

# IMPRESSION MADE BY AMERICAN NOTE

ENCOURAGING REPORTS ARE BEING RECEIVED FROM LONDON AND BERLIN.

## GERMANY REPORTS WILLING

Difference of Opinion in England, Some Favoring, Others Wanting Further Restrictions.

Washington.—Encouraging reports from both Ambassador Page at London and Ambassador Gerard at Berlin were received concerning the attitude of Great Britain and Germany toward the latest American proposals for the safeguarding of neutral commerce and the unrestricted shipment of foodstuffs to the civilian population of belligerent countries. The United States does not expect complete replies for several days.

Germany's willingness to make concessions and negotiate for an understanding on the submarine food and mine question already has been made known informally and the United States expects a formal acquiescence in a day or two. All eyes now are turned on London, where opinion is understood to be divided on the merits of the suggestions. Some leading British Cabinet members are said to favor in principle the American proposals as a means of solving the problem with as little inconvenience to neutral countries as possible. Another element, however, is said to be impressed by the military value of further restricting supplies to Germany.

The exact nature of the American proposals is still unknown because of the right reticence of officials here and abroad, but each day adds information on the subject. Briefly this much of the contents of the American suggestions now has been confirmed. The United States has asked that the previous rules of international law with respect to shipment by neutrals of conditional contraband destined to the civilian population, and not the belligerent forces of an enemy, be removed. The removal of all floating mines by Germany and Great Britain, is proposed except mines used for protection of coast defenses and harbors, pilots to be furnished to guide neutral ships through fields that remain.

## MANY BIG SUPPLY BILLS PASSED.

Congress Speeding Up to Be Ready For Adjournment.

Washington.—Congress worked steadily on its task of cleaning up supply bills which must be out of the way before adjournment on March 4. The Senate passed the naval bill, \$12,000,000, the fortification bill, \$6,000,000, and the diplomatic bill, \$4,200,000 while the House spent the day debating the general deficiency measure, with interruptions now and then to dispose of conference reports.

The Senate added about \$8,000,000 to the naval bill as it passed the House, providing the two-battletship construction program, for five sea-going submarines instead of one, for 16 instead of 11 coast defense submarines, for a gunboat and a hospital ship, and adding \$1,000,000 for an armor plate and \$500,000 for a projectile factory.

Senator Smoot vainly sought to have authorized the construction of 50 sea-going and 25 coast defense submarines, declaring that "no man can tell when the European disturbance will involve this country in difficulties." This precipitated a general discussion.

## Speaker Wooten's Condition Serious.

Raleigh.—Speaker Emmett R. Wooten of the house of representatives has been sinking steadily at Rex Hospital when he had a chill and other alarming symptoms appeared. Doctor Parrott of Kinston, his family physician, arrived and is in consultation with Dr. H. A. Royster, with a probability that as a last chance to save the life of the speaker the wound will be reopened. There is considered at this hour the very slightest sort of chance for the patient to rally.

## Bill Effects Common Carriers.

Washington.—Senator Newlands introduced a bill in the senate to empower the interstate commerce commission to examine all papers of a carrier, including correspondence. It would amend the law to meet the supreme court's decision that the commission did not have power to inspect the correspondence of the Louisville & Nashville Railway. Mr. Newlands submitted communications from Acting Chairman Clements of the commission and Attorney General Gregory, urging that the bill be passed.

## Special Tax on Foreigners Revoked.

Mexico City.—The French minister was advised officially that the portion of the special tax of 20,000,000 pesos levied by general Obregon which applies to all foreigners, will be revoked. General Obregon's decree stated that money was to be used for the relief of the poor. Americans in Mexico City at a meeting contributed a considerable amount of money for the assistance of the poor. Foreign banks have signified their intention of re-opening.

## Vienna Statement.

Vienna, via London.—The official communication issued by the Austrian war office follows: "Violent artillery engagements are proceeding in the sections East of Przemyśl in Russian Poland. Along the rest of the front north of the Vistula and in East Galicia, comparative calm prevails. The enemy's attacks in the Carpathians on our positions north of the Velove ridge and in the Ondava Valley were unsuccessful. In storming heights during battles in southeast Galicia, 1,240 Russians were captured."



