

Friday, May 18, 1928.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

I have very little information about the investigation going on before the Federal Trade Commission relative to the electric power companies. I had some talks something more than a year ago with a Harvard professor, who had two or three articles in magazines relative to the organization of electric power concerns -

Question: Professor Ripley, Mr. President?

President: Yes, and from such thought as I gave the subject at that time it seemed that the matter was almost entirely one for State action as distinguished from action by the United States. This investigation by the Trade Commission may perhaps reveal facts that will be helpful to State commissions in administering the powers that have been conferred upon them for the regulation and control of electric companies and the Commission may develop some facts that would call for national legislation, though the facts that they have developed so far that have come to my attention seemed to me pretty much matters for the States, rather than for the Federal Government.

I talked with Luther Steward this morning concerning the salary increase bill. He has been very conscientious and helpful in undertaking to frame a satisfactory bill that would remedy such inadequacies as are apparent and provide for careful investigation by the Classification Board to see what further increases should be made in the future. I understand from him that the body of the Federal employees that he represents are fairly well content, and he is very well content, with the bill that went through the House, and he did not undertake to promote the bill that went through the Senate. I told him that I thought there was no doubt that I would be willing to approve the House

measure, but I thought it was very doubtful if I was willing to approve the measure that went through the Senate, though of course I didn't want to make any promise about either one of them, but that was the impression I had of the two bills. I so notified Rep. Lehlback. Mr. Steward wanted me to do that and I have done so. I haven't been able to notify Senator Dale, because he is out of town.

Question: Is the Senate bill about \$10,000,000 more than the House?

President: The original proposal was for \$13,000,000, and then that was increased to about \$17,000,000, and the Senate measure has increased that to about \$25,000,000.