

Friday, April 9, 1926.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

It is quite difficult to say what can be done in relation to agricultural legislation. There have been various hearings going on before the Committee, and I have expected that the Committee would be able to formulate a bill that would be helpful. I know that Secretary Jardine is in touch with the various groups of men that represent different agricultural associations that have been testifying before the Committee, and is in conference with the Committee. I expect that he will be able to be of assistance to the Committee in formulating some bill for agricultural relief. I don't know just what he has in mind in relation to it, but I know he is giving constant attention to it and has been for nearly a year, to see what method can best be adopted for taking care of agricultural surpluses.

Here is an inquiry about the Brookhart election case. Of course the Constitution makes the Senate the sole judge of the election and qualification of its own membership and doesn't put any burden of the determination of that question on the Executive, and so I haven't any information about it that warrants my expressing any opinion on the intricate legal questions that I understand are involved in this problem. It is a question of what votes have been cast and what votes ought to be counted. A great many intricate and technical questions are involved and not having any information on which to base a judgment, I haven't formed any judgment,

haven't expressed any, don't expect to make any investigation of the question or express any judgment in relation to it. You want to make that perfectly plain about what I have done and what I expect to do: I haven't made any investigation of the questions involved, formed any opinion of them, expressed or expect to express any opinion in relation to it.

I hope the Senate will be able to take up the Railroad Labor Board bill that has gone through the House, a matter that I referred to in my Message, and get a decision on it in the Senate. I am somewhat embarrassed sometimes by referring to only one or two of the many bills by the fact that other bills considered just as important as those I happen to refer to are not mentioned at the same time. That is, other people have bills that are not mentioned, and then they come to me and want to know why I have a legislative program that doesn't include their bill, So I have had to explain a great many times that all I have referred to was some incidental bills that have been brought to my attention. I have been quite careful, I think you will recall it, at each conference since I knew that that difficulty was arising, to say that the legislative program is that contained in my Message and it is the business of the Congress to try to carry it out. They know what bills they can dispose of in the time they have left and what they can't, and I have to rely pretty much on their judgment on what legislation they can consider and what they can not. I speak of the Railroad Labor bill because there is a good deal of comment made about it here. I don't know that I have any opinion as to

what might be done that would improve the administration of the Tariff Board. The main difficulty, as I have seen it, on the Tariff Board, has been the lack of the membership to work harmoniously. I think there is more harmony there now than has been in the past. I am not undertaking to assess any blame to any particular individual, nor to indicate in any degree that the people that have been blamed for the lack of harmony are not now on the Board. There may be some on the Board just as much to blame for lack of harmony as some that have gone off the Board. But I have undertaken to do what I could to create harmony on the Board, not always with the greatest of success. I don't know whether if the Board was reorganized that could be worked out or not. That is one of the difficulties of the Executive - lack of harmony on several of the Boards. Of course it is more or less constitutional with Boards and it is only in rare cases that you have a Board that works in perfect harmony, though I haven't been disposed to view with too much alarm the lack of harmony that has been apparent on the Tariff Board.