That choice of course is one that I should recognize.

I haven't completed my message to Congress. I am still engaged on it. I expect to get it out to the press about a week before it will go to the Congress so that you can have an opportunity to send it throughout the Country by mail.

I haven't given any consideration to the question of whether the report that Colonel Carmi Thompson may make on his investigations in the Philippines should be published or not. There might be some parts of it that he would consider as confidential. I should want to confer with him before I made any final determination. I should expect, though, that the general parts of it would be published and perhaps it would be published

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in its entirety. But it will altogether depend on whether he has prepared it with that in view or with a view to it being a strictly private report to be made to me. But I expect it will be published.