

Tuesday, May 31, 1927.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

Here are two or three questions that perhaps could be answered more desirably by reference to Mr. Slomp's book -- what is the title of that?

Press: The Mind of the President.

President: The Class is perfect.

Press: Can we use that story?

President: I haven't any objection to it.

One of these questions relates to the desire of the United States Government to have financial help extended to European countries. I have discussed that several times in the different addresses that I think are reported in that book, and our country has been glad to give its approbation sufficiently through the action of the various secretaries to private interests that have been proposing to lend money for stabilizing currencies for economic development.

I could hardly send any special message to the Polish people. It wouldn't be quite in accordance with the custom of the Presidential office to do that. Of course, it goes without saying that this Government wishes well the Polish Government and the Polish people, and is interested in their welfare, development, and prosperity, the same as it is in the same things towards other countries in Europe.

I had noticed some increase in the prices of corn and wheat and oats. I took it that that was due perhaps to the feeling that the season was backward, perhaps the crops would not be quite so extensive as they were last year. There is nothing occurs to me that could be said about that in its relation to legis-

lation, either past or prospective, that hasn't already been said. I have discussed with some of the members of the Congress the desirability of having the committees of the House and Senate that would probably have charge of any flood control bills meet early in order to study the question and perhaps prepare bills. I understand that those committees are contemplating such action. Of course that is a matter for them to decide. It isn't a matter over which the President has any official jurisdiction and when they come into session, as I understand they are proposing to do, I shall direct the Flood Control Commission, the Mississippi River Commission, and the Engineering Corps to provide them with such information as they have and the results of studies which they are now carrying on as fast as those studies are developed.

It seems to be understood between the War Department and myself that Captain Lindbergh is to be presented with the Distinguished Flying Cross. He will, of course, be invited to come to the White House, call on me here in Washington if he reaches this country before I start West, or if he should reach here at a later date I should like to have him come to visit me at the Black Hills. I quite naturally want him to make such arrangements as are agreeable to him, as to what hospitality he will accept, so that is a matter for him and his committee that supplied him with funds and who are looking after that matter for him here to determine for themselves. But I shall of course invite him to come and visit me.

I have appointed the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy,

the Postmaster General, and Mr. Hoover will sit in with them, as a committee in charge of preparations for national recognition of Captain Lindbergh's great achievement and that committee will meet at 4:00 o'clock this afternoon. They will determine what the National Government can do to appropriately partake in some national celebration of his great feat. We also have under contemplation the matter of promotion, and I expect to appoint him to a higher place in the Reserve Flying Corps than that which he now holds.

Press: Could you say at this time whether or not this recognition will be in Washington?

President: Well, that is for the committee to decide just where they will hold that.

Press: There are dispatches from London this morning saying one reason he was being urged to come back at this time was because of advices from Washington.

President: I am glad you mentioned that, because the Secretary of State mentioned that in the Cabinet meeting and said that so far as he knew no advices had been sent. That must have referred to his own committee who have been here in Washington. Perhaps they have been in communication with him. I know in fact that they did communicate with him by telephone. I don't know whether it was here or at some other point. My impression was that it was from here and that may have been the origin of that story. That wouldn't indicate any official suggestion from this country.

Press: Will you personally confer the Distinguished Flying Cross?

President: I think so. I would like very much to do that.

I have a question here about the Treasury surplus and the possible effect on tax reduction. I can't tell yet just what the surplus will be. It will be a very comfortable sum and I am going to take that up and discuss it at some length in the Budget meeting, so that I hardly think I will comment on it now.

I expect to go to the Black Hills. I haven't yet any report from Colonel Starling since he went out there, but other people who have been in here and pictures I have seen of the location out there indicate to me that it is a desirable place.

I knew that some parties in New York, I think one of them is Professor Shotwell, are making a study of a possible treaty to be negotiated between this country and other countries on the subject which is generally referred to as outlawing war, and I had directed that they take the matter up with the State Department, which I think is being done. I wouldn't want to hazard any definite comment on it until I find out from the State Department just what is being proposed and what the view of the State Department may be. I have referred to that subject several times in my messages to the Congress. It is one which I have been very glad to observe is being studied and which I should be very much pleased to find had been put into a practicable form.

I do not think any movements of Marines in China or any considerable extent are contemplated. Our main base now is at Shanghai. We may send some more

Marines to Teintsin. That will depend on developments in north China and whether we think that our Legation and our Diplomatic and Consular representatives in that locality and the American interests there are in any peril. We have in general contemplation that we should remove the Legation from Peking if any general disorder develops in that neighborhood, because that is a long ways from the coast, comparatively over there, difficult of access, and therefore difficult to protect. It would be very much easier to take care of our interests if our Embassy and the people connected with it -- I mean the Legation -- was brought down where it would have better access to the sea.

Mr. Hoover is working out plans for flood relief, and as he has pointed out to me there is quite a difference between flood relief and flood reconstruction. I could only speak of that in general terms, of the desire that the Government has through its agencies, and which the Red Cross is manifesting, and which I have also taken up with the United States Chamber of Commerce and Mr. Meyer, the head of the Farm Loan Board, to cooperate in securing funds for relief and for reconstruction. I have this morning sent a communication to Mr. Pierson, President of the United States Chamber of Commerce, making suggestions to him about raising some more money to finance the Credit Corporations that are being formed in the three most interested states. I think they have already secured subscriptions of about \$1,750,000, and they need outside help of about the same amount. I am asking the Chamber of Commerce to do what it can to secure subscriptions of that kind from the outside business interests around the country. That will make a broader base on which the Federal Farm Loan Board and so on can

extend their credit to the inundated area.

I have already spoken of what is being done about Captain Lindbergh. I hope that he will be able to reach Washington before I go away.

I haven't seen the Goldsmith open letter which is said to have been addressed to me and which has been published in Canada. Without criticising in any way the writing and publishing of letters of that kind in foreign countries -- it is perfectly proper, our own citizens do it here and citizens of other countries can very properly do that in their own lands -- I think some of you recall that Clemenceau wrote a letter of that kind either last summer or two years ago, but it isn't possible for the President to make public comment on letters of that kind. I assume that it has something to do about our Government. But we have official methods of communication with the Governments of other countries and it is necessary for the President to keep within that bound, to carry on our diplomatic intercourse through duly appointed representatives, rather than to undertake to guide it through statements given to the press.

I am expecting to go down to review the Fleet, as the press already knows. I have conferred with the Secretary of the Navy this morning about making arrangements to take care of the press. They will be taken out from some appropriate point and either stay on the boat that takes them out or go on one of the battleships. I use battleship only in a general term -- one of the ships of the Fleet that will be located at that point to give them every possible assistance in properly reporting the review. I hope we may have good weather and that the press anticipates the enjoyment of it as much as I do.

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Can you say where the Peking Legation may be moved to?

President: I can't say yet. May possibly go to Shanghai, or some other location.