## COL. WILLIAM H. CROOK

Col. William H. Crook, disbursing officer of the White House, celebrated recently the completion of his fiftieth year as an employee in the office of presidents.

## TRADE GOES ON AS USUAL

THE AMERICAN VESSEL, CARES, COTTON LADEN, GOES DOWN IN NORTH SEA.

Warring Nations Are Not Affected Much By New War Zones.—All Crews Are Saved.

London.—Another American steamer, the Carib, has been destroyed by a mine off the German coast, while a third Norwegian, the Regin, has been torpedoed or destroyed by a mine off Dover. All the Regin's crew were saved and although not stated in the dispatches from Berlin, it is believed the crew of the Carib also escaped.

Thus neutral states continue to be the greatest sufferers from the mine and submarine warfare. It is considered possible, however, that one or two British steamers have suffered a similar fate, one being overdue and another being reported blown up off Rye. As a result of the activity of German submarines the British admiralty has announced that the Irish and North Channels have been restricted for navigation.

In the case of a few Scandinavian, Dutch and British steamers the crews have refused to sail where the voyages were to include the war zone, but in each instance substitutes were found. The crew of the British steamer Dardleydale which has grain for the Belgium Relief Commission refused to accompany the ship from Falmouth to Rotterdam but men were found to take their places. Otherwise the trade of the country is going on much as usual, and shipmasters continue to express confidence that the German submarines cannot interfere seriously with commerce. In fact the threatened blockade which has had such a small effect thus far, is beginning to give way in the public interest in military operations to the bombardment of the Dardanelles forts by the Allied fleet.

## THREE BURN TO DEATH.

Big Fire in Birmingham Causes \$200,000 Damage And 3 Lives.

Birmingham, Ala.—Three unidentified persons, probably more were burned to death, and eight others were injured, in a \$200,000 fire which swept the business section of Birmingham, destroying several commercial buildings and the Winsor hotel, a small old structure. The ruins of the hotel are being searched. Four of the injured were firemen.

The fire started at 4:30 in a hardware store on 20th street. Oil and paints stored there aided in its rapid spread. It was not brought under control for nearly four hours.

The exact number of guests in the Winsor when it caught is not known. Several of those hurt were injured jumping from upper windows. The Winsor hotel was a small one in the heart of the city occupying one of the oldest buildings in Birmingham. Fire wrecked the structure almost completely and it is probable that other bodies are in the debris which is piled high in the shell of the building. It is not known how many people were in the building when the fire began but police are trying to get a check on those known to have been in the hotel.

## Carib Owned In Savannah.

New York.—The Carib, which was sunk by a mine in the North Sea formerly was owned by the Clyde Line and was recently sold by them to Walker, Armstrong & Co., of Savannah, Ga. She was of 2,280 tons burden and left Charleston January 27 for Bremen with a cargo of cotton.

## 30,000 Killed And Wounded.

Suwalki, Poland via Berlin and London.—The German forces under Field Marshall von Hindenburg, by hard fighting and extraordinary marches, inflicted such a striking defeat on the Russians opposed to them in the recent battle of the Masurian lakes country, that the Russian remnants are a negligible quantity in the operations now in progress. The Russian killed and wounded in the four days' fighting were estimated at 30,000 men. Over 60,000 Russians are prisoners in German hands.

## Enlist Federal Aid.

Washington.—Federal co-operation by the enactment of legislation to prohibit the use of the mails to introduce into prohibition territory advertisements of intoxicating liquors or the solicitation of orders for liquors, is being sought by a commission of Alabama legislators sent here by the state legislature. Commissioner Samuel D. Weakley, Fred M. Jackson and Walter L. Sessions, three of five appointed by the governor, reached Washington and conferred with Alabama senators and representatives.

# AGRICULTURAL BILL PASSED BY SENATE

ONE MORE BILL CARRYING APPROXIMATELY \$23,000,000 PUT THROUGH.

## DEBATE NAVAL BILL NEXT

Seven of the Fourteen Appropriation Bills Have Been Passed.—Continue Free Seeds.

