

October 7, 1924.

Remarks by the President to the Newspaper Men.

I haven't reached any decision on the sugar tariff. As I have indicated at previous conferences I am asking for additional information from the Tariff Commission as to the present difference in cost of production here, and especially in Cuba, and also with reference to the cost of raising beets to farmers, because the whole question centers around that in my estimation. I have asked the Department of Agriculture about the desirability of doing what we can to encourage beet sugar production here, as a help to diversification in agriculture and as an insurance to the American users of sugar against a combination being formed in Cuba or some other foreign countries that would be able to control the price of sugar in this country, if it were not for the beet sugar industry.

Here is a suggestion that the delay in making public the findings of the Tariff Commission is inspired by political motives. That is a standard criticism of the present day which I can't either by confirming or denying help you to arrive at a conclusion.

I have indicated the reasons that I haven't been able to reach a decision on this matter, which seem to me rather to be mental than political.

I don't know anything about the suit filed in New Orleans relative to the qualifications of Walter Cohen holding the position as Collector of Customs. He has been appointed in due course and confirmed by the Senate in due course, and will hold office until it is decided by some competent authority that he hasn't qualified. I don't know whether the suit is inspired by political motives or what the reason for it is. I haven't read with care the newspaper reports. I rather thought from newspaper reports it was a familiar attack on those constitutional amendments which grew out of the war and which were adopted for the purpose of insuring the freedom of the colored race. He will stand as holding the office until competent authority decides otherwise.

I haven't hastened about appointing the Committee to look into the agricultural situation because, as I indicated in my speech of acceptance, the agricultural situation has seemed to be to quite an extent taking care of itself, and this Committee or Commission I was proposing to appoint not so much for relieving the situation at the present time, which has already been relieved by the rise in prices,

as for taking advantage of the present condition which follows one of relief and seeing if we can take some action to prevent a recurrence of the conditions that confronted agriculture during the period of low prices. If there had been any emergency I would have acted on that. Then I have some people that I want to consult about it that I haven't been able to get ahold of as quickly as I expected. My own thought was to find out what could be done while we have a breathing spell to prevent a recurrence of the decline and the period of the low prices of wheat, cattle, hogs and the larger staples of farm production at the present time when it is at a very fair level. I expect to appoint this Committee as soon as I can confer with two or three leaders in the farm movement, in order to see what we can do to prevent a recurrence of the bad situation that agriculture found itself in after the period of deflation.

Here is an inquiry about the transfer of a part of the immigration administration from Montreal to Newport, Vt. That is entirely in the hands of the Department of Labor, under which the administration of immigration is placed. The idea of making the transfer was in order to ~~xxxxx~~ save some rent. We had quarters in Newport that we thought might be adequate and we had to rent quarters in Montreal, not a very large sum but between \$4,000 and \$5,000. If we could save that we would like to save it. But when it was proposed to make the transfer representations were made by the transportation companies both in the United States and Canada that such transfer would make it very inconvenient to do the business of the office and perhaps might result in a good deal of a change in the lines of travel. I didn't understand that that was the case when the proposal was made. Investigation is taking place now to see whether that supposition has sufficient foundation and whether there would be sufficient public inconvenience by reason of that to warrant us keeping the headquarters in Montreal. No doubt the Department of Labor will do whatever it thinks is best for the public interest. If the public interest can be served fairly adequately in such a way that we can save a little money by making a change, well, we shall make it. If it appears to be a matter of great public inconvenience, of course the change ought not to be made.

There hasn't any report come to me from the Federal Trade Commission on aluminum, and I don't know whether any request has been received here from the

Democratic Committee, or whether that would be one of the things inspired by some political motive. I do not think the Trade Commission makes reports to this office. It is my understanding that they make findings and if their findings are not carried out the report is sent to the Department of Justice for such action as they think is desirable under the courts. So I can't give any information about that which would be very helpful.

I haven't any additional speaking engagements. I don't know but there are one or two conventions or conferences that are likely to meet here in Washington that are going to come over and have a picture taken, in which case I might take occasion to say a word or two. But I haven't any definite engagements that I know of.

I don't know as I can make any additional comment on the campaign. It is going along, as far as I can discover, and pursuing the same course that it has for some time. I think that the Committee are not oversupplied with funds. I don't want to make any comment about that which would look like an effort to solicit funds or anything. Whether that indicates that the people think that there isn't the necessity to put forth the effort that they sometimes put forth, or just what they have as a motive, I don't know. You have to realize that we don't know what the sentiment of the country may be unless it is registered at the ballot box. Of course, in order to secure that result it is necessary to organize to get out the vote and that is what the Committee is engaged in doing at the present time, and for that purpose is trying to raise funds to carry on the campaign. I think the campaign is making good progress. I haven't anything that I know of to criticize about it.

Anything in the Cabinet, Mr. President?

Nothing except a report from the Secretary of Labor saying that there is more and more opportunity for employment and at the present time there wouldn't seem to be any suffering anywhere from unemployment. There has been some slackness in parts in the textile industry in New England, but the situation in general is entirely good.