

Friday, February 15, 1929.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

Within two or three weeks I conferred with some of the Senators relative to railroad consolidation legislation. They thought at that time it might be possible to secure the passage of a bill at this session. I do not think that later developments have been very encouraging, but such legislation is not impossible.

I have a telegram from Mayor Nichols of Boston urging construction of one of the new cruisers at the Navy Yard at Boston. I think every time there is any naval construction work to be done that each of the navy yards in the United States sends word to the Department and the President, and oftentimes their delegation waits on the Department, and urges that the work be done in their yard. All that I can say to any of those is that we will try and have the work done where it seems to be most advantageous to the country and the Navy, and also do anything we can to assist any locality. Navy yards, you know, really ought to be for the benefit of the Navy and the country. Yet, they are generally considered to be for the benefit of the locality in which they are located.

I had a call from Representative McLeod this morning. He has been very much interested in Congressional reapportionment. He is a very enterprising Representative and I hope the press will give him all the credit and all the publicity that it can.

I haven't had a report yet on the matter of making the Samoa Islands part of the United States territory. There have been suggestions of that nature from time to time, but I should want to have a very careful investigation made to see just what is involved in the proposal before making a final decision on it.

I am having some investigations made relative to the immigration quotas under the national origins measure. The investigations that were made a year ago were not very satisfactory and for that reason the provisions of the law ought to be carefully considered. I doubt if I shall have sufficient information before me on which to act before the 4th of March, but the information will be available in season for my successor to take such action as he may wish.

Studies are also being made relative to international aviation. In 1919 I think at Paris, and I am of the impression as a part of the treaty of Versailles, some international regulations were agreed to. Some have thought that it would be well just to adopt treaty provisions like those included in the Versailles treaty. I had thought that such action would probably be wise and have<sup>been</sup> advised by the Department of Commerce that they feel that further studies should be made of that question before final decision, so that I should answer this question relative to flights over the Panama Zone as requiring further study before final decision is made about it. At the present time it has been our policy/<sup>not</sup>to permit flights of foreign airplanes over the Canal Zone.

I understood from the conference that I had yesterday morning with several members of the Senate and the House, including Senator Hale, that they did not wish for any money to start building cruisers in the present fiscal year. It really makes little difference whether some cruisers are started in June of 1929 and some in June of 1930, or whether some are started in September of 1929 and September of 1930, I sent up an amount of appropriation under the budget which I understood was satisfactory to the Navy Dept. It was in accordance with one of the plans they had worked out and submitted to the Bureau of the Budget and would bring the naval construction program for this year up to about \$50,000,000, next year I think up to about \$90,000,000, and so on until the program is finished.