Washington.—The senate added the agricultural bill, carrying approximately \$23,000,000, to the rapidly growing list of supply measures passed and debate on the naval bill began. Seven of the appropriation bills have been disposed of, and seven are still awaiting action.

After considerable argument the senate declined to support the action of the agricultural committee in striking out an appropriation of \$235,000 for the free distribution of seeds. One of the principal new provisions in the bill is the \$2,500 appropriation for combating the food and mouth disease among cattle.

Debate on the naval bill centers upon committee amendments adding several missions to the house bill including provisions for five sea-going submarines instead of one and 16 coast defense submarines instead of 11.

The house began work on the list of the supply measures for consideration in that body, the general deficiency bill. It also adopted the conference report on the seamen's bill. The senate now must act on it. Conference on other measures which have passed both houses are progressing favorably.

That there is some hope of passing the bill providing Philippine self-government and ultimate independence at this session became apparent. President Wilson told several administration leaders he wished the measure could have the right-of-way over any other general legislation and be passed in the midst of appropriation legislation if necessary.

Senator Simmons conferred with Chairman Hitchcock of the Philippine committee and later Mr. Hitchcock said he believed the bill would pass.

## FOOD EXPORTS INCREASE.

Vast Increase of Food Stuffs While Cotton Has Increased.

Washington.—What vast increases have been made in the export of foodstuffs since the European war began was disclosed by the department of commerce in a detailed statement. Foodstuffs exports for the seven months ending with January totaled \$377,400,000, an increase of \$138,000,000 over the same month of the last fiscal year.

One hundred million bushels more wheat were exported than last year; 38,000,000 bushels more oats; 10,000,000 bushels more corn; 40,000,000 pounds more fresh beef; 34,500,000 pounds more canned beef; 1,500,000 barrels more flour; 1,000,000 pounds more pickled beef; 22,000,000 gallons more gasoline, naphtha, etc., and 11,000,000 gallons more residuum, fuel oil, etc., were sent abroad.

At the same time there was a great decrease in the export of cotton, because of the war, the total for the seven months being 4,105,525 bales or 2,500,000 bales less than last year.

## WAR NEWS IN BRIEF.

London.—One sailor lost his life when the small British steamer Deptford, 230 feet long and 1,200 tons, was sent to the bottom in 20 minutes either by a German torpedo from a submarine or by coming in contact with a mine in the North Sea at a point off Scarborough. The 15 other members of the steamer's crew were saved and were landed at South Shields.

## Turks Report Victory.

Berlin, via London.—Reports from Constantinople say that a Russian attack in the territory east of Artvin, Trans-Caucasia, has been beaten off by the Turks with heavy losses to the enemy.

## The Western Coast Goes Down.

London.—The small coasting steamer Western Coast has been sunk by a mine or torpedo in the English Channel at a point off Beachy Head. The crew were landed at Portsmouth.

## The Royperana Goes Down.

Eastbourne, England.—The steamer Royperana was sunk off this port. It is believed that she was torpedoed. The crew of 31 men was saved.

## Also the Harpellon.

Newhaven, via London.—The British steamer Harpellon, from London for Newport News, without cargo, has been torpedoed off Beachy Head.

## Senate May Have Extra Session.

Washington.—Possibilities of an extra session of the senate alone after March 4th for consideration of treaties and nominations were being discussed among administration leaders. White house officials refused to talk on the subject, but it was known President Wilson was giving it consideration. Treaties with Columbia to pay \$25,000,000 for the partition of Panama, and with Nicaragua to pay \$3,000,000 for inter-oceanic canal rights, an naval bases, undoubtedly will fall of ratification at this session.

## Special Rates to British Ports.

Washington.—All ports in the British Isles were made "special ports" requiring special rates of insurance from the Government War Risk Bureau by an order issued by Secretary of the Treasury McAdoo. The only dom under former orders were those "special ports" in the United Kingdom on the North Sea, North of London. The order also extends the special port zone on the continent to include Bordeaux. The previous limit was Dunkirk. The bureau reserves right to refuse insurance to these ports.



