

July 22, 1924.

Remarks by the President to the Newspaper Men.

Here is an inquiry as to whether I have tentatively accepted an invitation to speak at Fort Hamilton, Brooklyn, on Labor Day. That brings to my attention a matter that perhaps I ought to make a somewhat specific statement about. I suppose every public man is invited to to a great many places. I always go when I can. Naturally since I have been President I haven't been able to respond very much. I have only one engagement to speak, outside of my speech of acceptance, and I think that engagement is a little more than tentative. That is at the dedication of this monument down here, the 1st Division I think. I believe it comes about the first week in October. Now, I would like it very much if the press would be as careful as it can be about reporting that I am going to this place or that place to speak. Oftentimes it happens that someone comes in, and I tell him that I would like to go to your place, I don't suppose I can, but I would like to, and if you will write to me later why then I can give you a specific answer. Take it up with me later. But it is quite embarrassing, of course, for the people that are trying to manage a meeting, and it is quite embarrassing for me to have it reported that I am going somewhere to speak, when there is probably no chance that I would have an opportunity to go there. So I think we better make it a rule that the press is to understand that there isn't any engagement on my part, either tentative or otherwise, to speak anywhere, unless you get a specific statement from me here about it, or from the office. If you will keep that in mind during the course of the campaign, it will save me from embarrassment, and save the press from embarrassment. Of course, they don't like to report that I am going somewhere, and have it develop later that I am not going. There is a tendency on the part of people that are trying to get up gatherings and meetings to speak in a hopeful vein. But I think it would be a protection to all of us to keep in mind, as a rule, that you are not to consider that I am going anywhere to speak unless you get an authoritative statement about it here in the office.

Mr. President, we are not to infer that you are going to make only the two speeches during campaign time that you have mentioned?

Well, you are to infer today that I have only two engagements to speak. Of course, I am saying that hereafter you will draw your inference from making

inquiry at the office and finding out whether I have engagements to speak. It will naturally be given out as soon as I make an engagement, and it will be authoritative and you won't be embarrassed, nor will I. I was giving you now the two positive engagements that I have; of course the speech of acceptance and the speech at the dedication of this monument. Now, I think this speech at Fort Hamilton, is that the one that had to do with the American Legion?

Some labor meeting, Mr. President.

It is Labor Day, I know. I have had a good many invitations to speak at different gatherings of some of the soldier organizations, the Legion, and so on, but as I am speaking here at the dedication of that monument I think that will be about the only one I would have time to speak at during the campaign.

Here is an inquiry about General Butler at Philadelphia. I haven't the slightest information about that. Nobody has spoken to me about it, and I don't know that there is any occasion to. My understanding is that Gen. Butler was given leave of absence for a year, with the contemplation that if he wanted further leave of absence he probably could secure it. But it hadn't been promised. Nobody from Pennsylvania - Senator Pepper didn't mention it. He merely dropped in to pay his respects. And I haven't seen the Mayor of Philadelphia, and nobody from Pennsylvania has mentioned the matter. That would be quite natural, because the consent for his absence has been given. That is all the Federal authorities can do. Whether the authorities in Pennsylvania want to continue his services, is for them to decide. It isn't a matter over which we have any jurisdiction here.

I don't think there is anything that I can add to what Secretary Hughes said at the Pilgrims' dinner. That was a statement of the policy of our country, and which, of course, the Secretary and I had discussed before he went abroad, and has been the general policy that I have tried to announce when I have made any reference to it, and which I think has been constantly carried on for the past year and prior to that as to our wishes in relation to the European situation. I read the press report of his address in the morning paper, and it seems to be a correct statement of ~~of~~ what the American attitude is.

There were no particular campaign decisions arrived at when I conferred with Mr. Butler yesterday. He had dinner with me and told me of some of the progress that he thought he was making. I have already spoken about a tentative list of speaking engagements. Of course I shall make speeches during the campaign, but when

or where has not been decided yet.

Mr. President, you mean other than over the radio?

Yes. That has not been decided. There is one little radio talk that I think I am to give Friday night of this week to the Boy Scouts - I think to a troop or something of that kind of Boy Scouts that are going to go abroad. They are having a dinner in New York, I think, a preparatory or send-off dinner, Friday night, and I have been asked to speak over the radio at that time for the special benefit of those sixty Boy Scouts, and for the general benefit of the Boy Scouts over the country.

I don't think that I conferred with Attorney General Stone and Secretary Work about any land case last week. They happened to be in here together. I do not think there was anything in connection with their two Departments.

A good many of these questions refer to the address of Secretary Hughes and my conference with Mr. Butler, which I have already covered.

Would you say anything about the Cabinet meeting, Mr. President?

There wasn't anything that came up in the Cabinet meeting of importance.

Mr. President, can you be any more specific about those speeches you mentioned?

I can't be any more specific about that. I mean the formal addresses. There may be radio speeches and things of that kind, probably more than a dozen.

There won't be anything like a tour?

I haven't anything like that in contemplation.