

North and South Carolina—Fair Sunday and Monday; not much change in temperature.

NO MENTION OF PEACE AT CONFERENCE

Col. E. M. House Returns From Trip to England and France

ALLIED MEETING A GREAT SUCCESS

Head of American Mission to Allied Conference Arrives in New York from History Making Council.

(By United Press.) New York, Dec. 15.—Peace was never mentioned at the Allied Conference in Paris, or the Supreme War Council which recently met at Versailles, Col. E. M. House, head of the American mission which recently visited England and France, declared tonight upon arrival from Europe.

Colonel House said the Allied Conference "brought things to a focus." He will report to President Wilson on Monday.

The Allied Naval Conference, formation of which has just been announced in Washington, is the first result of the meetings of American delegates and representatives of the other Allies, Colonel House said.

"Before the conference," Colonel House stated, "co-ordination was going on well."

"But we are working now well together. We got together principally on the economic situation, embargo, food and finance. I regard the trip as a complete success."

Colonel House said that the governments must ratify action taken. He said an announcement of the work accomplished by the American mission might be expected from Washington shortly.

The Supreme War Council, he said, is a permanent body and the United States has a permanent place in it if it so desires. The matter of Colonel House making another trip to Europe in the near future is entirely at the discretion of President Wilson.

"The morale among the people in both Great Britain and France is splendid," he said. "Even French pacifists admit that the morale was never better."

"American interests in Europe are almost paramount."

Colonel House visited the American troops and said tonight that they were in the very best condition and would be ready to fight when the times come.

"General Pershing," he said, "has a very difficult task, and is doing it well."

The entire American mission returned with Colonel House, except Commissioners Corsey and Taylor, who will remain in the near future.

The Inter-Allied Council, Colonel House said, should really be called the Allied Priority Board. House emphasized the fine work being done by Admiral Sims and the American naval forces in cooperation with the British and paid high tribute to his fellow delegates on the mission.

The American mission while in London conferred with Foreign Minister Balfour, Premier Lloyd-George and the King.

DUAL EMPIRE HAS 2,000,000 TROOPS

(By United Press.) With the French armies in the field, Dec. 15.—Austria-Hungary has 1,192,000 men in 79 1/2 divisions now in the field, according to accurate information obtained by the United Press today.

The dual empire's armies have not been augmented in man power since the end of 1916. At the present time the 79 1/2 divisions in fighting trim consist of 41 separate and distinct class divisions during the whole period of the war.

At the outbreak of the war, in 1914, the dual empire had 50 divisions—approximately 600,000 men. At the end of 1916, the dual empire's army was 76 divisions—about 1,344,000 men.

While the Austro-Hungarian manpower has not been increased, the army's strength has been tremendously augmented since the start of 1917. The figures show that every division has been augmented with the addition of some of Honveds and Landwehr, which have been doubled in their fighting strength. In addition, there have been tremendous general increases in the number of machine guns and mortars, in small caliber cannon.

The Austro-Hungarian artillery strength is stated to be 2,350 field and mountain cannon; 1,500 trench mortars; and 1,922 heavy cannon.

COL. E. M. HOUSE WARMLY PRAISED BY LLOYD-GEORGE

England's Premier Sends Message to the American People

A NEW EPOCH IN WORLD'S HISTORY

America's Representatives Won Friendship and Respect of European Democracies—Hopes for Other Visits

(By Ed. L. Keen, United Press Staff Correspondent.)

London, Dec. 15.—Col. House's visit to Europe marks a new epoch in the world's history and a new future in the conduct of world's affairs," Premier Lloyd-George, of Great Britain, announced tonight.

Informed of the arrival of the head of the American mission in New York again, the Prime Minister asked the United Press to cable the following statement to the United States for American citizens to read:

"I am very glad to learn of the safe return of the first great American mission to Europe.

"I say 'the first' because I hope it will be a prelude to many more, for the experience we have gained on this occasion has brought home to me even more strongly than before the paramount importance of ever closer perspective to bear upon the enemy's problem."

"It was work culminated in the first meeting of the Supreme War Council at Versailles—the outward visible sign of new unity, of new vigor in the co-operation of the world's great democracies in the fight for triumph of the ideals they represent."

"To that conference the President could not have sent more sagacious or more useful representatives than Col. House and the accompanying members of his mission."