## PRINCESS MARIE JOSE

Princess Marie Jose, the pretty little daughter of the king and queen of Belgium, is with her two brothers in England.

## MR. TAFT FORSEES CRISIS

GRAVE DANGER TO THE UNITED STATES IN NEW ISSUES OF EUROPEAN SITUATION.

Fully Sustains President Wilson in the Course He Has Taken in International Situations.

Morristown, N. J.—The United States is threatened by a serious invasion of its rights as a neutral by the warring factions of Europe and in protecting its commerce with those nations is face to face with a crisis. In the opinion of former President William Howard Taft.

In the solution of that crisis should arise, no fling spirit must be allowed to prevail, Mr. Taft advised; neither pride nor momentary passion should influence judgment.

"And when the President shall act," Mr. Taft declared, "we must stand by him to the end, in this determination we may be sure that all will join, no matter what their European origin. All will forget their differences in self-sacrificing loyalty to our common flag and our common country."

Mr. Taft's reference to the situation confronting the United States was made at the conclusion of an address before the Washington Association of New Jersey. Quoting a reservation in the treaty of Algeiras, proclaimed in 1907, and entered into by the United States and 11 European Nations, Mr. Taft said:

"Our interest in the present war, under the conditions that exist, should be limited as set forth in this reservation, to wit:

"To preserving and increasing the commerce of the United States with the belligerents; to the protection as to life, liberty and property of our citizens residing or traveling in their countries, and to the aiding by our friendly offices and efforts in bringing those countries to peace."

"Our efforts for peace," he continued, "have been made as complete as possible."

"In preserving the commerce of the United States with the belligerents, however, we are face to face with a crisis. The planting of mines in the open sea and the use of submarines to send neutral vessels to the bottom without inquiry as to their neutrality when found in a so-called war zone of the open sea, are all of them a variation from the rules of international law governing the action of belligerents towards neutral trade."

"When their violation results in the destruction of the lives of American citizens or of American property, a grave issue will arise as to what the duty of this Government is. The responsibility of the President and Congress in meeting the critical issue thus presented in maintaining our National rights and our National honor on the one hand, with due regard to the awful consequences to our 90,000,000 of people of engaging in this horrible world war, on the other, will be very great. It involves on their part a judgment in its consequences that we should earnestly pray that the necessity for it may be averted."

"If, however, the occasion arises we can be confident that those in authority will be actuated by the highest patriotic motives and by the deepest concern for our National welfare. We must not allow our pride or momentary passion to influence our judgment. We must exercise the deliberation that the fearful consequences in the loss of our best blood and enormous waste of treasure would necessarily impose upon us. We must allow no jingo spirit to prevail. We must abide the judgment of those in whom we have entrusted the authority and when the President shall act, we must stand by him to the end."

## Both Houses of Congress Busy.

Washington.—Appropriations for national defense occupied the attention of both houses of congress. The senate discussed until late at night the army appropriation bill carrying approximately \$103,000,000, while the house debated the fortifications bill.

While progress was being made on both these measures, the senate committee on naval affairs practically completed consideration of the naval appropriations measure and the senate passed for four minutes to pass the pension bill carrying \$164,000,000.

## Increases for Submarine and Aviation

over provisions of the house bill were recommended by the senate committee in a bill which will total approximately \$150,000,000. The committee urges \$1,000,000 for aviation instead of \$300,000, as authorized in the house bill, and also recommends the construction of 6 sea-going submarines instead of one and 16 instead of 11 of the smaller type submarines, the former to cost not more than 1,400,000 each and the latter not to exceed \$550,000 each.

# AMERICAN NOTE IS BEING CONSIDERED

BASIS FOR FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS IS PRESENTED, IT HAS BEEN LEARNED.

## BRITAIN IS VERY RETICENT

But Still Points Out That Food Has Not Been Declared Absolute Contraband of War.

Berlin, via London.—The American identical note on marine warfare, sent to Great Britain and Germany, is in the hands of Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg, Imperial German Chancellor, and Gottlieb von Jagow, the German Foreign Minister.

The German Government is not ready to make public the contents of the note, but it is said they may be regarded as the basis for further negotiations. Certain of the proposals, as an example the removal of the mine fields around England, probably will be unacceptable to Germany.

