December 23, 1924.

Remarks by the President to the Newspaper Correspondents.

I want to extend to all of you the greetings of the season. A most
Merry Christmas.

I haven't done anything further about a parade, nor about choosing any-
one as a successor to Mr. Speelman as Register of the Treasury. I don't know when
his term expires. I am not indicating that he won't be reappointed, just an
inquiry as to whether I have done anything about it. I haven't done anything about
it.

There hasn't been anything done about the unofficial side of the inaugura-
tion, or as to a parade or a reception. Some of the people that came in to see me
yesterday did tell me that they had seen and known of many inaugurations here in
Washington, and that it was the general consensus of opinion that that which was
held four years ago was on the whole the most satisfactory of any that have been
held. Of course sometimes we suffer badly on account of bad weather, trying to
have a parade under very adverse circumstances, so I am going to make further
inquiries before anything is done about a parade or a reception. I haven't felt
very favorably about having a reception. If they want to have anything of that
kind it will be better to call it a ball. That as you know has not been very
attractive to me, though I approve of people that like to dance dancing as much
as they wish.

Mr. President, does that mean that if the people express a preference
for the ball it will meet with no objection on your part?

No. But if they are going to have a reception or a ball, I should judge
it would be more agreeable to those that want to go to have a ball.

Mr. President, do you mean by that a charity ball or something of that
kind outside the White House.

Well, you can't have a ball in the White House. You couldn't get any-
body in there, not even the newspaper men. Those who had the picking out of the
people that should be invited to a ball in the East Room would have some trouble.

Would you attend the ball, Mr. President?

You mean if they have one? I don't think so. I am expecting to attend
the charity ball which is almost a matter of official action. It comes on the
second of January, I think, or about that time. It has been customary for the
President to go to that ball for some time. As I say, that is practically an
official act. My wife and I shall drop in to that and stay a while, this coming
January.

I can't give you any information about the District rent situation.
I talked the matter over somewhat with Mr. Whaley yesterday. That is, I mean I
can't give you anything that is not already known. You know that they have an
adverse court decision on the question of the emergency end of the law. And then
I discussed with him the question of whether the law is so drawn that it rested
upon nothing but an alleged emergency and didn't rest at all on the general police
powers. He thought the decision that was rendered by Judge Holmes in the first
case that came up placed it also on the Police Department and justified the law
on that ground. I mean by that the protection of the health, morals and general
well-being of the community, as distinct from a purely economic question of
whether someone is forced to pay more for something they want to purchase than
is warranted. I thought that Judge Holmes' opinion had stated that on the general
police powers there was authority for enactment of a law of that kind. I am having
Mr. Whaley consider and take up with me and the committees of the Congress the
possibility of amending the law and placing it squarely on the police powers, so
that it may have all the possible sanction that the Constitution can give it. His
opinion is that there is a good deal of need for a law of that kind and that the
high prices that are being charged for rent here, which he thinks are disproportionate
to what is just and fair, result in bad housing conditions, and congestion, and a
situation that is detrimental to the health and morals of the District.

Nothing has been done and nothing further has come to me about the
police and juvenile court judgeships of the city. There are some investigations
being made there by the Attorney General's Office. I hope to have reports on those
very soon.

I haven't any plan about taking a trip on the Mayflower this week. I go
down on that sometimes at the end of the week. It gives us a little relaxation,
a little change of view, and presents a diversion. But there are so many other
diversions this week that perhaps I shall not feel so much in need of that.
There isn't anything that I can say about the suggestion of the French Ambassador. The policy of this country has been stated by the Congress and embodied in the law, and that is our policy in relation to the foreign debts. It had to be modified some in order to get a settlement with the British. It was thought wise to do so, and it would be for the Commission to hear any suggestions that would come from France. You know that this suggestion of the Ambassador of France was not made to the Commission. It was made to the people out in the country. If the French wished to do anything about the debt, the Commission I have no doubt would have been glad to hear suggestions from the Ambassador. But they were not made there, they were made in the country, and that is the reason, perhaps, why I shouldn't make any comment on it. If the representative of the French Government wanted to make suggestions to the Commission, why then I should be in a position where I could make some response and some comment on his suggestions, and indicate whether I wanted to transmit such suggestions to the Congress.

I am glad that you asked me about this proper recognition of the world flyers. It was brought to my attention that there was such a multiplicity of suggestions before the Congress, different bills and different ideas, that there was grave danger that with the multiplicity of counsel no decision would be arrived at. So I have asked the Secretary of War to have the General Board take this up and make a recommendation as to what they think would be proper recognition and embody their recommendation in a bill which I will immediately take up with the Committees of Military Affairs of the two Houses. I think in that way that we can get a bill that will seem fair and just and attempt to do what I know the nation is very anxious to do to give these men proper recognition of their great achievement, and get something done at once. I am sorry that that didn't occur to me a little earlier, in order that we might have made an effort to get something of that kind done by Christmas.

I can't give you any information about what ought to be done in relation to the charge for carrying newspaper publications. That is all embodied in that report which cost a number of hundred thousand dollars, and a good deal of time,
and has been transmitted on request I think to the Senate by the Post Office Department. That would undoubtedly contain a discussion of the reasons that led to its conclusions.

No successor has been decided upon for Judge Anderson, and of course Judge Anderson is still judge of the District Court out there. It has been suggested that he should be promoted, and I look on that suggestion with a good deal of favor. I think very likely I shall decide to do that. It seems to meet with general approval.

I haven't decided on any successor to the Secretary of Agriculture. Mr. Gore will stay, of course, until he begins to be Governor on the 4th of March. I should like to get someone very soon. I am keeping the position of Assistant Secretary open in order that perhaps if I found someone I might appoint them as Assistant Secretary and they could go in and get the advantage of Mr. Gore's knowledge and experience before he became Secretary.