

Friday, November 18, 1927.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

I did not discuss with the Secretary of War in any extensive way the waterway meeting at St. Louis. I asked him if it appeared to be a successful meeting and he expressed himself as in general pleased with the results of the meeting. I judge that he thought it resulted in clearing up some questions that might be in the public mind of the people in the regions where there was representation at the meeting. I haven't any fully matured policy about government barge lines operating on the Mississippi, the Warrior, the Missouri, and the Ohio. Perhaps what I said last night about the Government undertaking to supplant private enterprise is applicable. We are operating some barge lines on the Mississippi, two separate lines, one running from the Twin Cities to St. Louis, which was opened this fall, and the other south from St. Louis and on the Warrior River. That has been on for some time. Both of those are in the nature of demonstration lines. That is the provision of the law, as I understand it, under which they are operated. They are to be put on by the Government and financed in part by Government money to demonstrate whether a line of that kind can be successfully operated, having in contemplation when the demonstration has been made, if it be successful, that it shall pass into private hands, and if it be unsuccessful, as I understand it, that it will be discontinued. It may be that something should be done on the Missouri. We are opening that up to navigation. That work isn't fully completed. I had a special appropriation with that in view of \$10,000,000 put into the budget last year. I am not advised whether a barge line on the Missouri could be operated at the present time, but when the Missouri is opened from St. Louis up it might not be inappropriate to put on a demonstration line there, always with the understanding that it is done because private

enterprise is not ready and does not care to make the experiment. The situation on the Ohio, as I understand it, is quite different. There are a large number of lines already operating in part on that river, well equipped and ready to operate over the whole river as soon as the works are completed there. That of course is the more desirable condition, because then the people get the advantage of some competition in rates and service, and where there are private lines running I should expect to find that it would be very inappropriate for the Government to undertake to go in and compete with them and perhaps render their further operation impossible.

I have noticed in the press considerable speculation about who is to be Governor in the Philippines. I don't care to discuss who is to be Governor. It is quite obvious that some of the press reports might be indirectly inspired to find out in advance who is to be Governor. It may be that they are for consumption among certain people in this country and certain people in the Philippine Islands. As I indicated the other day, I shall have to assume responsibility for the appointment of the Governor. I want to find a good sound man with some experience relative to Philippine questions and send him out there. There is evidently some fear in certain quarters that somebody may be appointed that is friendly to this man, or friendly to that man, or friendly to the other man. I don't think that is very material. As I suggested the other day, General Wood's name is constantly brought into the discussion, a good deal of talk about the General's friends. He did very great work out there, as I have indicated oftentimes in public, and I always supposed that he had friends in this country that I ranked as members of that circle. I think he told the newspaper reporters at the Black Hills that he had my support in all of his efforts out there, and I believe that is so. So that if it is any of his other friends that are fearful that his good work is to be over-

looked I think they can relieve themselves on that score. Of course, the General is gone and we can not carry on the work of the Governor General of the Philippines under his direction and control. It is necessary to have some one else to take his place. I expect to find a good sound man that will undertake, as the General has undertaken, to administer the Islands according to the organic law. Any one that I might send out there will probably be like the General in some respects, and unlike him in other respects. But I think, as I indicated the other day, that the situation wont be helped by clinging to personalities. You have to remember that our conception of government is that it should be a government of law and not of men, and whoever goes out there will undertake to administer the affairs of the Philippine Islands in accordance with the organic law.

I do not know just what it is that President Lewis and other representatives of the Mine Workers wish to lay before me, so I couldn't comment on it in advance of their coming in. I think they have an appointment -- is it tomorrow, Mr. Sanders, or some day next week?

Mr. Sanders: Monday.

President: Monday. Yes, thank you. They have an appointment Monday. I shall find out then just what they think it might be possible for me to do to help in that situation. I have asked the Congress several times for authority to act in the case of coal strikes. Congress hasn't given me the authority, and generally reported to me that each time I had made a request of that kind, authority for me to act had been opposed both by the operators and by the miners.

I have stated to the conference that I stand on the recommendation that has been made by the Secretary of the Treasury relative to the revision and reduction of taxes.

I haven't made any further examination of the report of the Industrial

Conference on the farm situation. I am waiting until I can get hold of a bound copy. I don't know that I could say anything more than what I said last night about building more submarines and some more cruisers for the Navy. We are making some reports and some investigations relative to submarines, so that it may not seem desirable to do much right away about the building of submarines. I think we are prepared to take up the building of some additional cruisers by passing a law at the coming session. I do not expect, however, that the number would be either increased or diminished by reason of failure to reach an agreement upon limitation of armaments at Geneva. It was contemplated when we went into that conference that one of its results, if we reached an agreement, would be the building of some more cruisers by this country, and that is what we shall have to do, not having reached an agreement. So the result of the conference, so far as building some cruisers at the present time is concerned, is entirely negative.

The reception that was given me last night by members of the Union League of Philadelphia was very gratifying. The people of this country are always considerate of the Presidential office and treat it with great respect. But it is none the less pleasant to have a party reception manifest by the members of a great organization. I don't know that I could say any more about it than what I said in the opening of my address.

I have had several people under consideration for the Ambassadorship of Cuba. No final decision has yet been reached.

The Red Cross is undertaking very effective measures of relief in the flooded area in New England. They gave out a statement that perhaps wasn't fully noted on the 7th of November, that they would carry through an extensive program of reconstruction that will probably include such items as the rebuilding and repairing of dwellings, replacing of household goods, furnishings and clothing,

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providing of livestock and farm implements, and that was reiterated on the 11th of November, that they would assist families to rebuild and repair their houses, supply household furnishings, and in certain cases livestock. I speak of that because there appeared to be some little confusion in the minds of some of the people in Vermont, and some of those who were working to take care of the situation up there, as to just what part the Red Cross was taking.