The German Government, it is said, does not expect that Great Britain will accept any proposals permitting the importation of foodstuffs in to Germany.

The Lookal Anzeiger says it learns that the American note presents a basis for further negotiations. "Washington," the newspaper adds, "now takes up the suggestions outlined in the final passage of Germany's answer and makes proposals which apparently are addressed equally to Germany and Great Britain."

## PUTTING UP A GOOD FIGHT.

Fear That Renegade Utes Will Join Old Polk's Band.

Salt Lake City, Utah.—Fear that renegade Utes from the reservation in Colorado will join Old Polk's band of Piute Indians which has been battling United States officers near Bluff is expressed in a dispatch to The Desert News.

Reports from the Colorado reservation say the Indians believe the white men have killed 25 squaws and papooses and they are greatly incensed.

Marshal Nebeker has wired the United States District Attorney at Salt Lake City and also the Department of Justice at Washington that he will use the 20 Navajo Indian police he has requested be sent him to assist in tracking the hostiles.

"My men will take care of all the fighting," he said.

A scouting party found that Old Posey, leading a small band of Indians had crossed the San Juan River to Navajo Reservation on the south side.

Another scouting party followed the trail of Old Polk and about 10 mounted warriors to re-capture Wash. eight or 10 miles east of Bluff, but was unable to determine whether his movement indicated an attempt to escape or an effort to obtain reinforcements.

## President Wilson For Mountaineers.

Washington.—Praise for the "simple, straightforward" people of the Southern mountains, and criticism of the "airs that high society gives itself" were voiced by President Wilson here at a meeting held in the interest of Berea College, Kentucky founded to educate the mountaineers. The President declared the college was "going straight to the heart of one of the most interesting problems of American life," and added that "the only thing that is worth while in human intercourse is to wake somebody." Justice Hughes of the Supreme Court presided at the meeting and other speakers were President Frost of Berea College, F. G. Bonser of Columbia University and Hamilton W. Mable of The Outlook magazine.

## New Orleans Bakers Ask Embargo.

New Orleans.—The executive committee of the National Association of Master Bakers forwarded to President Wilson and leaders in Congress a resolution asking that an embargo be placed on the exportation of wheat, rye and flour.

## Alabama Prohibitionists Get Hearing.

Washington.—Alabama's plan to prevent liquor advertisements and solicitation of liquor orders from being sent through the mails to prohibition territory was incorporated in a bill introduced in the national house of representatives by Representative Abernethy. The bill was drafted by a delegation sent here by the Alabama legislature to confer with President Wilson. Postmaster General Burison and members of the Alabama congressional delegation.

## Underwood Leaves House Committee.

Washington.—Representative Oscar W. Underwood bade farewell to the house ways and means committee, of which he is chairman, as he will represent Alabama as its junior senator after March 4. He presided over the committee at its final session of this congress and was presented with a resolution of thanks and congratulations by his colleagues. There were speeches by various members. Speaker Clark later yielded the presiding officer's chair to Mr. Underwood.

## Obtains Passport False.

New York.—Richard Peter Spiegel, a retired German sea captain and a German navy reservist, was arrested here by department of justice agents, charged with fraudulently obtaining an American passport. Vincent Cook of Hoboken, N. J., also was taken into custody. The department of justice agents said they expected to make additional arrests immediately. Spiegel is alleged to have obtained a passport under the new regulations adopted by the state department about January 1.

## WEATHER FORECAST.

Movements Due and Their Local Effects For the Cotton State, Feb. 28 to March 7, 1919.

Carothers Observatory Forecast—Sunday, February 28.—The week will open with a Cool Wave in the Eastern Belt as previously forecast and with warmer weather prevailing in Western Belt.

Monday, March 1; Tuesday, March 2; Wednesday, March 3. Cool Wave is due to overspread the South Monday and Tuesday, it is believed without precipitation, and it will bring 10 degrees cooler weather, with light frosts in Eastern Belt nearly to the Gulf and Atlantic Coasts.

