

Tuesday, January 29, 1929.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

Mr. Sanders has compiled a report showing that during 1928 I made about 20 addresses and Messages to the Congress. I think that is 2 more than 1927, isn't it, Mr. Sanders?

Mr. Sanders: About the same.

President: It is too many, but it indicates something of the pressure that the President is under constantly to make efforts of that kind.

Question: Do you mind giving us an indication of how many invitations you have refused?

President: I wouldn't have any idea about that. A very great many.

Another member of the Radio Commission, Sam Pickard, has resigned. He has an opportunity to go into private business in the radio field and having finished up the work comparatively, speaking of the Commission, he wanted to retire from the Government service to take up some private employment.

I have here quite a long series of questions relative to further disarmament conferences. The only action that our Government is taking at the present time in relation to that subject is to prepare certain persons to attend the Preparatory Conference that is to be held in April under the League of Nations at Geneva, so that in case the next administration desires to send some one there will be some one that is prepared to go. Of course, I don't happen to have any indication as to any plans of the next administration relative to any conference to consider the rights of neutrals in time of war. That is a subject that might well be studied and on which a conference very likely could make some desirable recommendations. As I indicated the other day,

the practical difficulty would be to get an agreement of that nature approved. I indicated in my Message to the Congress, and I have indicated in several public addresses, that any action that could possibly be foreseen by a future limitation of arms conference would not have any bearing on the question of the adoption of the present cruiser bill, for the reason that its adoption would leave us well within the tonnage that could possibly be adopted as a limit in a future conference. We have at the present time 10 cruisers - they are called 7500, as a matter of fact they are about 6600 - which gives us 66,000 tons. We are starting to build 8 more which are 10,000 ton cruisers. We have 22 old cruisers, all of them more than 20 years old, some of them in excess of 10,000 tons. Most of them I think are smaller. While it isn't necessary to put those all out of commission at the present time, there are many naval services for which they are perfectly adaptable, it is necessary to build to replace them in order to have ships that would be real fighting units. As fighting units, those old ships are outclassed by the newer construction and they need to be replaced. That is the reason that I have favored a building program at this time, so that while I favor a limitation of armaments I don't see that that question has any relation to our building program, because any limitation that would be put on would certainly be large enough to include this program, and from any information that we have now it would be large enough to include a considerable larger building program than we are proposing. I do not think, as I have already indicated, that it is helpful to have a time limit put in the bill. That ought to be taken out. And I think every one ought to understand that our Government is proposing to build these ships because it feels that it has need of the ships, and if the bill passes with the time limit out I should expect immediately to transmit to Congress a budget recommendation for immediately beginning building operations.

Nothing further has developed relative to the District of Columbia judgeship.

I asked Senator Phipps and Senator Waterman to come in and talk with me about the District Attorneyship in Colorado. I had a very agreeable conference with them. I think we shall soon reach an agreement in relation to it.

I am transmitting to the Senate the report of the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Agriculture and the Interstate Commerce Commission in response to a resolution of last May requesting an investigation of the factors which are contributing to the diversion of commerce from the ports of the United States to Canadian ports, and practical remedies for preventing such diversion. I am also transmitting a separate report of the United States Shipping Board in response to the same resolution.

I was very much pleased with the business meeting of the Government we had last evening. I thought that perhaps on account of the hour and the fact that this was the end of my administration there might not be the interest in the budget meeting that has usually characterized those occasions. But I found when I came to attend the meeting that the hall was filled with people. I think all the seating capacity was exhausted and some of the standing room, and there was no lack of continued interest in the important subjects that are discussed at a meeting of that kind. I am always a little embarrassed in making my budget address, because it is necessarily a record of what has been done under my administration, and while I understand and especially tried to indicate last night that a great amount of the credit for it lies with the people that are in the Government service, it sometimes has the implication of undertaking to speak exclusively of my own accomplishments. When I came to sum up the results that we have secured under the budget, I was very much gratified with their favorable character. But it is necessary to stress, as I did somewhat last night, that we can not relinquish our efforts. There are a large number of bills

pending before Congress at the present time, that if passed and approved so that they became law would land us in a deficit, and it is of course necessary for the Congress to keep that in mind in making their decisions on pending measures. I should be glad to cooperate with them as effectively as I can to that end.