

AMERICAN SHIPS ARMED

FROM SICK BED PRESIDENT WILSON AUTHORIZES ARMING OF AMERICAN MERCHANTMEN

American Ships Will Sail the Seas, Regardless of Germany's Submarine Warfare and Will Be Prepared to Defend Themselves Against Attacks by the Underwater Craft—President Wilson Decides He Has Authority to Act.

CALLS EXTRA SESSION OF CONGRESS FOR APRIL

Arming of Ships Is Fraught With Grave Possibilities of War With Germany But President Wilson Does Not Hesitate About Order.

WASHINGTON, March 9.—President Wilson from a sick bed today ordered the arming of American merchant ships against Germany's ruthless submarine warfare, and at the same time issued a proclamation calling an extra session of congress to meet April 16.

The president's decision came suddenly late this afternoon, following the action of the senate yesterday in revising its rules to permit prompt action on important questions and the submission of formal opinions by Secretary Lansing and Attorney-General Gregory that he has the power to arm merchantmen without action by congress.

Details Withheld.

Details of the government's armed neutrality plans for defending the merchant marine were withheld to avoid endangering Americans and their ships by permitting the information to reach Germany. The only statement at the white house and the navy department was that the president had determined to fully protect American rights.

The decision, coming at the end of a period of tense waiting, was generally hailed as the natural and unavoidable next step in the policy adopted by the president when he broke off diplomatic relations with Germany and gave warning that the United States could not tolerate attacks on American ships and citizens in violation of international law.

Possibility of War.

Fraught with the grave possibility of war with Germany, the action was taken by President Wilson only after he was convinced that Germany actually was proceeding, with her campaign of ruthlessness, and had made efforts to plot with Mexico and Japan against the territorial integrity of the United States.

Long before the order was given from the white house all necessary preparations for the arming of merchantmen had been completed at the navy department. Secretary Daniels, however, issued an appeal to the press of the nation to refrain from discussing these preparations.

The president's action sent a thrill through the senate, meeting in special session and through the government departments. Still hoping that war with Germany will be avoided, officials and senators declared that the issue rests entirely with Germany.

Formal Announcement.

Formal announcement of the government's policy was given in the following announcement issued from the white house:

"Whereas public interests require the congress of the United States should be convened in extra session at 12 o'clock noon, on the sixteenth day of April, 1917, to receive such communications as may be made by the executive;

"Now, therefore, I, Woodrow Wilson, president of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim and declare that an extraordinary occasion requires the congress of the United States to convene in extra session at the capitol in the city of Washington on the sixteenth day of April, 1917, at 12 o'clock noon, of which all persons who shall at that time be entitled to act as members thereof are hereby requested to take notice.

"Given under my hand and the seal of the United States of America, the ninth day of March in the year of Our Lord, one thousand nine hundred and seventeen, and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and forty-first."

Signs Proclamation.

The president signed the proclamation calling the ex-

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REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS CLAIM HOUSE MAJORITY

Speaker Clark and Representative Woods Plan to Organize House.

SICK REPUBLICANS CAUSING TROUBLE

May Give Democrats Control of the Lower House; Are Optimistic

WASHINGTON, March 9.—Optimistic forecasts of the control of the next house came quickly from democratic and republican leaders tonight when they heard of the president's call for an extra session of congress, April 16. Many unblinded observers, however, foresee only a long and bitter organization fight unless a coalition agreement prevails.

Predict Victory. Both Speaker Clark and Representative Woods, of Iowa, chairman of the republican congressional committee, predicted victory for their respective parties. Each said his party was assured of at least 218 votes and that this probably would be its minimum strength.

The official standing of the incoming house is as follows: Republicans, 215; democrats, 214; prohibitionist, 1; progressive one; progressive-protectionist one; socialist one; independent one; vacant one.

The vacancy exists in the Fifteenth New York district, which is overwhelmingly democratic. Under the New York law this vacancy can be filled before the extra session begins should Governor Whitman call a special election. It would make virtually certain a tie at 215 between the democratic and republican membership on the opening day of the session. Then the winning side would have to gain the votes of three of

