

December 21, 1923.

Remarks by the President to the Newspaper Men.

Here is an inquiry about the Shipping Board. The difficulty there, as I understand it, is that the law provides for a selection of members of the Board from different localities - the Atlantic Seaboard, the Gulf States, the Great Lakes region the Interior, and I suppose the Pacific Coast. There is a member from the Great Lakes in Mr. O'Connor, who I think lives in Buffalo. Mr. Lasker was appointed from the Interior, and his successor, Mr. Farley, who comes from or lives in the same town - I think they are both residents of Chicago or some suburb of Chicago. Mr. Lasker was confirmed by the Senate, but now, as I understand it, the Committee on Interstate Commerce thinks that Mr. Farley's residence is such that his appointment does not comply with the law. According to my information on that they have voted in the Committee not to recommend to the Senate that he be confirmed. Naturally that has left me somewhat at a loss as to what I shall do for a Chairman, and it may make necessary a rearrangement of the Commission. So that I thought it was necessary to hold up the other two appointments. I have withdrawn them. That leaves them acting, of course, under the recess appointment. Mr. Thompson from Alabama and Mr. Haney from Oregon simply continue acting under the recess appointment until I can solve the question of what to do about a Chairman. I thought it might be unlikely that I could find a man who would know very much about shipping from the Interior, which I suppose would be the states between the Mississippi and the Rock Mountains. I wanted to leave the matter open, and give myself a chance to make any necessary adjustments. That doesn't mean that I am not entirely satisfied with Mr. Haney and Mr. Thompson. I think they are both very excellent gentlemen. That is the reason why I appointed them. Very likely I can find some way of continuing both of them on the Board. I wanted the opportunity of making an adjustment, should it become necessary.

There is no action to be taken, so far as I know, with the Japanese Government on the immigration question. Whenever the question comes up of laws relative to immigration, it is quite natural that the different Governments should be solicitous for the protection of the rights of their citizens, and it is not infrequent that they apply to the State Department to know about the conditions of the proposed legislation. There is nothing unusual in that.

Would you permit a question about that subject? Mr. President.

Have you or the Cabinet ever given any thought to translating the gentleman's agree-

ment into law?

No I don't think so.

An inquiry here about the ~~abolition~~ operation of the Arkansas tax law, the road tax law. All that is proposed there, is that on account of some complaints that came in, each project that is pending there is to be taken up and each one decided on its merits, in order to cooperate for the protection of those who live along the line of proposed highways, and in order that we may, of course, give to the State of Arkansas its full share of the money for the building of roads. These appropriations are made especially for the benefit of regions situated like the State of Arkansas, where there is a large amount of farming territory and where the population is scattered, rather than being gathered in centers. For that reason the United States wants to help, if we can, and not so as to distress any one. We expect cooperation from the officials of Arkansas toward that end.

An inquiry also about an endorsement by the Navy Department for an additional Naval Base at Alameda, California. That hasn't come to my attention directly yet. I think at present it is before the Budget Commissioner for his consideration, and later he will report to me.

An inquiry about some reports from the Tariff Commission. I don't think there are any reports before me from the Commission. They are holding a great many hearings and making a great many investigations, and it seems to me that I have had some information that they were awaiting ~~for~~ some court decision. But about that I am not certain. The suggestion has been that there would have to be a court decision, or rather that there is one pending, to clear up some question relative to the elastic provisions of the present Tariff act.

The Arkansas matter I have just referred to.

I have also referred to the Shipping Board matter.

+ I don't know as I have any very definite plans for Christmas. I think Christmas eve that some of the church choirs, or one church choir, is to sing carols at the White House - outside the White House - in which they will be joined by some of the citizens of Washington. I believe also the plan is to have a church service, a union service, which I think is to be held in the church that I attend, on Christmas morning, where I expect to go. And I think I am to press some buttons to light a Christmas tree down on the Elipse. I think, also, I am to start some kind of a celebration in California. You men that represent the

California press perhaps can tell us what that is. I think something is to be opened. What is that? Any California men know?

Is it Pasadena?

There is something out there. It seems to me it is a water works or a town, or something of that kind.

An inquiry about a supposed pardon case of Louis and Abraham Auerbach from Cleveland. No such case has come to this office. If there is any petition pending, it is in the office of the Department of Justice, and no report has been made to me, so far as I know, and since this question came in I inquired in the outer office and no recommendation has reached them.

There is no further statement that I can make about the Russian situation. Everything that I had in mind about that is contained in my message, and on that I stand, of course.

+ I haven't any plan for a short holiday cruise on the Mayflower. I think it possible that I shall take a Saturday afternoon trip on the Mayflower tomorrow. I have been out on it four or five times. Usually we go to Quantico where there is a very good opportunity to turn around, then run back up the river taking dinner on the boat, which is very pleasant, and have some of our friends along.

There hasn't been any preparation to announce any nominations for judges. I want to get that done as soon as I can. These appointments, I can say all of ^{that} them/ are pending, were left over from last spring, and they were left over because of the difficulty of solving them; The difficulty of getting the men that appeared to be satisfactory and knew the requirements that ought to be met by every man that sits on the Federal bench. There are a great many difficulties about it. I am working it out as fast as I can. I can't make any comment about the plans for the Arlington Memorial ~~Commission~~ Bridge. Several of you saw the plans. So far as I could judge of them, they appeared to be eminently satisfactory. It is mainly a question of expense. The building of the bridge itself, I think is a matter of some \$6,000,000 or \$7,000,000. The other work that is contemplated by the plans would run into \$12,000,000 or \$15,000,000 more. I don't know just how far the Commission will feel justified in going, but naturally we would proceed slowly on a project of that kind, involving such an expense.

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I don't know of any comment that I could make on the statement of Mr. Ford, other than to say that I am very gratified that he is willing to endorse the work of the present administration.

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