

Friday, April 22, 1927.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

No information has come to me relative to holding national political conventions in Washington, other than what I have seen in the press. I am always glad to do what I can to help advertise the city. I don't know as I can make any contribution that would be helpful in that respect on that subject.

No entirely final decision has been made about delegates to the proposed naval limitation conference. Of course, Mr. Gibson, the Ambassador, who has been through this preliminary conference, will represent the United States, and the naval representatives that have been with him. That is settled. And they will be the backbone of the American delegation. I think that one of the admirals is expected to return to Washington for a conference, and after such conference has been held with him we shall know whether it is necessary to send any additional representation. My present feeling about it is that all that will probably be necessary in that respect will be, perhaps, some expert advice that might be helpful to Mr. Gibson in the possible drafting of treaties and studying proposed drafts, and such additional help as the naval experts may furnish. It is our information that the British and Japanese are confining their delegates almost entirely to representatives of their Navy. I don't mean by that all naval officers, but representatives of their naval organization. We do not have any that exactly corresponds. That would leave us, if we pursued a similar course, to use officers of the Navy to a large extent, and that is what we are proposing

to do. Mr. Gibson is, of course, expected to head the delegation if no change is made in the plan.

I haven't been taking up any questions relative to Mexico with Charles Beecher Warren. He has been spending two or three weeks, he told me, at White Sulpher Springs, and stopped off here on his way back to Detroit. I think he is returning to Detroit tomorrow. I am not quite certain about that, but I think that is what he told me. He and Mrs. Warren and his family. I asked him to take lunch with me. We had a chat in which we talked some about the developments in Mexico, but not in any official way, nothing having developed other than what we both knew about virtually at the last time we talked together.

There hasn't been any development relative to the appointment of a Judge in California. ~~ixkxvexhx~~

I have had called to my attention lately the fact that some of the press are beginning to get a little careless about quoting the President as the result of these conferences. It seems that it is necessary to have eternal vigilance to keep that from being done, and to caution the members of the conference against that. Of course, it is a violation of the understanding to say that the spokesman said so and so, and put in quotations on that. I think, by the way, that it would be a good plan to drop that reference to these conferences. It was never authorized in any way that I could determine by the President. It has been used from time to time, but it has been used so long and there has been so much reference to it that one might as well say that the President said so and so, or

the White House spokesman or the official spokesman said so and so.

Question: Mr. President, do we understand that the term spokesman is not permissible?

President: It has never been authorized and has been used in a way that it is perfectly apparent that when the word is used it means the President. Now, that need not have been done, but it has been done, and having been done I think it would be better to drop that.

I am very much interested in doing what we can for the relief of possible flood sufferers along the Mississippi, the lower Mississippi. I have, as I think has already been given out, appointed a committee of the Cabinet, consisting of the Secretary of the Treasury, in whose department is the Public Health and the Coast Guard, that will assist in doing what they can to provide for the health of the stricken area. Of course, the Coast Guard has a great many boats that could be used in an emergency up and down the river. I have also asked the Secretary of War, in whose department there is a store of medical supplies, tents and blankets and cots, and the Secretary of the Navy, who is somewhat similarly equipped, to assist. The Army and the Navy are, of course, prepared to supply surgeons wherever they may be necessary. Of course, under the War Department is the Engineering force of the Army, some of whom have charge of the work on the Mississippi. That will be strengthened and reinforced, and such assistance as the Engineering force can give will be given. And Mr. Hoover, who is an expert in all kinds of relief work, will provide his services. He is also Chairman of the Executive Committee - I think

that is the name of it - of the Red Cross. Now, I have appointed this Committee and directed them to meet this afternoon at 2:30, which I think they did, with the Red Cross officials here in the city, and I am planning to carry on this work of relief through the Red Cross, making them the managers and supervisors of it, and they will call on the Government for such assistance as the Government can give. It looks as though the situation might get considerably more serious before it gets better, and for that reason I am hoping that we may have a generous response to the request that I made this morning for funds to go to the Red Cross for this relief work. The Government hasn't any appropriation that can be used for that purpose. That is one of the reasons that we are putting this under the direction of the Red Cross. They have facilities for raising money. The Government can't raise money in that way. We think the work can best be met in that way.

What I said about quoting the President in relation to the use of the term as spokesman wasn't said for publication. It was just said for the information of the conference. That part of the conference we will consider carried on in executive session.

Question: Have you any formula to suggest?

President: I think your ingenuity will provide you with one. The only thing I am suggesting is that you observe the rule of not quoting the President.