

*Newspaper Conference*  
*Tuesday, December 30/24*

There isn't anything further I can say about a Naval Conference other than what I have already said. I want to have a conference whenever the time seems propitious and I hope such time will come within the year. I am not certain that it will but very much hope that it may. I do not think I have made any comment about it other than what I have made to the press and in my speeches and so on -- which is all public property.

I haven't any plan about the Register of the Treasury.

I <sup>would</sup> ~~am~~ be glad if I <sup>had</sup> ~~can find~~ the time to prepare a statement on the unveiling of the painting of Crispus Attucks.

I have no plan, of course, as to what I will ~~do~~ in relation to the appointment of additional Judges of the Police Court of the District of Columbia in case the bill should pass.

I do not believe I want to make any comment on statements that were made in the French Chamber of Deputies which were to the effect that there will be a discussion of Inter-Allied debts at the coming Dawes plan meeting of Finance Ministers in Paris, January sixth. I know of no plan on the part of America to make any discussion of our debts at that time, nor do I know of the authorization of any American representatives to participate in such discussions.

I think Secretary Hughes made clear the position of the American

government in relation to the French debt. It seems to come up at every meeting that I have with the press. I do not know how I can make my position any more clear than I have already made it. We hold the written obligations of the different European governments for money that was advanced to them, and Congress has passed a law giving directions as to how a settlement can be made, and that is the present position of the American government in relation to the debts that are due to it from the governments abroad.

I asked, as I told the press I think either last Tuesday or last Friday, the General Staff to prepare some plan for rewarding the World Fliers, and I think they have prepared such a plan and sent it up to the Department. It is not quite so generous as I had thought would probably be desirable, but the General Staff are well qualified to pass on questions of that kind, and I am told it is the most generous reward that has ever been given to men in the military service for what they have performed in time of peace. And it is thought by the Secretary of War to be appropriate, and if that is the case it has my approval.

I did not have any chance to talk with Secretary Davis about his wish to retire on March fourth.



I do not know just what budget estimates will be made for beginning work on the additional cruisers or for work that is contemplated on our battleships. My general directions to the Bureau of the Budget were to investigate the needs that arise on account of the passage of the legislation, which include a number of things, and to recommend appropriations that will put them into effect. I did not imagine that it would be thought best to lay down all of the eight cruisers during the present fiscal year - which is the one that ends June 30th, <sup>or not</sup> ~~but whether~~ all of the eight cruisers ought to be provided for sometime during the next fiscal year after this, I would not be in a position to state at the present time.

There was nothing especially significant in the calls made by Senators Bruce and Norbeck, -- merely some routine matters that they were interested in in relation to some of the departments, and bringing me some information I had requested in relation to some possible appointments.

I haven't received any report from the Naval Board studying the merits of submarines and aircraft.

I am not familiar enough with the present situation in relation to Muscle Shoals to pass any judgment as to whether the situation would be improved by the substitution of legislation for a commission rather than by the passage of the Underwood Bill. Broadly speaking, the situation is this: The House has passed the so-called Ford Bill. Mr. Ford has indi-

cated that he does not now desire to make a bid for Muscle Shoals and has withdrawn the suggestion that he has made, so that the Senate is not undertaking to pass this bill, as I understand it. They are undertaking to pass entirely new legislation, which would bring the House and the Senate into disagreement on all the provisions of the legislation. If that is so, it may not make a great deal of difference what the Senate does pass. Whatever it does pass would <sup>go</sup> ~~come~~ <sup>the Committee</sup> to ~~it~~ on conference, and then there would be an opportunity in the Committee on Conference to provide for such legislation as they thought might be acceptable to the House and the Senate. So the only advantage to be gained is to find out what the sentiment of the Senate is in relation to the different proposals for the guidance of the Committee on Conference.

No decision has been reached about the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. I think that is the Circuit that is in Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee. I am in conference with different people ~~xxx~~ with the expectation that it will ultimately go to Kentucky, because both Michigan and Ohio have Judges on that Circuit and Kentucky has none. I think that Judge Moorman is at the present time the most probable appointment but no decision has been reached about it, and no decision has been reached concerning the selection of a successor to Judge Moorman in case he should be promoted.



Here is an inquiry about the extension of private credit to France by American concerns in view of the recent report of the French Ministry of Finance. That leads me to a further statement that perhaps might be helpful. Reports that are made by the French Ministry are supposed to be made to the legislative body over there, and there are discussions through-  
judicial  
out the country. The things that we take ~~official~~ notice of over here are official communications to this government. It often happens that some person in America - perhaps a member of the Debt Commission, makes a statement that might not be in harmony with what the rest of the Commission might feel were the requirements of the situation. We should not want them taken too seriously in France. Now it may be that <sup>it is</sup> some officer of the French government who does not seem to be in harmony with the situation. Perhaps we ought not to take that too seriously over here. We shall have to wait and see what develops out of this situation before we can make any final determination about it. I think that would be a good idea to keep in mind about the French debt or any other debt over there, both in relation to statements that might be made over here and statements made over there, which, while they come from official sources in a way, are to quite a large extent unofficial in that they are not made to this government, and the statements made here are not official communications from the duly authorized representatives of this government to the governments abroad.

Before I could decide whether I ~~wxx~~ should want to favor further ex-

tension of private credit, I should have to find out what all the conditions are and, in general, for what the credit is going to be used.

Whether I favored it or not is not always for me to decide personally.

Our private citizens have a perfect right to make loans abroad either to governments or private parties. It is the usual procedure to ask whether our government has any objection. We have no legal right to interfere. They have a legal right to make loans. And we should only interfere if the loan was to be used for some purpose that would be contrary to the policy of the United States.

So I could not answer this question at the present time either one way or the other.

No decision has been finally reached about the appointment of a Judge in Indiana. I have expected to promote Judge Anderson. Several people have been under consideration for appointment to take his place on the District Court. One of them is Judge Robert C. Baltzell, and there are others. No final decision has been reached. Judge Baltzell is very well recommended by the bench and the bar and the public.

I do not know very much about the British embargo on potatoes from the United States. I have, however, requested the Dept. of Commerce to investigate and see if there is anything that the Govt. can do that might be beneficial to our citizens.