

Tuesday, February 7, 1928.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

I do not see much prospect of being able to address the Indiana Editorial Association on the 9th of March at Indianapolis.

There has been no further decision relative to the appointment of a Judge to succeed Judge Hoehling of the District Supreme Court Bench of the District of Columbia.

I have not heard any rumors that the Republican National Convention will not be held in Kansas City. I have seen by the press that there was some question about accommodations for the Convention and members of the Convention and those that might go there to be present when the Convention is held, at hotels, etc., which I understood was in process of adjustment.

I haven't any plans relative to flood relief, other than those that are represented in the report of the Engineering Board of the War Department. There is no very material difference in the plan advocated by the Engineers and the plan advocated by the Mississippi Flood Commission, the Mississippi River Commission, rather a difference in detail, but in the main I am told that they are in agreement. I am, so far as I know, willing to approve a bill embodying the recommendations made by the Engineers. There are some bills pending up there that at the present time I do not look on with favor. My position, of course, relative to flood relief was set out in considerable detail in my message. No reasons have been advanced, so far as I am aware, for any radical change in the principles that I indicated ought to govern the draft and passage of any bill that had Mississippi flood relief as its object. Some of the members of the Committee have conferred with me and indicated that they were somewhat disturbed at the trend that the hearings had taken and the probable position of a majority of the Committee. Such

information as I have received has indicated that there is more and more a disposition to look with favor on the report and recommendations of the Engineering Board. I feel considerable confidence that that situation will develop. I think they have presented a very good plan, and as it is studied more and more I think it will more and more commend itself to the members of the House and the Senate. There is evidently a considerable attempt to bring pressure on the Committees and members of the Congress, a quite extensive propaganda. I think there have been already considerable newspaper advertisements and something in the way of circulars, and I believe posters. I doubt if this is a question that can be solved by that method. It ought to be solved by candid consideration of the elements involved. I think it is capable of a very reasonable solution.

I have very little information relative to the proposal to establish a line of dirigibles, which would run I believe from London to New York. I think one has already been built, which it is estimated would carry 100 passengers and make the passage from London to New York in 38 hours. As I recall it, the fare would not be very high. I can't tell just how much that was.

Press: \$400, Mr. President.

President: Yes, I was going to say that, though I mentioned that in the Cabinet meeting this morning and some one said he had heard it was \$5,000. I told him he was probably wrong about that, and that it was less than that. I think the Navy has already indicated that they would permit the use of our landing mast, which is located somewhere in New Jersey. The capacity for freight, as I understand, is 10 tons, and the ultimate plan would be for an American company and a British company to cooperate, one of them as I understand owning the dirigibles that would go from here to London and the other the dirigibles that would go from London over here, so as to have joint action. It is almost entirely a matter for experts, and

beyond that would be a matter for experiment. It looks like a practical proposal and I have indicated to the Secretary of Commerce that I should be glad to have that Department make any investigation required and offer any cooperation that they thought might be helpful to the American interests of the project.

There is very little that is new, as I understand it, in the arbitration treaty that was recently signed with France. I regard all treaties of that kind as of importance, as signifying the peaceful intent of the countries involved and the declaration made in the solemn method of a treaty of the desire to adjust all differences by negotiation, conciliation and arbitration. In a way, they provide a method before controversies arise by which controversies may be adjusted.

I have only the merest outline of the plan for the construction of trans-Atlantic ships that would make the passage in four days. It looked to me as though it was presented by a responsible concern and would appear to be feasible. I should like to have it carefully investigated. It looked to me like a method of extending reasonable assistance to shipping and a recognition of the services that are rendered by shipping to our national defense and general welfare on the part of the country. The main contribution that is asked is in harmony with the present law of extending credit - I think the law now provides for extending $2/3$ of the cost of construction and this would be $3/4$ of the cost of construction - but there is another element that comes in that would provide that such credit should only be extended to a concern that was responsible and provided with adequate working capital. There is some question about mail contracts, the details of which I do not know, because I haven't been able to consult with the Post Office Department. I think that could be worked out.