

April 3, 1925.

Remarks by the President to the Newspaper Men.

I don't know of any development relative to former employees of the Government Printing Office that have been laid off.

I have very little direct information about the arrests that have been made in the Internal Revenue Bureau of those who have been charged with improperly attempting to influence the making of taxes, or assessment of taxes. It is of course exceedingly important that the public have confidence in that Bureau and it is very desirable that if there has been any misconduct there that it be found out, punished and prevented in the future. I wish you would be a little careful about my comments about the punishment. I don't want to assume that because certain persons are charged with crime that they are guilty. It would hardly be fair so to judge them until they are declared guilty by competent court jurists. So I don't want to appear as saying someone is guilty. It says here that 14 arrests have been made, which indicates that the Bureau is taking very vigilant action to correct any misconduct that has existed there.

I have appointed Senator Ball to the District Rent Commission, because he was Chairman of the District Committee in the Senate, and his knowledge of the situation especially qualifies him to undertake that public service. The Commission goes out of existence in 6 or 8 weeks, I think the latter part of May, the 22nd, and quite naturally it would be useless to put a man on there that didn't have an intimate knowledge of the situation already. He wouldn't have a chance to learn the requirements of the place. So I have asked Senator Ball to undertake this purely as a matter of public service on his part. He has been most helpful as Chairman of that Committee in the Senate, and I am hopeful that he will be willing to carry on this work until the Commission goes out of existence. Of course it wasn't a place that he sought, but the place sought him. I very much hope he will be willing to hold that place and do whatever may be necessary there. Mr. Whaley resigned.

There isn't anything that I can say about an Arms Conference or foreign debts.

I haven't received yet the note of Peru in the Tacna-Arica case. The Secretary of State told me that it had been delivered to him and was being studied by our experts to see what, if any, reply ought to be made. This isn't a matter really that affects the United States Government. ~~It~~ There was an agreement between Chile and Peru that the President should arbitrate the differences that had existed there for some 40 years, and while that agreement was made in the lifetime of President Harding it became incumbent upon me to take it up and carry it on, which I did, so that these notes here are not notes to the United States Government, but notes to me. I don't understand that this note is signed by the Peruvian Government, but signed by one of their representatives that had acted for them in the Tacna-Arica case. As I don't know the contents of the note intimately and accurately, I can't comment on it at all, other than to say that it is being considered by our experts and whatever reply it is necessary to make will be made. I should assume that if anyone took the note and then took the findings of the arbitration, that they would find most of the answers to the note set forth in great detail in the arbitration itself. I don't know that that is so, but I rather imagine it will be. This is a case where we have to exercise patience. The Peruvians are naturally solicitous about the possibility of losing some territory that they regard as part of their own, and I want them to feel that the arbitration will be carried out carefully and as accurately as possible, of course in very good faith, and all of their rights will be scrupulously observed and protected in accordance with the decision, the plan and the stipulations made in the article of award.

I don't know much of anything about the sale of vessels by the Shipping Board. I knew that there had been bids submitted, but as the law specifically makes the Shipping Board responsible for the decisions I never have given it personal consideration. I have made no study of it. I knew that there were bids and in a general way what the bids were. I think perhaps it is fair to assume that the Board has tried to do the right thing, until the contrary is shown.

I learned this morning that Secretary Weeks had been ill, but I am very much gratified to say that the report was that he is very much better this morning, so that I think in the course of a few days he will be about again and able to do his usual work.

No final decision has been reached, I think, about the Minister to China, though it is the expectation of myself and the Secretary of State that Mr. MacMurray will be named for that post. It is a place requiring training and technical skill at this time. Mr. MacMurray is our expert in that field and is especially qualified, we think, to hold that place.

Dr. Culbertson has not been offered the post at Madrid. I think the boys are advertising that post a little too much, and we are getting too many applications about it. As Mr. Moore is still there and likely to stay for the present, I can't gratify anybody about it at the present time. I don't know when Mr. Moore is likely to retire. He has been there now two years or so and will retire some time, but that is in the future.

I am not expecting to take any week end trip on the Mayflower.

I do expect to go up to Minnesota in June to attend the centennial of the settlement over here of the Norwegians. Of course I can't be entirely sure about that.

Mr. President, will there be any stops made?

No ---- no ----- no.

I don't understand that Assistant Secretary Andrews' coming into the Treasury Dept. at all changes the policy in relation to prohibition enforcement. He will act as the special representative, as I understand it, of Secretary Mellon, and be a liaison officer between Secretary Mellon and Major Haynes to do whatever is necessary and make prohibition enforcement as effective as possible. I suppose that simply means that he goes in to help Sec. Mellon in his relations with Major Haynes, instead of Mr. Mellon undertaking to perform all the contacts personally with Major Haynes. Mr. Andrews will take that work up.

There was no discussion in the Cabinet meeting this morning, - a very short meeting and nothing of importance came up.

That seems to cover the questions.