"Col. House indeed proved himself not only a worthy representative of the United States, but he won the friendship and the respect of all European empires."

BRITISH DESTROYER LOST BY COLLISION

(By United Press.) London, Dec. 15.—Sinking of a British destroyer in a collision Wednesday with loss of two men, was announced tonight by the Admiralty.

The same statement detailed the loss of a British non-rigid airship with its crew of five men in the North Sea Tuesday. Another airship of the same type, it was stated, had been forced to descend over Holland Tuesday.

FUEL SHORT IN SOUTH CAROLINA

Schools Closing and Church Services Curtailed By Lack of Coal

(By United Press.) Columbia, S. C., Dec. 15.—Closing of schools, suspension of church services and other drastic steps are urged by the fuel administrators of South Carolina, and of Richland county, in appeals to the public issued today. The situation is declared to be serious.

Three of the largest colleges in the State have already agreed to close down for two weeks or longer because of the seriousness of the situation. In a statement issued tonight, the local fuel board urged that the churches hold union services in order to conserve coal and to discontinue the night services. State Administrator Gossett has gone to Washington in an effort to find some relief for the situation. The bitter cold weather of the past few days has added to the seriousness of the situation.

Violent Artillery (By United Press.) Paris, Dec. 15.—Artillery reached a pitch of great violence in the Champagne sector, tonight's official statement asserted. The Germans attacked and were easily repulsed by the French. South of Juvincourt French forces surprised the enemy and captured some prisoners.

Italy's Retire (By United Press.) Rome, Dec. 15.—Retirement of Italian forces out of Caprie due to a continuous day long assault of violent character by the Teutons was announced today. The war office said General Diaz's soldiers had taken "firm positions" to the rear. The assault on Colanarre and Berretta was described as waged by massed forces with great desperation.

At the head of Monte Solarolo and Coldorosso the statement reported violent and repeated enemy attacks repulsed with heavy losses to the Teutons. An Italian counter attack there compelled retirement and suspension of ever the enemy's artillery offensive.

The war office praised in the highest terms the valor of the Italians in their defense.

NO VERDICT LAST NIGHT IN CASE AGAINST MEANS

Jury With Fate of Concord Man Locked Up at 10:30 O'Clock

A DISAGREEMENT IS FREELY PREDICTED

First Degree Verdict Not Expected—If Acquitted, New York Will Doubtless Prefer Other Charges

JURY LOCKED UP.

(By United Press.) Concord, N. C., Dec. 15.—The fate of Gaston B. Means, charged with first degree murder for the death of Mrs. Maude King, rested with jury tonight. Judge Cline closed his long charge to the 12 men shortly after 7 o'clock and the jury immediately retired to its deliberations. At 10:30 the jury notified Sheriff Caldwell that it would not be able to agree tonight. The jury retired for the night. A verdict may be received Sunday.

Concord, Dec. 15.—The jury was locked tonight with the fate of Gaston B. Means, charged with the murder of Mrs. Maud King.

Practically everyone connected with the case concedes a verdict of first degree murder unlikely, but few predict acquittal, and disagreement or a compromise is the general outlook.

The jury received the case shortly after 7 o'clock this evening following the longest criminal trial in North Carolina history.

Eighteen full days were required to complete taking of testimony and hearing of arguments.

The close of the speech making at 5 p. m. today came after a spirited colloquy of counsel. Attorney L. C. Caldwell, concluding the State's argument, seized many signatures of Mrs. King found in Means apartments and frantically waving them at the jury, shouted:

"What do these mean if this defendant is honest? What have they to do with the establishment of that second will? What explanation can he give for an instrument purporting to be her endorsement of his stewardship and a receipt showing her writing of his accounts when he writes the body of paper in pencil and has her sign it in ink?"

The defense implored Judge Cline to stop this sort of argument but the court allowed the prosecutor to proceed.

Judge Cline, in his charge to the jurors, did not attempt to summarize the evidence. He urged the jurors to deliberate Sunday if they found agreement tonight impossible.

A verdict in the second degree would be within their province the court informed the jury, but he left no room for a manslaughter finding. All the New York officials attending the trial left tonight. They intimated that if Means is acquitted they would attempt to bring him to New York on other charges, an effort that Means' counsel will resist before Governor Bickett.

