

Friday, March 11, 1927.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

For some time we have known that it was the opinion of the Cuban Government that in return for the convention that exists between that country and ours, by which they accept parcel post shipments, that they ought to have some change in the law here by which at present our Country bars the shipment of Cuban cigars and cigarettes into this territory in less than 3,000 lots. There was a bill that would give the remedy that the Cuban Government desires introduced in the present Congress -- I think it was reported from the Committee favorably but didn't have an opportunity to have it acted upon. It is one of those questions where we have to concede that Cuba, of course, has a perfect right to take whatever position they think is for their interest, and while we should desire to give them favorable consideration if we can. It is not an administrative matter that can be adjusted by the Executive Department, because it is a matter that is regulated by United States statute, and in order to secure any relief for Cuba we have to proceed through a statutory enactment. I have had this matter up several times with the Postmaster General and with the Secretary of State. I don't know what plans the Postmaster General may have, now that legislation has failed. It is possible that through negotiation we may establish some method of procedure until the next Congress assembles so as to prevent failure of the present arrangement for sending parcels from this Country into Cuba. Every effort will be made in that direction.

I don't know whether it will be developed that there is sufficient urgency for the appointment of a federal judge in Maryland to warrant a recess appointment. From such slight information as has come to me, I would say that probably a recess appointment will be made. My information is not complete and my opinion is not final. It depends on so many different elements, whether there is any one over there that has a general agreement on it so that if he were appointed it would be understood that he would be confirmed without trouble, or whether there is a considerable variety of candidates and the people over there are not able to agree upon any one.

I haven't any positive speaking engagements for the near future. I like to go out and speak when I can, but on the other hand there is a great deal of administrative work to be done at the present time that will require my attention here in Washington and rather closely confine me to looking after the business of the Government.

I don't know whether I shall be able to go to the dedication of, I think this is Wicker Park, near Hammond, Indiana. A very large delegation came down this morning in a special train to invite me, so large that I suggested to them that I might make them a speech here and save myself the trouble of going out there, but they seemed to want to make speeches themselves down here, which they did, leaving me to make a proper response at some future occasion. I haven't given any particular attention to the details of the treaty that has been proposed by President Diaz of Nicaragua.

Of course this country would consider carefully any suggestion that the Government of Nicaragua desired to make to us, but from such casual consideration of it as I have been able to give to the reported outline I doubt very much if the Government of this Country would think it desirable to enter into such a treaty. As I have expressed to the conference heretofore, we have some peculiar interests in Nicaragua, on account of our right to build a canal there and establish a naval station, and in addition to that we have a desire to help that country or any other ~~peas~~ Central American countries in any way that we can, but of course it has been my policy and I want to carry it out as far as I can to leave those countries as undisturbed as possible to work out their own salvation. That was the reason why I withdrew the Marines from Nicaragua in 1925. We are willing to respond so far as we can any time that we can be helpful, but to take on a permanent obligation of the nature that I understand is contemplated in the suggestion of President Diaz would be, I think, a little farther than this Government would wish to go.