

Tuesday, December 13, 1927.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

I have set out in my several messages to Congress my recommendations relative to coal legislation, sometimes in more detail than others, but in general that the Executive ought to be empowered to deal with an emergency, when one seemed to be impending, by having some fuel administration that would take care of the distribution of coal, and also to appoint an emergency board to do what it could to settle any labor controversies. That would be a board that would come into existence, both of them, when an emergency arises and when the emergency has gone out of existence the boards would go out of existence. I did not contemplate setting up any permanent board or commission for either of those things. I don't see any reason for any permanent board.

I have referred to the State Department a suggestion that came to me that something might be secured relative to the World Court by further negotiations. I haven't in mind exactly the language of the replies that were secured by the Department when it notified the different countries that were signers of the treaty that our country was willing to adhere to it in accordance with the resolution passed by the Senate. Whether there is anything in those that would give any encouragement to further negotiation, I therefore could not tell. So far as I know, they were not of a nature that encouraged the thought that further negotiation might bring about positive results, and so far as I have made inquiry of men in the Senate who were very friendly to the World Court proposal they have uniformly indicated to me that they would not be willing to support any modification of the position that the Senate had already taken. I thought the general result of the conference that was held by the other members of the Court was quite a strong indication that they would not wish to have our country become a member of the Court if it was going to involve any modification of the present

rules governing the action of the different countries that have established it, in relation to it.

The Navy Department is making a study of what plan it may wish to submit to the Congress for carrying out the suggestions that were made in my message relative to a building program. Any definite conclusion has not yet been arrived at, though several different plans are in contemplation. The main part of the program would be the enlargement of our cruiser forces. That, as I stated in my message, was something that we have known all along must be done. It needed to be done had we made a limitation agreement, and it needs to be done just as much and perhaps more so without any limitation agreement. I have not read the article in the Times. I have seen the headlines. From my own knowledge, the headlines do not always accurately represent the statements that are in the body of an article. The headlines in the New York Times are not substantially accurate, and of course any statement that I have approved a program is entirely inaccurate. I have not approved any, and the Navy Department has not yet come to a final conclusion regarding one.

I do not know whether any information has come to the State Department relative to a reported assault made on an American citizen in Rumania. The Department would of course deal with that in the usual way, and we should undertake the usual methods of protecting the persons of American citizens when they are abroad.

Though I have known for some time that Chairman Butler did not contemplate being a candidate again for the Senate in the coming year, I have no information about his statement other than what is already in the press.

I was talking with Admiral Jones today about the needs of the Navy and gathering more information from him relative to the developments that took

place in Geneva.

It has already been announced that I have nominated Albert H. Denton - this here is Arthur H., the name is Albert H. - of Kansas, to be on the Shipping Board in the place of W. S. Hill. Mr. Hill had a recess appointment that I made I think in June. Knowing at the time it was a recess appointment I did not at that time come to any definite conclusion as to what course I might take when I was to fill the place permanently. Mr. Hill has been, I think somewhat bothered by his financial condition and his connection with some financial institutions in his State.

My interest concerning the proposed flight of Colonel Lindbergh to Mexico and Cuba is in nowise official, but the same interest that other American citizens, I assume, share toward it. He goes there as a private citizen at the invitation, as I am informed, of the Mexican people or Government, or both. I think it will be of interest to them to see him, and will be helpful in promoting the navigation of the air and aviation in general. I referred to my interest, especially in encouraging aviation to all points south of the Rio Grande, in my message. I think the Colonel's flight to Mexico and Cuba will stimulate interest in some government encouragement of that kind.

I haven't done anything further about my expected trip to Havana.