

THOROUGH INQUIRY INTO CONDUCT OF WAR TO BE MADE

To Investigate Rumors of Incompetence and Greed On Part of Officials

CROZIER TO GO ON STAND MONDAY

Military Investigation Will Be Public—Two Naval Probes Start Monday

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 on the heels of disclosures in congressional investigations into the conduct of the war. If ugly suspicion 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 war aims across and ending the war. "Congress is not trying to get anybody," 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 getting on 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."

Tonight, to sum up the results thus far of the 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. —That the naval 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 demanding that war profits be investigated. Lawson charged that the government is being robbed of huge sums by concerns furnishing munitions and supplies for the army and navy.

"The impression is growing," wired Lawson, "that from a third to half 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 do the purpose of all of them." Others referred to Lawson's statement as "somewhat wild" and "hardly justified."

When the military investigation by the senate military affairs committee is resumed Monday, General William Crozier, chief of ordnance, will gain by on the stand. Monday's session, Senator Chamberlain, committee chairman, said tonight, will be public. The last two hearings will be executive, because Crozier was giving confidential military information.

Today's session developed evidences of what Chamberlain called "satisfactory progress" in production of the 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 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 20,000 needed for the army has been delivered, and that the first guns will not be delivered until next April; that the machine gun officially chosen for the United States army was not picked until after bitter quarreling in the war department, and then was decided on two months after this country entered the war.

WAR COUNCIL TO OVERSEE WARERS

Baker Creates Organization To Bring Army in Field and War Department in Closer Relations

Washington, Dec. 15.—Creation of a war council within the department to oversee and coordinate 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 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 the 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 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 have advised 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 will be given the greatest experience and represent every branch of military service and civil life. General Bliss, who is chief of staff, is now abroad studying the war. The information that he will secure is expected to prove of valuable aid.

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.

KAISER TO MAKE OFFER OF PEACE

Germany Conducting "Peace Drive" and Military Offensive on Western Front in Conjunction

London, Dec. 15.—Germany's expected bid for peace, long forecast, is to come in the form of a Christmas message by the kaiser to his people, according to reports which reached this city 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 offer was regarded here 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 which the beginning of the end for his autocracy. The kaiser does not propose to trust Chancellor von Hertling with the pronouncement. London was not concerned with peace offers tonight. Premier Lloyd George's ringing speech of yesterday, coupled with President Wilson's recent address to congress have aroused British public opinion to recognition of its aim for a peace only to be won by allied victory.

BRINGS CHARGES AGAINST HOOVER'S SUGAR COMMITTEE

Government's Price Fixers Adjunct To Sugar Trust, Declares Spreckels

Washington, Dec. 15.—Claus Spreckels' slashing accusations before the senate investigating committee today that the government price-fixers were hand-in-glove with the "sugar trust" brought an answer from Herbert Hoover tonight that Spreckels, who is an independent, "is sore at the food administration," because his pocket book had been touched by federal regulation.

Hoover Makes Lengthy Answer Spreckels' Pocketbook Has Been Hit By Food Administration's Rules

This statement marked the culmination of Spreckels' spectacular testimony that:—1.—Earl D. Babel, trust head and a member of Hoover's international sugar committee, 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.

—That the Hoover sugar committee—the price fixing body—forced American refiners to close when 70,000 tons of Cuban sugar was available. —That this committee, which he dubbed "a mere adjunct to the sugar trust," fixed prices without consulting anybody representing consumers. —That he now is trying to fix high sugar prices for years to come through contracts for Cuban sugar.

Spreckels devoted most of his testimony to an effort to develop that the sugar committee was dominated by the "sugar trust." 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. —The American people have been getting 70 per cent of their normal sugar supply for two months, and they'll get that 70 per cent, and no more in December, if cars are available. —Seventy per cent is twice what the French people get. Hoover said them a lot of sugar and is proud of it.

—Every pound of sugar has been brought in that cars and ships could bring. —Spreckels knows the bitterness among refiners, that some of them are trying to use the food administration as a club to settle their feuds. —If Spreckels will tell Hoover where there is any sugar that Hoover can get ships or cars to carry Hoover will deliver it.

—Babel 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 will be won 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 over the prices of Mr. Spreckels' company. The government program has stabilized 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." When Spreckels made a startling claim that Hoover had sought to have him use his influence to have the anti-trust suit dropped, Babel's answer was stirred. Deeply flushed, he demanded an opportunity to reply. "Spreckels asked me for 13,000 bags of sugar to help him cover over his orders," Babel said. "And I asked whether, if our other competitors would recommend dismissal of the suit he would join them. He said he'd think it over. I absolutely deny that I ever asked him to write the president."

"You deny that," Spreckels interrupted. "I do under oath," retorted Babel. "After the lie was passed between the two, Senator Reed quieted the argument and assured Babel he would have a chance to tell his story."