When at 10:30 p. m. the jury notified Sheriff Caldwell of its inability to agree tonight they were locked up for the night.

ITALIANS RETIRE FROM ONE POINT

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HERBERT HOOVER'S HEATED REPLY TO CLAUS SPRECKELS

KAISER EXPECTED TO MAKE BID FOR PEACE CHRISTMAS

The Offer to Come in An Address to the German People

BRITISH THINKING ONLY OF VICTORY

Peace Talk from Berlin Given Little Attention—Great Object to Prepare for the German Offensive

(By United Press.) London, Dec. 15.—Germany's expected bid for peace is to come in the form of a Christmas message by the Kaiser to his people, according to reports which reached here tonight.

Presumably the war lord hopes to time it with a German offensive on the Western front, already confidently announced by the German press.

The fact that the Kaiser himself is expected to make the proffer was regarded as another evidence of the determination with which Germany is conducting a "peace offensive" now when her military strength is at its top notch and before the arrival of American troops on the line spells the beginning of the end for her autocracy. The Kaiser does not propose to trust Chancellor Von Hertling with the pronouncement.

London was not concerned with peace proffers tonight. Premier Lloyd-George's stirring speech of yesterday coupled with President Wilson's recent address to Congress have aroused British public opinion to re-concentration as its aim for peace, only to be won by Allied victory.

Germany's maneuvering for peace has been patent to British observers for weeks. The military offensive which is to accompany that peace offensive was, however, mainly in England's mind tonight.

Public officials are under no delusion as to the strength of this expected blow. Russia's downfall gives the enemy a great number of veteran troops. Great numbers of guns taken in the Austro-German drive in Italy give the enemy powerful artillery support.

"It has been borne home to the British officials that widespread stories of breaking down of German morale, of lack of adequate reserves, of scarcity of metal curtailing artillery and ammunition, must now be swept aside and that the nation will need its most determined efforts against the foe."

Hindenburg has now gained the initiative. Haig has lost it.

Many London newspapers are now vigorously urging the abandonment of British campaigns in Mesopotamia, Palestine and South Africa and the concentration of large forces of British troops now in these far distant theaters of war on the Western front.

WANT TO KNOW ABOUT "GARABED"

Scientists to Pass Upon the Merits of Alleged Greatest Invention

(By United Press.) Washington, Dec. 15.—Thomas A. Edison, with four other internationally known scientists, may soon be called upon to rule on the genuineness of the alleged greatest invention of mankind.

The "Garabed" resolution providing investigation of the alleged discovery by Garabed T. K. Giragossian, of a virgin natural force passed the House on viva voce vote late today. If the Senate and President Wilson approve it, a committee of five eminent scientists to which the invention will be demonstrated, will be constituted.

Closing hours of the debate on the strangest scenes in the history of Congress. Opponents of Garabed, after interposing every known parliamentary obstruction including two roll calls, had brought on to the House floor an electrical machine they claimed paralleled the Garabed invention. Turmoil immediately broke out, as scores of members' essays about the loudly-whirring device.

"Garabed" supporters, however, finally succeeded in having the machine removed from the chamber.

Henry Perrigo, a Kansas City electrician whose machine figured in the House wrangle, stated tonight he will attempt to induce Congress to submit his invention to the same committee of scientists which will pass on "Garabed." Perrigo claims to be able to produce unlimited electricity from the air without use of fuel. Garabed's claims are not based on electricity. He says he has a discovery of an entirely new natural energy. Both Giragossian and Perrigo were in the House gallery during the debate.

Government to MAKE EXPLOSIVES

More Than \$90,000,000 Will Be Spent in Building These Plants

(By United Press.) Washington, Dec. 15.—More than \$90,000,000 will be expended by the government in the erection of government explosive plants, Secretary of War Baker announced tonight.

Daniel C. Jackling, of San Francisco, was appointed to take charge of the building of these plants.

The new government plants will be built to supplement the present output of explosives by private manufacturers, considered insufficient to meet the government's needs.

Jackling is managing director of a large group of copper mines which produce a large percentage of the country's copper. He will act under authority of Secretary Baker, by whom he was appointed.

"This step is in accordance with the government's purpose to keep abreast of its war requirements and, where necessary to anticipate them by forehanded action," said Secretary Baker.

