Friday, March 12, 1926.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

I have been very much pleased with the apparent support that is coming to the Italian debt settlement. It has to do with foreign relations, which as you know is a question that I have always tried to deal with in a nonpartisan manner, thinking that our foreign relations are not a matter that ought to be brought into politics. I am very glad to see the nonpartisan way in which the Italian debt settlement is being support. It was made in the first instance by a bi-partisan board and was adopted in the House by a large vote of both parties. It seems to have from the press of the country, without reference to party affiliation, almost unanimous support, and members of the Senate on both sides of the house are joining in supporting the measure. All of which is very gratifying to me.

I have here an interesting report from the Bureau of the Budget about supplemental and deficiency estimates. Sometimes it is thought that the quite large estimates which go in after the budget goes are in the nature of deficiency appropriations. That is not the case. They are almost always supplementary appropriations that have to be made on account of changes in the law and entirely beyond administrative control. Of the $425,000,000 that went in on the deficiency estimates and supplementary estimates, only $23,000,000 are really deficiency estimates which could in any way have been controlled by the various Departments. I merely speak of that in order that if you ever have occasion to refer to it you will keep clearly in mind the difference between supplementary
estimates and deficiency estimates. The bill is usually known as the emergency after
deficiency bill and it might be thought that after the budget is made up we then
come in with a lot of additional expenditures that should have been included in
the budget.

My father's health is very poor, as I think all of you gentlemen are aware. I talked with him on the telephone this morning. He didn't have a very
good day yesterday, but he had a comfortable night and seemed to be brighter
and better this morning. His pulse and temperature are normal. I should like
very much to go up there, but I don't see how it is possible for me to get
away. It is in the dead of winter and the snow even where it is not drifted
is six or eight feet deep. There isn't any real certainty about moving about
up there, except on snowshoes, and there isn't any place up there I could stay
with the necessary accommodations that would be required if I was there. Of
course I very much desire to have my father come down here. He has every care
that can be extended to him up there and it is ample, though I always felt we
could make him a little more comfortable here. But he is very much more contented
there than he would have been anywhere else and for that reason I think, on
the whole, it is better for him to be there. I am expecting to go out on the
Mayflower tomorrow. I shall cruise down the river very far, so that I could
return quickly in case I had any bad news from him.

I don't know just what the plan is in Congress about additional
legislation. It has been my policy to leave that pretty much to the men
who have the responsibility of managing the legislative program. I had assumed that they would pass a public buildings bill. Has it come through the House?

Press: Yes.

President: I thought so. It is now in the Senate. Such information as comes to me indicates that it will pass the Senate.

I don't know about the necessity for legislation relative to the observance of the Sabath in the District of Columbia. So far as my observation has gone the Lord's Day seems to be very well observed here. It may make a difference about one's opinion on that subject as to where you spend your own Sabath. I usually spend mine going to church. I don't go outside much. Such observation as I have made seems to indicate that the observance of the Lord's Day is fairly good in this district, though the laws here I know are not quite so strict as they are in Massachusetts. I think the tendency of legislation has been rather towards liberality of Sunday observance, so far as legislation goes, rather than towards more strict laws. I recall that when I was Governor of Massachusetts I signed a bill permitting the playing of baseball on Sunday, not professional baseball and not baseball where any admission is charged.

I haven't any idea what purpose the delegation from the anti-saloon league has in calling on me tomorrow. I didn't know that such an appointment had been made. Nearly all appointments that are made to call on me are made through Mr. Sanders or some one else in the office, and I scarcely ever know about them until I see them on the list in the morning. So I can't give
you any information about that.

I have had some suggestions about a special session of the Senate to try a possible impeachment case. No plan has been made about it and my disposition would be to cooperate with the members of the Senate and such members of the House as might be charged with the duty of presenting any possible impeachment to the Senate. If they would prefer a special session, in order that that matter might be taken up, I should be quite certain that I should be willing to call such a session; though no definite plans have been made about it.

I haven't any information about the possibility of a canal to run from the Lakes to Albany and down through the St. Lawrence River, other than such as is already in the possession of the public. I should judge it was purely an engineering problem, and until the engineers make a report on it as the result of a thorough and careful study, I shouldn't want to express any opinion in relation to it. I want to see, as you all know if you will look at my messages, an opening-up of a waterway that will reach into the Middle West. I am doing something at the present time towards a barge line to run from St. Louis to St. Paul-Minneapolis, and I am also committed to a larger appropriation for Rivers and Harbors, in order that an additional $10,000,000 may this year and next year be expended on the Mississippi River. Of course we are also working on the Ohio River, which will be finished in two or three years, and these surveys and studies are being made of an exit to
the East either through the St. Lawrence or through a canal that will run across
the State of New York. But until the studies are made I wouldn't want to under-
take to pass any judgment on it.

I have just referred to my messages. Mr. Strother, who had something
to do about arranging and compiling in conjunction with Mr. Slemp that book
that Mr. Slemp issued, was in this morning and brought me in a presentation
there
copy of it. Glancing at it I see that it is very well indexed and/is topically
arranged in the book things that I have said in relation to a great many
subjects. I think your offices ought to provide each one of you with a copy
of that book.

Press: Would you autograph each copy?

President: Yes, I would be glad to, and whenever you want to know
what my position is on any subject, if you will just glance at that index
it will very quickly refer you to a place in the book where you can learn what
I have said in relation to a very great many different subjects.

I hope some kind of a railroad consolidation bill will pass this session, and we also ought to have some legislation in relation to shipping.

I haven't any information that would entitle me to any opinion as to
whether another ship ought to be built to take the place of the America which was
damaged by fire. I had understood that that was covered by insurance, which I
suppose means that the ship can be refurnished and put again into operation.
But concerning that I haven't any definite knowledge, and I should think that such
information as you would desire you could probably secure from the Shipping Board.