FUEL COMPLAINS FROM THIS STATE

Federal Fuel Administration Does Not Expect Serious Shortage in This State—Situation in Eastern Cities

By GEO. H. MANNING.

Washington, Dec. 15.—Several complaints of coal shortage and of complete inability to obtain fuel for domestic purposes and to continue the operation of manufacturing plants in different parts of North Carolina have come to the fuel administration here at different times, and by taking steps at once the fuel administration has been able to quickly relieve the situation. It was said at the office of Fuel Administrator Garfield today.

President Bailey, of the Mt. Airy Granite company, came to Washington today and said he could obtain no coal for his plant and had been compelled to shut down. He saw Congressman Stedman, who will take the matter up with the fuel administration. The administration communicated at once with the North Carolina fuel administration which will do all in its power, it is said, to have coal shipped to Mt. Airy immediately. "We have received comparatively few complaints of coal shortage from North Carolina," said a high official of the Mt. Garfield's office. "Complaints come to us from all the states which supply coal, but with a bare supply on hand and with miserable transportation facilities, it is quite a task. It seems that when we get one section supplied another runs shy. If we had ample railroad facilities our task would be simple. We don't anticipate any fuel situation in North Carolina becoming serious and are gratified at the way the North Carolina people are using unlimited supplies of wood in the fuel situation in North Carolina on the coal supply."

Poor Fight For Fuel

New York, Dec. 15.—Fuel shortage which is causing suffering, privation and even death in many states, is most severe in the east and in the coal regions—Lowes which are nearest the big mines, according to a report of the situation by the United Press today. In the west, municipal coal yards and strict supervision on distribution and use are being insisted upon by the fuel administration. In the New England district there are coal yards and there are empty coal yards and riots among the poor who fight for the right to purchase a scanty supply. In New York half the yards are empty and the use of electricity is being curtailed to save fuel. Steam in some big tenements have been shut off and police have been called to disperse coal riots. Many train loads of coal are snow-bound. Federal Fuel Administrator Garfield, speaking in New York, said the transportation situation was largely to blame for the famine. The railroads, he said, are overwhelmed by the war's demands.

KNEW NOTHING OF LUSITANIA CARGO

Colonel Bryan Says Investigating Committee and La Follette Know What He Will Testify

Washington, Dec. 15.—Delay on a final vote which woman suffrage supporters won in the house of representatives today may block passage of the federal amendment at this session. The house, willing to vote before the Christmas recess, displayed increasing resentment at the forced postponement of the vote. Many members of the suffrage movement, who were in the city for the festive dinner at Grove Park Inn, where vegetables dried by a new process were tested. Colonel Bryan will be present in the house when the vote is taken on the prohibition amendment, and while he will have nothing to say or do, it is very likely that his presence will have some effect upon some of the national legislators who might be inclined to let the vote in the crucial moment. Incidentally, while in Washington this time, Colonel Bryan may make the statement, so often prophesied concerning the Lusitania and its cargo—the statement concerning which Senator La Follette is keenly intent.

Naturally Colonel Bryan would hardly wait around Washington very long for the meeting of the investigating committee. He has already made several visits to the national capital in order to testify before that committee and in every instance they were not ready for testimony. Yesterday in conversation, Colonel Bryan gave THE TIMES to understand that he was ready to make his statement concerning his knowledge of the cargo of the Lusitania whenever the committee was ready; and further he said that both the members of the committee and Senator La Follette knew that he would testify that he did not know anything about it until it was all over. It is likely that the committee will permit Mr. Bryan to make a written statement and file it with the committee to be used when they are ready. Colonel Bryan expects to be in Asheville again within a few weeks and hopes that his house will be ready for occupancy no later than April 1, when with Mrs. Bryan he will come here to remain through the summer.

PEACE NOT MENTIONED AT CONFERENCE, SAYS HOUSE ON HIS RETURN

Head of American War Mission Reached Atlantic Port Saturday Afternoon—"We Got Together on Economic Situation, Embargo, Food and Finance," He Declares—Supreme War Council Permanent Body

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 his arrival from Europe. Col. House, it was said, reached an Atlantic port late this afternoon. Col. House said the allied conference brought things to a focus. "I will report to President Wilson on Monday. The allied naval conferences, 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, Col. House said.

"Before the conference," Col. House stated, "co-ordination was not 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." "Must Ratify All Actions," Col. House said that the governments must ratify all action taken, especially on the economic situation, accomplished by the American mission which he expected from Washington shortly.

The supreme war council, he said, a permanent body and the United States has a permanent place in it, if it so desires. The matter of Col. House making another trip to Europe in the near future is entirely at the disposition 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."

