

Tuesday, February 21, 1928.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

I am attempting to lend what assistance I can to the problem of flood control through the Engineering Department and through conference with various members of the House and Senate that are particularly interested in it. I am afraid the present bill that has been drawn by Chairman Reed of the Flood Control Committee wont work out in a practical and satisfactory way. It doesn't seem to adopt any plan. It sets up two or three gauge levels and authorizes the expenditure of money to try and make those gauge levels effective. I am advised by the Engineering Dept. that that would probably cost about a billion and a half. I am going to get a report from the Engineers on the bill and take it up further with Mr. Reed and some other members of that Committee to see if his bill can not be reshaped. The bill apparently wouldn't do any more about flood control than is contemplated in the plan proposed by the Engineers and would cost 4 or 5 times as much. Then it leaves the decision of a great many details to the President. It is quite obvious that it would be rather difficult for the President to make decisions of that kind. The only thing he could do would be to rely on the report of the Commission, and if the President is going to do that, which it would be necessary for him to do, it might as well be left to the Commission in the first instance. I am not very much in favor of creating a new commission for this purpose. The plan under which we have been proceeding, the present Mississippi River Commission, and the action of the War Department through its Engineers, has been working out satisfactorily as far as construction is concerned. The work that they have done there was proven in the last flood to be of a very solid and substantial nature. Then the bill does contemplate starting in on projects on all the streams between the Appalachians and the Rocky Mountains, which if put

into effect would involve us in an expenditure greater than contemplated by any other piece of legislation since the Government was founded, with the possible exception of the Declaration of War against Germany. It would cost more than the Civil War cost.

I have been very much gratified at the outcome of the Pan American Conference, which is just closing its sessions, and have directed the Secretary of State to send a telegram of congratulation to our delegation on the work that has been accomplished by the Congress.

I have seen references in the press this morning to some possible proposals from Japan relative to further treaties with the U. S. to maintain our peaceful relationship. I don't know of anything that has come to the State Dept.

I haven't given any thought to a summer vacation. It is nice to be reminded that there is going to be one. I don't know of any place that I would enjoy more than I have the last three summers, one at Swampscott, one in the Adirondacks, and one in the Black Hills, but having been to those three places I would like during the coming summer to find some other part of the country, not too remote from Washington, where I might gain new contacts with the people of that locality in a way that might be helpful to me and the administration of the office of President.

I doubt if Mrs. Coolidge will be able to go to Alexandria. She is sitting up and having her clothes on about the room, but hasn't been out yet. I presume that the doctor thinks she better not go out on so hard a journey as that might be. We are going to have a reception over there and a review of a parade.

I have no information about ~~xxxx~~ the future plans of Colonel Lindbergh.

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I do not think there is any foundation at all for any rumors that Justice Sullivan contemplates retiring from the Court. He has been a most valuable member of the Court. While his health has not been of the best, I have seen him recently at dinners and receptions at the White House and he seems to be very much improved, and I judge and hope that he is in such shape that he can prolong his useful service to the country on the bench.

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