

Tuesday, December 4, 1928.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

I don't know of any plan for any immediate change in the Comptroller of Customs of New Orleans.

I haven't any plans for the Christmas holidays. I have had several suggestions come in and some invitations, but I really haven't given it any thought yet. It lay in my mind that I would like to be at the White House on Christmas day. We have made it a practice to have the singing of Christmas carols at the White House on Christmas eve. Very likely we should like to continue that.

Question: Do you think there will be any extra holidays for the Government employees?

President: Well, don't you think you ought to ask Congress about that? This is perhaps as good a time as any to comment on what I think has grown into an abuse. Congress makes holidays and every time there is a holiday it is the practice for one department to telephone over to another department and say we are going to have an extra holiday in this department and what is your department going to do about it. Of course, the message is taken to the head of the department and we have usually been put into the position that it has been expected that in addition to the holiday that is furnished by law the President would furnish one or two more. If it comes on Saturday, they want a holiday on Friday, and, of course they couldn't come back and travel on Sunday and so they want another holiday on Monday to get back on, and while I like all the employees of the Government to receive such holidays as can be given, if that practice is to continue I think it ought to be established by law and let Congress say by law when there is to be a holiday giving Government employees additional leave of absence. I haven't any plan as to what may be done at Christ-

mas and New Year and Washington's birthday. I don't know whether Lincoln's birthday is a holiday. I think it isn't. Those are the only three that are to come up during my administration. But it really ought to be taken up and regulated by law, in order to prevent the President and the departments being subjected to pressure every time there is a holiday for additional leave of absence, because those are holidays that are fixed by law and everybody knows they are to come. There are times that an emergency arises. Some great event is to be celebrated or some catastrophe arises, so that the President is justified in having the departments closed. That would be the case in the death of the President or the Vice President, but in the case of events that everybody knows will occur it ought either to be provided by law or not provided for at all.

I have a statement here that says there is confusion in Boston brought about by conflicting reports relative to the Boston postmastership. Now, I don't feel any blame about that myself. If that situation has arisen, I think the blame is probably on the newspapers. I haven't said anything about it and there has been no change in the situation there, so far as I know. If the newspapers have nevertheless commented on it the responsibility is theirs. If I had anything to give out I would have been perfectly willing to give it out. There hasn't been anything to give out and I haven't given out anything. If the members of the press want to write about it, they will of course have to write about it on their own responsibility. If there is anything to be given out, I am always glad to give it out.

The general news for this afternoon and tomorrow I suppose will be the President's message, so perhaps you will be sufficiently provided with copy if I don't make any further comment this morning.