Praise for Pershing's Men. Col. House visited the American troops and said that they were in the very best of condition and would be ready to fight when the time comes. "General Pershing," he said, "has a very difficult task and is doing it well." The entire American mission returned with Col. House except Commissioners Crosby and Taylor. They will return in the near future. The inter-allied council, Col. House said, should really be called the "allied parity board."

House emphasized the fine work being done by Admiral Sims and the American naval forces in co-operation with the British and paid high tribute to his fellow delegates on the mission. The American mission while in London lunched with Foreign Minister Balfour, Premier Lloyd George and the king.

House's Visit Marks New Epoch In World's History

By ED L. KEENE. (Copyright by the United Press.) London, Dec. 15.—Col. House's visit to Europe marks a new epoch in the history of the world's affairs. Premier Lloyd George, of Great Britain, and the president of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, have arrived 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 and more constant association between the United States, the free democracies of Europe and the nations of the British Commonwealth—not only in the prosecution of the war, but in the future conduct of the world's affairs. The mission which thus has just successfully terminated its labors was,

as far as we are concerned, an unqualified success. I did not receive a great deal of advertisement at the time, because Col. House rightly insisted that it be first and last a business affair. But the fruits of its labors will be seen by all in time to come. It not only enabled the United States and the allies to co-ordinate preparations so as to produce maximum military effort in the shortest time against the common enemy, but it brought fresh minds and a new perspective to bear upon the allies' problems.

Its 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 conduct 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. E. M. 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 allies."

WOMAN SUFFRAGE MAY NOT PASS THIS CONGRESS

Many Members Incensed at Postponement Secured by Measure's Proponents

Washington, Dec. 15.—Delay on a final vote which woman suffrage supporters won in the house of representatives today may block passage of the federal amendment at this session. The house, willing to vote before the Christmas recess, displayed increasing resentment at the forced postponement of the vote. Many members of the suffrage movement, who were in the city for the festive dinner at Grove Park Inn, where vegetables dried by a new process were tested. Colonel Bryan will be present in the house when the vote is taken on the prohibition amendment, and while he will have nothing to say or do, it is very likely that his presence will have some effect upon some of the national legislators who might be inclined to let the vote in the crucial moment. Incidentally, while in Washington this time, Colonel Bryan may make the statement, so often prophesied concerning the Lusitania and its cargo—the statement concerning which Senator La Follette is keenly intent.

HOUSE WILL VOTE ON PROHIBITION MONDAY

Believed That It Will Receive Required Two-Third Majority

Washington, Dec. 15.—After decades of ceaseless agitation, national prohibition has worked its way to preferred position before the house of representatives. It will come up for immediate consideration Monday and will be voted on before night under unanimous agreement reached today. The outlook was that it will receive the required two-thirds vote as a constitutional amendment. Members throughout the past fortnight have been targets for violent bombardment for both pro and anti-saloon interests. Great stacks of telegrams and letters evidenced the country-wide upheaval over the approaching decision. The oratorical strife scheduled to rage over the house floor from 11.30 to 5 o'clock Monday was expected to rival anything in the past. Both sides will try to sway the admittedly considerable numbers of members who remain "open minded."

MEANS CASE NOW RESTS WITH JURY; MAY BE MISTRIAL

At 10:45 o'Clock Jury Reported That It Had Not Yet Agreed

SPECULATION ON PROBABLE VERDICT

Guilty In First Degree and Acquittal Believed To Be Improbable

Concord, N. C., Dec. 15.—The jury was locked up tonight with the fate of Gaston B. Means, charged with the murder of Mrs. Maude A. King. Practically every one connected with the case concedes a verdict of first degree murder unlikely but few predict acquittal. A mistrial or a compromise verdict 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 trial days were required to complete taking of testimony and hearing of arguments.

The close of the speech-making at 5 o'clock this afternoon came after a spirited colloquy of counsel. Attorney L. C. Caldwell, concluding the state's argument, seized sundry signatures of Mrs. King found in the Means apartment and frantically waving them at a favored juror 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 scrutiny of his accounting when he writes the body of the paper in pencil and has red to sign it in ink?" The defendant, Judge Cline, stopped 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 of murder 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 o'clock tonight the jury notified Sheriff Caldwell of its inability to reach a verdict and they were locked up for the night.

GOVERNMENT TO BUILD MANY EXPLOSIVE PLANTS

San Francisco Man Selected To Take Charge of Erection of Plants

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 it is necessary to anticipate them by forward action," said Secretary Baker.

BRITISH DESTROYER SUNK WEDNESDAY

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 airship with its crew of five men in the North sea on Tuesday. Another airship of the same type, it was stated, had been forced to descend over Holland. Arrested For Hoarding. New York, Dec. 15.—The arrest for hoarding of sugar and the first closing of stores by the food administration in New York took place today. Camouflaged as a store where wastes 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.