April 29, 1924.

Remarks by the President in Newspaper Conference.

This first inquiry is about Section 28 for the enforcement of preferential rail rates of the shipping law, and the inquiry is as to whether this is to be given further consideration by administrative agencies, or whether the matter of the effective date now rests with Congress. I think the answer to that should be that both of those agencies are working on it and should continue to. The matter is going to be taken up by that special committee that I have appointed relative to cooperation in transportation, where I have undertaken to provide an agency for the coordination of the railroads and shipping, and the producers of freight and carriers both by land and sea. It is my strong impression from such information as I have that it would be well to suspend the operation of this proposal for the year. I think there is a bill before the Congress that would provide for that, but the question as to whether it can be adjusted between the Shipping Board and the Interstate Commerce Commission is a question of some difficulty. It is recognized I think by the Shipping Board that there are some ports that would not adequately be served under this proposal, but their difficulty is as they interpret the law is that they cannot put it into effect as to certain ports and not in effect as to other ports, and that it has to go into effect as a whole or not at all.

I have before me the report of the Tariff Commission on the tariff duty on sodium nitrite, but on account of some legal complications I have had to ask the opinion of the Attorney General as to just what I can do legally, and what might be proper for me to do as a matter of observing the spirit of the law. While the report was pending before the Tariff Commission an injunction was sought to restrain them, I think, from making their report to me. That case came up for hearing, and it was decided against the petitioners. I think there is an appeal pending. Whether I ought to take any action pending that appeal, I don't know. I have several inquiries about that.

Here is an interesting inquiry as to whether I can suggest the character of the conversation that is likely to take place between General Dawes and me. Perhaps we won't interpret that too literally. I haven't any plan about seeing the General. I would like to see him, of course, and learn his story of his...
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erience over there, and what he knows of the General European situation, with which
he must have become particularly well informed. I would like to see him to express
personal appreciation for the character of the service that he has rendered as an
American citizen, drawn from private life and undertaking to do his part, and what I
say in relation to him I mean in relation to all three of the members who served
upon the expert board with him to do their part for the settlement of the difficult
situation in Europe, attempting to bring it back into harmony with the prevailing
force of civilization, to settle their differences so that they can take up the
burdens of meeting the just requirements, restoring Germany to productiveness, and
undertaking to provide a method for reparations to be paid to the other interested
governments and peoples.

There isn't much of anything I can say about the immigration bill. That
is before the Committee in Conference. They are undertaking to see if some arrange-
ment cannot be made which will provide for exclusion and at the same time avoid
injuring the sensibilities of a friendly nation. In that I am in entire sympathy.
I think that statement covers quite a good deal. I don't know that I could add
anything to it by undertaking to amplify it. There are two things, exclusion and
that
the ordinary courtesy of conduct ought to characterize all the actions of the
government of the United States of America.

The Bursum Pension Bill hasn't come to me.

Here is another inquiry that we want interpret too liberally or to
narrowly. Could the President indicate his probable action on this measure? Yes,
I could indicate my probable action on all measures that come before me, to try
to take it up and find out what the effect of the legislation will be, and try to
decide it on its merits. Of course I should be extremely gratified in a great many
ways if I could approve a measure of this kind, and am hopeful that I may find that
I can do so. If I find that it has undesirable provisions in it, and there seems to be
an unwarranted expense on the public treasury, then I shall have to disapprove it. X
I haven't made up my mind about it. I haven't seen the bill and it hasn't come to me.

Mr. President, has it been referred to the Pension Department?

No. Well, I may be wrong about that. Those bills don't come to my desk in
the first instance. When they are brought in there are rules of procedure that any-
thing relating to the War Department would go over there for their comment, and those
relating to the District of Columbia to the Commissioners, Navy bills to the Navy Dept., and so on. That is done as a matter of course.

Here is an inquiry about the selection of Representative Burton of Ohio as Temporary Chairman. I always dislike, and you know I avoid if I can, to say anything that would appear to spoil a good newspaper story. I dislike to do that in this case, but the plain fact is that Representative Burton was chosen in what I believe to be the proper way for making a choice of this kind. I think that his name occurred to me before anyone mentioned it to me. I mentioned it to several people myself, and it seemed to be received with approval. Chairman Adams and Committeeman Mulvane came in the other morning. They inquired of me as to whether I had any choice for the Temporary Chairman of the National Convention, and I told them I had, and that my choice was Representative Burton. I didn't tell them that because I thought it was my business to dictate any choice about the matter, but simply that I thought it was my privilege to suggest names, and if on consideration any reason should be given that the suggestion I had made didn't seem to meet the requirements of the situation, I should want to change that and make another suggestion. But the name met with their approval, and when they went out they wanted to know whether they could give it out. Knowing the appetite of the newspapermen in the outer office, I told them of course they could give it out, which they did. Personally I like the selection of Representative Burton. I think it is a happy circumstance that he lives in the City of Cleveland, and for that reason will be able to extend a sort of neighborhood welcome to the Convention. Of course that means also that he lives in the State of Ohio, which is naturally entitled to consideration on account of the peculiar circumstances of which you know. My predecessor lived there, and I would very much like to have the greetings to the assembled delegates extended by a resident of that state, and one who is known to be a friend of former President Harding.

As I have said several times, the selection of the Mexican Claims Commission is a matter of negotiation. The last time Mr. Hughes spoke to me, which was several days ago, he had not had advices from Mexico. I haven't learned that he has received them. So decision has been made about who is to present my name at Cleveland, and I haven't made any determination about who I should like to have for permanent chairman of the Cleveland Convention. I suppose that that will be arrived at by conference in substantially the same way as the temporary chairman. Of course, the temporary chairman is chosen by the national committee - the executive committee I believe.