

Friday, October 2, 1925.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

I haven't any information about the proposed consolidations, I think that is what is referred to here, in the baking companies or the bread industry, other than what I happened to see in the press, so I am not qualified to express any opinion as to whether any investigation ought to be made or not. I assume that the Federal Trade Commission and the Department of Justice keep a general lookout on actions and activities in the industrial and commercial world to inform themselves whether any proposed actions might be a possible violation of law, and when it seems that there are indications that would arouse suspicion that a violation of law might be in contemplation or some one might be about to commit a violation of law, I don't mean purposely, that they make investigations and take such remedial actions as are necessary. I assume that will be done in relation to the bread industry. I have seen some reference to disagreement on the part of members of the Federal Trade Commission about it. I don't know just what the particulars are. I suppose the Federal Trade Commission would have to act in accordance with the judgment of the majority of its members. Is this something that a Senatorial resolution asked to have investigated?

Press: LaFollette resolution.

President: Yes. Of course I don't know the particulars in relation to that. The Federal Trade Commission of course like any other Commission is established and the duties are assigned to it by law. Now those duties can either be enlarged upon or diminished by resolution of the House or resolution of the

Senate. Of course a resolution of that kind doesn't have the force of law.

I should expect that wherever the House or the Senate brought to the attention of the Federal Trade Commission or any other Executive Department the circumstances that seemed to require investigation that if the department had authority under the law to make an investigation it would go ahead and make it. Of course if the Senate happened to pass a resolution telling the Interstate Commerce Commission to investigate the laws in relation to the making or selling of bread, why I should expect that Commission to say, why that is something over which we have no jurisdiction. . There is a broad distinction. Now of course the distinction is narrowed down. I understood from what I had seen in the press that the Federal Trade Commission was under the opinion that under the law which established it, it hasn't any jurisdiction to make some investigation other than the Senate has requested. Now as I say a resolution of the House and Senate can either enlarge or diminish the powers of the Federal Trade Commission, or any other Commission, and they have to proceed in accordance with what they are directed to do under the law, but I should suppose if there was an indication that there was about to be a violation it would be perfectly proper to have an investigation. Now, as I say, I haven't any personal information about the circumstances in relation to the consolidation of different baking companies, and it may be perfectly obvious on its face that there isn't any violation of the law and therefore a Government agency isn't warranted in making any investigation. But if there is any uncertainty about it, I suppose an investigation would be made to find out whether the law is being observed.

I haven't asked for the resignation of D. A. Lines, the Internal Revenue Collector, State of Louisiana, and as far as I have knowledge the Treasury Department has not asked for it, and I don't know that the Treasury Department has any information that would warrant any expectation that a resignation is to be asked for. If there is any report of that kind it is hearsay, and I think it must be erroneous.

No decision has been made yet about reconvening the Agricultural Conference. That is awaiting, as I understand it, on some members of the Conference conferring with different agricultural interests to see whether they think any further action of the conference will be helpful, and then on conference with the Secretary of Agriculture who happened to be a member of the Conference to find out whether he can not make such recommendations as will be necessary in relation to agriculture without the necessity of reconvening the Conference.

Secretary Weeks didn't come in to the Cabinet today, but he will be present on Tuesday I understand, and I very much hope he will be able to continue his duties as Secretary of War.

I can't comment on any of the phases of the Security Pact Conference that is now being held at Locarno. At Cambridge on the third of July I expressed the general hope that a pact of that kind might be entered into on the part of European countries, and I am still of the opinion that that would be very helpful and I would be glad to reiterate the hope that this conference may be able to agree on the principle and form of a pact of that kind. Now, as I say, as to the

particular phases of it and the different questions involved, I haven't any information that would warrant my expressing any opinion except in the general hope of the success of the Conference. I think it is exceedingly important that some agreement of this kind be made in order that there may be a cessation of the uncertainties and the constant preparations for defense and the armaments that are going on in Europe.

I don't know of any proposal at the present time to amend the present immigration law. I think in my message to the Congress last year I suggested some amendments. They were made at the suggestion of the Secretary of Labor. I think no amendments were made last year and I don't know of any change in conditions that would indicate that I should take any different position now than I did at that time. It is quite probable that the experience of the Department in dealing with immigration and the administration of the law may have revealed some weaknesses, and may also have revealed some places where the law ought to be liberalized. I think that the suggestions I made in my message were for liberalizing the law in relation to the admission of the relatives and members of the family of people that were already in this country.

I have several inquiries here about the Shipping Board. I don't know as there is anything I can say about that at this time that will be helpful. I haven't given the matter any further consideration since I returned from Omaha. I suppose it is well known that I didn't agree with the policy that the Shipping Board adopted. I have just made a speech on toleration and perhaps that is the principle that ought to be applied by the executive in times when actions are taken

with which he does not agree. I don't know what my authority is in relation to the Shipping Board. I haven't had any advice from the Department of Justice about it. The only action that I should think of taking would be to find out what the law is and what duties are assigned to me by law and the Constitution, and try to execute those duties. It is rather strange that Mr. Crowley would take a position of that kind on the Shipping Board without first finding out whether such an appointment was agreeable to me. That is the general practice in the reappointment of Bureau chiefs and executive heads in the Departments, to find out from the President whether the proposed action was agreeable and whether the person it is proposed to appoint is acceptable to the President. I don't happen to know Mr. Crowley, and haven't any information about him, and wouldn't want anything - what I am saying - understood as criticising his ability or experience in his duties. I haven't made up my mind what action I ought to take in relation to the Shipping Board or the administration of its affairs. I had called Mr. Dalton down as an experienced man to make an examination, which I understood after a conference with Mr. O'Connor, the Chairman, and Admiral Palmer and Admiral Benson, they were agreeable to have him come. I think Mr. Dalton is going to return the first part of the week. I suppose that he will then make an investigation and perhaps will be able to advise me what can be done, if anything, to improve the service and the administration of our shipping interests.

Press: Have you asked the Dept. of Justice for an opinion as to what your powers are?

President: No.