

Tuesday, April 20, 1926.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

Senator Deneen and Representative James came in to tell me about the progress that their Committee was making on the Muscle Shoals problem. They have several bids, I can't tell just how many, six or seven I should judge. I suggested to them that they call in the people that have made bids and tell them the offers that - that is tell each one the offers they have received from the other bidders and find out whether the bidders have made their final offer, or whether they could increase their offer. There were three things that I was anxious to have secured - the production of fertilizer, the distribution of any surplus power, and the payment of the best sum that we could secure to the Government for the property and the use of it - and I thought the Committee ought to recommend the acceptance of the bid of that party that does the most in these directions. I hoped that they would be able to make a disposition of the property that would not involve the expenditure of any more money on it by the Federal Government.

Galen Stone came in to pay his respects to me, as an old acquaintance of mine that I had known in Boston. I haven't happened to see him before, since I have been President. He was in town and dropped in to see me.

Congressman Treadway was in the other day to suggest two places in Stockbridge, - I think one is the Woodward place - that is the Woodward that was connected with the Woodward and Lothrop Store here in Washington, and the Patterson place on the Lee-Lennox road, - as possible places for me to occupy during the summer. I have taken those under consideration and of course have

a good many places offered. I am very glad to have the press report on all of them. While I can't occupy more than one place during the summer, it is very nice to have brought to the general public's attention the availability of all these different localities for other people that are seeking places to go during the summertime.

Charlie Michaels: Would they get such good rates?

President: The country is full of beautiful places that are very attractive for summer vacations.

I don't know that I could say anything about a censorship of films. If any of you are interested to see some of my thoughts in relation to that subject you would find them in a veto message that I wrote to the Massachusetts legislature when I was Governor. I didn't there go as much into the merits of censorship or lack of censorship, because the question there turned more or less upon constitutionality. I have never considered the question of whether there ought to be a national film censorship, so my first reaction would be to leave that pretty much to the states to determine. I think there is no doubt that moving pictures have been an element in creating better understanding between the nations. I don't know but what it would be of advantage if some of our moving picture producers in this country would bring us into a little more intimate touch with some of the life abroad. I am quite sure that it has been of assistance to this country to have our moving pictures shown abroad, both in the understanding it has given of our people and their customs and in the promotion of trade. The moving picture in this country has grown to be

very large. It is one of the leading industries of the country and it ought to be encouraged and promoted in every legitimate way by the Government. Some years ago there were complaints about the character of some of the films that were produced. I haven't heard so much complaint recently. I think the reason is that the moving picture concerns themselves have taken the burden of reforming such abuses as existed and that the character of the pictures that are produced now is steadily increasing, better than it has been before. I presume that Mr. Hays has been a very helpful influence in that direction.

I don't know that there is any comment that I can make about the inquiry that is proceeding in relation to Commissioner Fenning. That is, or ought to be, entirely a judicial matter that will be conducted from a judicial point of view, without any outside influence.

There isn't anything new about the Tacna-Arica discussions. They are proceeding. Mr. Kellogg talked with me yesterday about it and he is very hopeful of reaching a settlement. I haven't had any request from Bolivia in relation to any interest that that country may have.

The bill for the return of the Alien Property that is held in this country has security is before the Committee. I understood that Mr. Mills withdrew because he found some concern in which he had some interest would be affected by the passage of the legislation. That is, I understood that he meant that if the bill passed there would be a settlement of their claim, so that he thought it would be inappropriate for him to be taking a leading part in relation to the bill. I think his attitude in that respect was proper and

judicious. That doesn't affect at all, though, the merits of the bill, the fact that he thought he ought not to take a leading part in promoting the passage of the bill and the presentation of the reasons for its passage in the Committee and the House. I thought the statement that Secretary Mellon made in relation to it, which was in the morning press, was a very clear statement of the situation, and his suggestion that if this plan was not to be adopted that some one ought to present some other plan until some plan is presented that appears to be better than this, why I can see nothing to do but to continue to advocate this plan. The subject is a rather intricate one and difficult to deal with. I think this is the second plan that the Treasury has devised, after consultation with various interested parties and securing their consent to it. They had a plan before that didn't seem to work out so well, as I understand it, and so they have presented this plan. I don't know whether the Congress will be able to take it up and dispose of it at this session. That will be for them to determine.