Spreckels Charged that Price Fixers Were Allies of Sugar Trust

LIE IS PASSED AT COMMITTEE HEARING

Babst and Spreckels Question Veracity—Hoover Says Spreckels is Sore Because Profits Are Cut

(By United Press.) Washington, Dec. 15.—Claus Spreckels' slashing accusations before Senate sugar probe that the government price fixers were hand-in-glove with the "sugar trust" brought the heated answer from Herbert Hoover tonight that Spreckels—independent—"is sore at the Food Administration," because his pocketbook had been touched by Federal regulation.

This statement marked the culmination of Spreckels' spectacular testimony in the probe that:

1. Earl D. Babst, trust head, and Hoover, International sugar committee member, asked him to write President Wilson urging dismissal of the pending dissolution suit against the "trust."

2. That the Food Administration created a sugar shortage when there was a large available supply.

3. That sugar went through New York, where there was famine, to Canada because Canadian refiners were allowed to import it when Americans were not.

4. That the Hoover sugar committee—the price-fixing body—forced American refiners to close when 70,000 tons of Cuban sugar was available.

5. That this committee, which he dubbed "a mere adjunct to the sugar trust," fixed prices without consulting anybody representing consumers.

6. That it now is trying to fix high sugar prices for years to come through contracts for Cuban sugar.

To these, in a preliminary statement tonight, Hoover replied:

1. Spreckels is sore at the Food Administration and would like to see it destroyed because his profits were cut.

2. The American people have been getting 70 per cent. of their normal sugar supply for two months, and they will get that 70 per cent. and no more in December if cars are available.

3. Seventy per cent. is twice what the French people get. Hoover said them a lot of sugar and is proud of it.

4. Every pound of sugar has been brought in that cars and ships could bring.

5. Spreckels knows the bitterness among refiners, that some of them are trying to use the Food Administration as a club to settle their feuds.

6. If Spreckels will tell Hoover where there is any sugar that Hoover can get ships or cars to carry, Hoover will deliver it.

Babst tonight issued a formal statement asking the people to reserve judgment until "we have presented our full case."

"We are going to see this thing through," he said.

"It is well known in the sugar trade that the American Sugar Refining Company has, since last February, sold its sugars for from one-fourth of a cent to a full cent a pound below the prices of Mr. Spreckels' company."

"The government's program has established the sugar market and checked speculation. Without it there is no question but prices would be both uncertain and vastly higher than they now are."

"My request today for the Senate committee's permission to make a statement was unusual, but I wanted them to know that misrepresentation and falsehood will be answered fully."

Spreckels devoted most of his testimony to an effort to develop that the sugar committee was dominated by the sugar "trust."

(Continued on Page Eight.)

A WAR COUNCIL TO OVERSEE SUPPLIES FOR FIELD ARMIES

AN EPIDEMIC OF "INVESTIGATION" HITS CONGRESS

Nation's Legislators Propose Finding How War is Being Conducted

ARMY AND NAVY TO BE INQUIRED INTO

Many Prefer to See Results From Sugar Inquiry and Crozier's Testimony—Tom Lawson Bobs Up Again

(By United Press.) Washington, Dec. 15.—Congress tonight is determined to learn whether any men now ostensibly serving the government at great personal sacrifice are really doing it at great gain.

This development followed swiftly in the heels of disclosures in Congressional investigations into the conduct of the war.

If ugly suspicions now lurking in the minds of some congressional leaders are shown to have foundation, official heads are sure to be lopped off, it was predicted tonight at the capitol.

If these suspicions have no foundation, the country will learn, through investigations now under way and to come, that its war time government is above reproach.

Congress is determined to smoke out incompetence, greed or any other fault which might seriously interfere with speedily putting this country's aims across and ending the war.

"Congress is not trying to 'get' anyone," said one Senator tonight. "Some individual Congressmen doubtless would like to unseat some individual members of the government, but Congress as a whole has but one idea in investigating the government—to learn how things are going, and if they are going badly, correct them by whatever means is necessary. And Congress will go right down the line until it has done that."

Pausing tonight to sum up the results thus far of the two chief inquiries, Congressmen agreed the outstanding facts are:

That the military inquiry has shown partial paralysis of the vital Ordnance Department through causes not entirely explained.

The sugar probe has shown sinister mixing of private affairs with public business.

