

May 9, 1924.

Remarks by the President to the Newspaper Men.

I have another inquiry about the opinion of the Attorney General on the sodium nitrite question. I don't know whether there would be any reason for not publishing that or not. There is a case pending in the courts, I think, relative to it. That would be the only reason that I know of. My inquiry of the Attorney General was simply to find out whether there was any reason why I couldn't issue a proclamation changing the rate of duty on this product while that suit was pending. The opinion was to the effect that there was nothing to prevent my action during the time the suit was pending. Whether the publication of the opinion would do any harm, whether it would be anything that would prejudice the rights of the Tariff Commission while the suit is pending, I don't know. You will have to find that out from them or the Attorney General.

I haven't been consulted about any successor to Mr. Burns. I didn't know he had retired until I saw it in the afternoon paper.

I haven't any comment to make about the announcement of Speaker Gillett's candidacy for the Senatorial nomination in Massachusetts, other than what would occur to everyone, his qualifications and so on.

I haven't been directly consulted about the provisions of the proposal of Senator Lodge for a World Court. He told me one time that he had a plan that he was going to present, but he didn't consult me as to its provisions. Anything that Senator Lodge on account of his long experience in international affairs might suggest, of course, the matter would be given careful consideration. My position on the World Court was expressed in my message to the Congress and again in the address I made at New York before the Associated Press.

I haven't any plan other than that which was outlined in my address before the Associated Press at New York, relative to another conference of the powers for the purpose of disarmament or the consideration of the codification of international law. I don't know whether both of these questions could be considered ⁱⁿ ~~at~~ the same conference. The question of disarmament is one that affects certain large powers. The question of international law is one that affects all the nations of the world. I should think from what information I have now that it would not be practical to

call one during the summer. There is a political campaign that will be going on during that time, and I don't know now what the condition in Europe will be. I indicated in my New York address that before there would be much hope of a successful conference it is necessary to have European questions settled, so far as they can be, and a more composed state of mind there than there apparently exists at the present time. There are very hopeful indications that a settlement will be made in Europe, but when, no one can tell. They have had elections in Germany. Elections I think are to be held this month in France. Those elections may have something to do in determining what the attitude of France may be, and after the elections I suppose it will be some time before the coming in of those who are chosen, and naturally ~~there~~ it will take some time after that to arrive at a settlement on the part of the governments concerned. With all those things in mind, I don't see how it could be possible to think that there was a practical hope of success for having a conference during the summer here.

I think I shall be able to announce the appointments of the Americans to sit on the Mexican Commission very soon. .

I don't know of any change in this country's attitude in relation to the allied debts. Our position on this has been stated several times. Nothing has occurred to change my attitude on that question.

I have an invitation to speak at Independence Hall ~~of~~ in Philadelphia, or rather an intimation that I shall receive such an invitation, for next July.4th. I also have an invitation to speak on that day at the gathering of the great convention of school teachers that is to be held in Washington. I can't tell at the present time what my decision may be. I think though that the chances would be more that I should remain here and speak at the teachers convention, than that I should go to Philadelphia. But that is just a suggestion.