

Friday, October 30, 1925.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

I haven't had a chance to see the new Chamber of Music that has just been dedicated to the Library of Congress. I was invited to go up there to a concert that was held the night before last, but I had other things to do, so I can't comment on the gift other than to make a statement of grateful acknowledgment for the generosity that has bestowed that improvement. I understood from Mr. Moore, Chairman of the Fine Arts Commission, that it is a very great addition to the building up there.

I have several inquiries here about the trial of Colonel Mitchell. I don't care to comment on that while it is before the Court of Inquiry. That will follow my course in relation to matters that are up before a court.

Here is an inquiry about Attorney General Sargent. Apparently the press hasn't got the great news that I received last Saturday night that he had become the grandfather of another granddaughter. If there was any mystery in the reason for his going to Vermont I think that perhaps explains it. I knew that that was the reason he went upthere. For certain personal reasons, perhaps, he didn't reveal it to the press before the event, and I think that is a complete answer to all rumors that have been afloat in relation to him. I am very certain that so long as he stays in Washington, which I trust will be a long time, he will stay in the office of Attorney General. I might say in relation to that that one of my reasons for appointing him was that he was not in politics. I think it is quite essential to the office that the Attorney General be kept out

of politics as much as possible. I appreciate that in a way it is a political office, but I think it ought to be administered without a political purpose. When I say political, perhaps I should say partisan. I don't want to make any unjust criticism of men who are engaged in politics, even to the end of writing for the newspapers as political newspaper correspondents.

I haven't selected any one to be the successor of Commissioner Thompson of the Shipping Board.

I am not familiar enough with the details of the cost of prohibition enforcement to give any opinion as to whether any part that is now borne by the Federal Government could by any rearrangement be taken over by local governments. I doubt very much whether that could be done. The Federal Government doesn't have a very large force, I think some 1500 to cover the United States, and with all the efforts that local governments could make in the way of enforcement I should think it would be necessary to maintain on the part of the National Government about that number in the field. The main cost has come in the last year or two from building up a force to cope with smuggling. That has necessitated an expenditure of a considerable amount of money for the building and purchasing and refitting of boats and the hiring of men to man them. Whether there will ever be any chance to make any reduction in that, I don't know.

I haven't decided on any particular farm legislation for the coming session of Congress. I haven't any doubt but that I shall make recommendations in my message.

I don't know just enough about the military situation here in the District to answer very intelligently the inquiry whether there ought to be included in any building scheme for the District the erection of a new Armory. My general thought about the erection of buildings here was that an appropriation should be made which would run over a series of years, a certain number of million dollars to be available each year, and then leave to some single authority to determine what buildings should be erected. I wouldn't want to give offhand any opinion as to whether a building should be built for the militia, for the Department of Justice, Commerce, or any other of the things that are going to be necessary.

I had a conference this morning with Senator Pepper and talked with him some after seeing him at lunch, - he lunched with me at the White House, - and with Mayor Kendrick and the City Solicitor of Philadelphia, relative to keeping General Butler as the head of the Police Department. I wasn't able to give them very much encouragement, though I told them I would take it under consideration. I had present as you probably know the Secretary of the Navy, Senator Swanson of the Senate Naval Committee, Mr. Vinson of the House Naval Committee, and General Lejeune and Representative Madden, Chairman of the Appropriations Committee of the House. I didn't get very much encouragement from any of those gentlemen who heard what Mayor Kendrick had to say, but I want to advise with one or two other people and take the matter under consideration. I have a good deal of sympathy with the purpose that is expressed of course, ~~and~~ a desire to

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have a seasoned man for the head of the Police Department. Of course I have in mind the notice that I gave the Mayor and the citizens of Philadelphia a year ago, when I permitted the General to have another year's leave of absence, in which I told Mayor Kendrick that I wouldn't want to extend the leave over a year and hoped that even before that he would find some one that could adequately discharge the duties of head of the Police Department of his city.