

Tuesday, November 30, 1926.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

The only plan that has occurred to me for radio control would be by more legislation. I don't use the radio in the White House very much. My wife uses it a great deal. I am most usually in the evening engaged in some kind of work that keeps me in the library. My wife likes to knit or something of that kind and while she is knitting she turns on the radio. She uses it a great deal. I haven't heard any complaint about interference. That may be due to the peculiarities of Washington. We are almost always getting our radio from the local radio station, which of course is sufficiently powerful so that outside interference wouldn't come in except in a slight degree.

I haven't any advices from the State Department about any proposal to send a successor to the present French Ambassador who is resigning. If any inquiries have been made over there they have not yet been reported to me. They would be reported the day they are made.

I haven't been into the matter of tax reduction or tax legislation very much with different members of the Congress. All that I could say about that is that they have indicated a disposition to take such recommendation as I may make in my message and consider it. We shall have to see in relation to that, of course, what may develop.

Colonel Tilson and Mrs. Tilson are guests at the White House. I am having conferences with different members as they return. Speaker Longworth is coming in tomorrow. I shall probably have different members in for breakfast or lunch as time goes on. I had some in this morning. Has the list of those been given out, Mr. Sanders?

Mr. Sanders: Yes, sir.

The President: It is primarily a social matter. There is incidental talk about various matters that may come before Congress. I think I have already indicated that I expect to send up my message and not take it up in person.

Mr. Russell, Vice President of the New Haven road, and Mr. Barnes, who I think is one of the counsel of the New Haven road, he was formerly in the Massachusetts Senate with me, an old acquaintance, and the General Counsel for the New Haven, Buckman, I think he was formerly President of the road as I understand it, now General Counsel, came in yesterday. They were in town on some matters affecting their road, as I understood it. They came in to call on me. I was glad to get their report of the progress that is being made by the New Haven and the Boston and Maine, in which Mr. Buckman said the New Haven has a considerable interest, in getting back into a better financial condition.

Most of the progress that has been made toward a choice of a Commissioner for the District of Columbia still continues to be negligible. Quite a large number of people that would make very good Commissioners I find on investigation, even though they have been endorsed by a good many people whose

endorsement would bear great weight with me I find are incapacitated by reason of the clause that requires a three year residence, so that I haven't made much progress. It has been mostly as a result of elimination, eliminating those that I find are not qualified by lack of sufficient residence or who think that their private business is such that they would not be able to serve if the position were offered. I have not offered the position to anybody.

I haven't any new policy about shipping. Such policy as I have has been announced several times in my message. Of course, conditions change and as they change quite likely I would change my mind about what ought to be done. But conditions have not changed enough up to the present time to indicate any particular change in any shipping policy that I have. Now, I don't want to have my shipping policy confounded, exactly, with the policy that the Shipping Board may have. Under the law they have the duty of administering that great property, more or less independent of the Executive, more or less responsible to the Congress. I am glad to cooperate with them in any way and give them any help, but they have to make the decisions under the law and assume the responsibility for them. I know they have been holding some hearings, advertising some lines for sale, and making some progress I think in developing the opinion of the Country, and some progress towards liquidating our ship property.

Then we turn to a somewhat lighter subject, one that interests me a little. We have received a present of a tame racoon.

Press: Edible, Mr. President?

President: That depends on your taste. I haven't much of a taste for

raccoon meat. Some people like it very much. But I have established him here in the south lot in suitable housing and he seems to be enjoying himself very much. There is another development in the south lot that I do not think has been suitably reported in the press. While we were away at camp this summer a swarm of bees moved into one of the hollow trees in the south lot and has been engaged during the summertime in making honey. That is edible. Again, I don't have very much of a taste for honey. It never seemed to agree with me very well. When I was a small boy about three years old my grandfather's hired man visited his people and brought back quite a supply of honey. I ate so much of it that it disagreed with me violently and I have never enjoyed the flavor or even the smell of it. But I am interested in its production. I am quite interested to have what is known as a swarm of wild bees take possession of one of the hollow trees in the south lot.

Press: Is this raccoon very young?

President: I think he is. I don't think he is quite grown yet. He is very playful, very interesting, and seems to be very well trained and well behaved.

Press: Have you a name for him, Mr. President?

President: Perhaps you can advertise for one.