Thursday, March 4, to Sunday, March 7.—Rain setting in in Western Belt Thursday will overspread the South Friday and Saturday in advance of the cool wave. This movement will cover the South Saturday and Sunday, with moderately cooler weather, minima ranging around 50 degrees, with clearing.

## MOUNTAINEERS WANT OUTLET

A Line From Edgemont to Newland Would Give Outlet to Tennessees Over E. T. & W. N. C.

Lenoir.—The citizens of Edgemont, in Caldwell county, and Newland, in Avery county, have begun a strong agitation for a railroad from Edgemont to Newland. Already this agitation has taken the form of action and a charter will be applied for at present General Assembly.

The distance between the above mentioned towns is only twenty-one miles and this will not only give the people of Avery the opportunity of a closer association and connection with their former friends in Caldwell, but with this connecting link Lenoir would then enjoy direct transportation facilities with Johnson City, Tenn., since the East Tennessee and Western North Carolina railroad extends from the latter city to Newland.

For several years there has been much talk of extending the Carolina and North Western railroad from Edgemont, the present terminus to some point in Tennessee and it is reported on good authority that the money was actually in hand for this extension some two years ago, but on account of the passage of the Justice intra-state freight bill, the project was temporarily abandoned. Among the prominent citizens behind the present movement are W. H. Ragland, and J. Robert Campbell, of Newland, and W. W. Barber of Edgemont.

## SUES STREET CAR COMPANY.

Charlotte Lady Asks for \$7,000 Alleged Damages for Injuries Received.

Charlotte.—Ray B. Diehl and wife, Bertha filed suit against the Charlotte Electric Company for \$7,000 alleged damages as the result of an injury during a ride by Mrs. Diehl and her six-months-old baby on one of the company's cars on June 12, 1914.

The allegations set forth that as the result of the actual injury by reason of the sudden start of the car and the humiliation and mental anguish caused by the alleged rude treatment on the car the plaintiff was in bed for a long while, necessitating the service of a physician, and that she is permanently injured. Wherefore plaintiffs ask \$5,000 for actual damages and \$2,000 for punitive and exemplary damages.

## MARKET REPORTS.

Cotton, Cotton Seed and Meal Prices in the Markets of North Carolina For the Past Week.

As reported to the Division of Markets, North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station and Department of Agriculture, Raleigh.

Town	Price of mid-ling cotton	Price of seed cotton	Cash price of cotton seed meal	Price of meal
Asheville	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Charlotte	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Columbia	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Farmville	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Maxton	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
New Bern	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Wilmington	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Winston	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
South Eastern North Carolina				
Fayetteville	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Jacksonville	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Monroe	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Greensboro	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Pittsboro	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Raleigh	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Smithfield	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Wilson	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
South Central North Carolina				
Charlotte	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Columbia	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Gastonia	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Kings Mtn.	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Monroe	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Mooreville	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Newton	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Richmond	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Salisbury	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Stateville	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Southfield	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2
Norfolk, Va.	7 1/2	40	30	18 1/2

## RETAIL PRICES OF CORN FOR THE PAST WEEK.

Town	No. 2	No. 3
Charlotte	30	25
Columbia	30	25
Elmore	30	25
Greensboro	30	25
Louisburg	30	25
Maxton	30	25
New Bern	30	25
Newton	30	25
Raleigh	30	25
Seaford Neck	30	25
Smithfield	30	25
Wilson	30	25

## TAR HEEL BREVITIES.

Durham will vote on the city manager plan of government March 18. Duplin county will have a county school commencement March 4 and 5. Henderson and Vance counties now have whole time health officers. C. D. Mangum of Wake county made 150 bushels of corn, 6 tons millet and peavine hay and vegetables enough for his family on 5 acres of ground, paying out only \$4.30 for help. He also attended every baseball game played in Raleigh.

# CORN CLUB BOYS SET PAGE FOR FATHERS

CLUB MANAGER RETURNS FROM TRIP TO SAND HILL SECTION OF STATE.

## OVER 500 NEW MEMBERS

Great Growth in Interest Shown.—Number of Prizes Offered For Largest Yields This Year.

West Raleigh.—That the work of the Boys' Corn Clubs has served as a nucleus for the