Another factor entered the investigation field today when Thomas W. Lawson, the Boston financier, wired many Senators a demand that war profits be investigated.

Lawson charged that the government is being mulcted out of huge sums by concerns furnishing munitions and supplies for the army and navy.

"The country's impression is growing," wired Lawson, "that from a third to half of the government's funds are profits to camouflage our front wall."

Lawson's challenge did not find immediate answer in the Senate. Members said "too many investigations at once might defeat the purpose of all of them." Others referred to Lawson's statement as "some what wild" and "hardly justified."

When the military investigation by the Senate Military Affairs Committee resumed Monday, General William Crozier, Chief of Ordnance, will again be on the stand. This session, Senator Chamberlain, committee chairman, said tonight, will be public. The last two hearings have been executive.

Because Crozier was giving confidential military information.

Today's session developed evidence of what Chamberlain called "satisfactory progress" in production of heavy ordnance—field artillery and siege guns. Crozier gave full facts concerning contracts, labor conditions, probable dates of quantity delivery, and estimated the length of time it would take to provide enough artillery to equip the entire American army on a modern scale.

Crozier's earlier testimony showed how the daily output of rifles has been reduced half since last March, chiefly because of disorganization of the working forces of factories; that not a single machine gun of the more than 30,000 needed for the army has been delivered, and that the first will not be delivered until next April; that Pershing's forces in France are depending entirely on France for artillery.

(Continued on Page Three.)

Creation of New Advisory Body Announced by Secretary Baker

COUNCIL MEMBERS MEN OF EXPERIENCE

Secretary of War and Assistant Chief of Staff, and Generals Sharpe, Weaver, Crozier and Crowder.

(By United Press.) Washington, Dec. 15.—Creation of a War Council within the War Department to oversee and co-ordinate all matters of supply for the American field army was announced tonight by Secretary of War Baker.

The War Council will also bring in closer touch the relations between the army in the field and the War Department.

Members of the Council at the beginning will be the Secretary of War, the Assistant Secretary of War, Chief of Staff, and Generals Sharpe, Weaver, Crozier and Crowder.

When General Bliss, Chief of Staff, returns from Europe, he will assume active supervision of the Council. His fresh knowledge of conditions as they affect all branches of service will aid the War Department in prosecution of the war.

Later, officers of extensive experience will be added to the Council and it will constitute the main reliance of the Department in initiative and important plans.

The new organization will not assume specialized duties of the General Staff or the War College, but will advise the Department in a broad sense.

Members of the Council will, from time to time, visit the theater of war to make observation for information of the body which they represent.

"The work of the War Council is of the highest importance," Secretary Baker said. "It is intended to bring to the larger problems of the Department both the experience and general training of the officers of most mature years and largest experience in service."

"The newly created body will act through the Chief of Staff and will be provided suitable accommodations and facilities for the transaction of business."

While any officer is detailed to the Council, provision will be made to free him from administration duties and responsibilities.

Members of the Council are men of the greatest experience and represent every branch of military service and civil life.

General Tasker H. Bliss, who is Chief of Staff, is now abroad studying the war. His return will add valuable knowledge to the War Department's fund for information.

Major General Henry G. Sharpe is head of the Quartermaster Department of the army.

Major General William Crozier, who is Chief of Ordnance, was in the line light during the early stages of the Senate probe of military affairs.

Judge Advocate General Enoch H. Crowder is at the helm in carrying out the provisions of the selective service law. He has directed this work from the very beginning.

Major General Erasmus M. Weaver has charge of the Coast Artillery division, and is a member of the General Staff.

STORES CLOSED FOR HOARDING SUGAR

(By United Press.) New York, Dec. 15.—The first arrest for hoarding sugar and the first closing of stores by the food administration in New York took place today.

Camouflaged as a store where waists were sold, the business of H. Borrak was called to a standstill on evidence said to point to his holding 60 barrels of sugar. It has been held for high prices, it is declared, only two barrels being disposed of in November. Borrak is said to have purchased 31 barrels in March and 29 in August.

Signs marked "closed by the food administration" were placed today on stores owned by Herman Dworkin and by George Goldberg and Cohen. Their licenses for operation were revoked on charges of violating the rules for sale of sugar.

Charges of forced sales of other commodities before sugar would be sold were made.

ONLY 7 MORE DAYS LEFT TO SHOP READ THE ADS