

Newspaper Conference, Tuesday, September 25, 1928.

The President: There isn't anything that I can add to what I have already said concerning the Anglo-French naval agreement.

I haven't any specific information about the oil controversy in Colombia. If there is anything about that it can be secured at the State Department.

We have no invitation or any knowledge that an invitation is to be sent to a tri-partite conference to consider the English and French disarmament agreement. When we had anything to propose in the way of limitation of armaments we asked for a conference of the powers that were interested and proposed it there. Some came that we invited -- some did not come -- refused even to discuss the question. I think that would be the proper tribunal before which to have a discussion and present our views rather than to try to carry on a discussion through the public press.

I haven't any knowledge as to what probable action Congress will take on the Naval building bill that is in the Senate. I have assumed all the time that it would probably be taken up and passed.

I haven't made any final decision about extending the Saturday half-holiday to Federal employees. It has been customary to have two months -- July and August -- on the theory that the weather in Washington at that time was warm. Last Spring I extended that to include June



and September. My offhand impression is that that is as far as the President ought to go. If something further is done I think it ought to be done by legislation rather than by any stretch of the authority of the President. But I haven't made any final decision about it. Our Federal employees now have thirty days of leave, working days. They have their sick leave -- I think they have another month for sick leave in case of necessity. And they have the usual holidays. Almost always when those occur there is great pressure for an extra holiday either for the day before or the day after. Of course, to extend a Saturday half-holiday would mean an addition of twelve percent of labor cost to the Government -- that is, to extend a Saturday half-holiday throughout the year. So that my offhand opinion is that if anything of that kind is done it ought to be done by Act of Congress.

I haven't taken up for final consideration the appointment of a Federal Judge in Louisiana.

I understand that the Board of Mediation is in touch with the railroad situation on the Western roads where that is an unsettled request for increase of wages on the part of the conductors and trainmen. I think there is a fair chance that it may be adjusted. If it is not adjusted, the next thing would be the appointment of a board under the statute. In case of failure to bring about an adjustment, I suppose it would be the duty of the President to appoint such a board; but I have every hope that some adjustment may be made.

I have been invited to visit Fredericksburg, Virginia, on the 19th of



October and have that under consideration.

Query: What is the occasion?

The President: It has to do with the dedication of the battlefields there. There was a bill passed by Congress to establish a national military park at and near Fredericksburg, Virginia, and to mark and preserve historical points connected with the battles of Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania Court House, Wilderness, and Chancellorsville, including Salem Church, Virginia. They want to begin the work under that and have some appropriate exercises.

Query: If you go might you make a speech or just a visit?

The President: They want me to make a short address. I have an invitation from the Governor of Virginia and some of the members of the House and Senate.

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