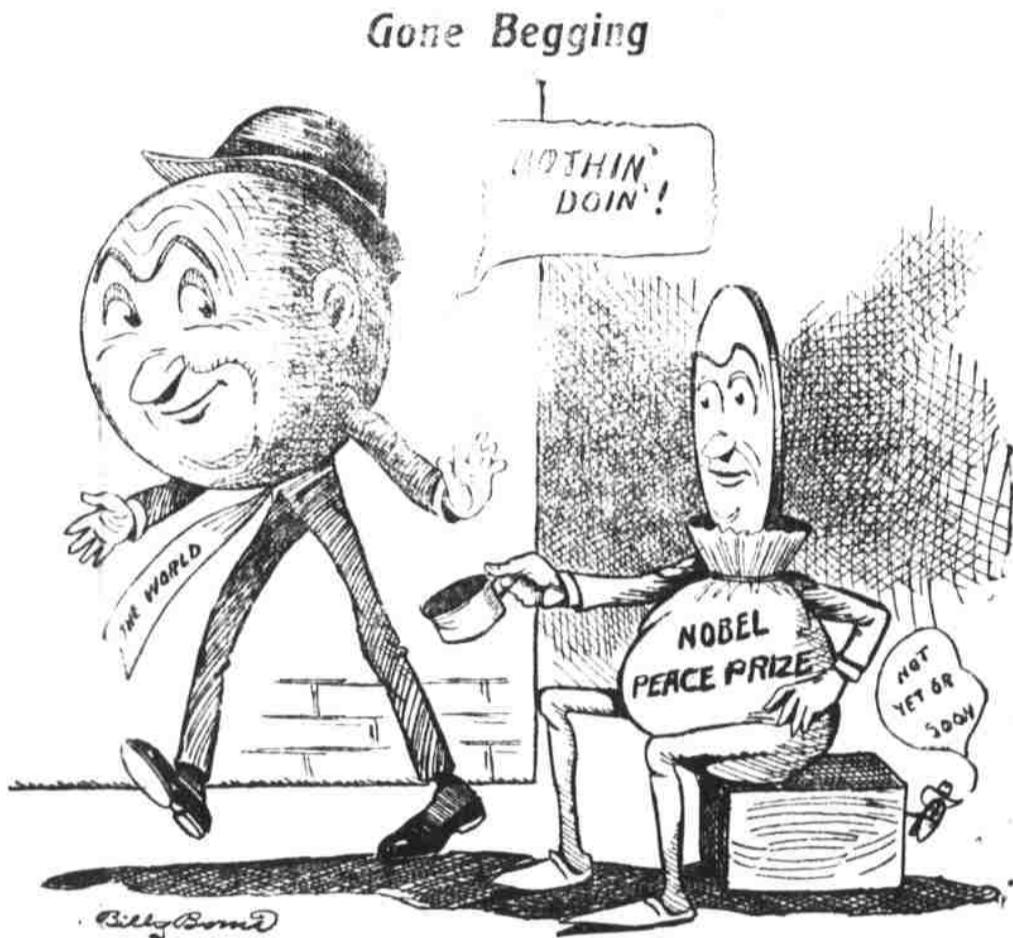
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AMERICAN MARINES AND 'JACKIES' AT SANTIAGO FACE POSSIBLE FIGHT

Chance That Rebel Bands Will Attack the American Forces.

REBELS HAVE FLED.

WASHINGTON, March 9.—American marines and hidelackets occupying Santiago, recently the stronghold of the Cuban revolutionists, appear from latest navy department dispatches to be facing the possibility of an attack by the rebel bands waging guerrilla warfare in the city's suburbs. The dispatches, apparently several hours behind developments, said the rebels had turned back after fleeing the city and were doing considerable damage around the outskirts in a movement which showed some signs of developing a general attack. A body of Cuban government troops under Colonel Betancourt was reported on its way to Santiago to reinforce the small government garrison, however, and navy officials believed the rebels would stay out of the city proper and avoid any clash with the Americans. Although the loss of Santiago is regarded here as marking the collapse of the revolution, it is realized that a continuation of the guerrilla campaign in outlying sections may make serious trouble for the government commanders. When the rebels fled they left a notification that they would continue to refuse allegiance to the Menocal administration and already they are reported to have destroyed several bridges and to have wrought great havoc in the cane fields of the Santiago district.



DANIELS ASKS ALL NEWSPAPERS TO REFRAIN FROM PUBLISHING NEWS OF MOVEMENTS OF AMERICAN VESSELS

Lacking Legal Authority to Establish General Censorship, Secretary of the Navy Asks All Loyal Newspapers to Aid in Keeping Movements of American Ships Secret—Best News That Can Be Published Is That Ships Have Been Armed.

WASHINGTON, March 9.—Lacking legal authority to establish general censorship, the administration tonight appealed to the patriotism of the country's newspapers and cable companies to suppress publication and transmission of information about the movements of American craft, now to be armed against German submarines.

"The best news that readers can have," Secretary Daniels said, in a formal statement to press representatives, "is that the government will protect the rights of Americans to the freedom of the seas."

"The publication of details can serve to no good purpose and might jeopardize human life."

Reveals no Plans. Mr. Daniels has determined not to reveal any of the department's plans for carrying out the policy ordered by President Wilson. He previously has stated, however, that the navy is prepared with guns, ammunition, gun crews and all other necessary equipment or personnel to carry out the instructions.

Navy yard commandants will superintend the actual installation of guns on merchant craft. The rifles, ammunition, mounts, range finders and other accessories are already stored at the yards. They range from heavy six-inch rifles to three-inch weapons and smaller guns. The number of guns to go on each ship, the personnel selected from the reserve list of the navy or from the reserve to handle the guns, the time of sailing or the names of ships that have been armed, will not be disclosed.

Daniels' Statement. Secretary Daniels in his statement

to the newspaper men said: "You have read the statement issued from the white house and now you know that the president has the power to arm American merchant ships making trips on the seas on lawful errands, and is free to exercise it at once. I do not think you ask with what guns they will be armed or how they will be manned or exactly when the power will be exercised. The government should be trusted fully to carry out the policy announced in the best way."

"I do not think you ought to ask when the ships will be armed or printed when they will sail. Today I requested every cable company in America not to send out any news about ships sailing to or from Europe. The wireless stations are under the direction of the navy department and no news of sailings will go out by radio."

"I am going to request you and every newspaper and every news agency in the United States not to print any news about the arrival of ships or when any of them will sail for European ports. There is no power of censorship in our country. The president does not have any authority over the press. In this time of national emergency, I feel sure that every newspaper will accede to the request not to even give a hint or speculation of the sailing of American ships. Such publication might result in the loss of life. As the reasons are obvious for making this request, there is no confidence in administration circles that this request will be complied with by every patriotic paper in the country."

Americans Patriotic. "All patriotic Americans are ready

to make sacrifice for their country in times of emergency. The press can render the highest patriotic service by refraining from printing at this time what ordinarily they would freely print.

"Inasmuch as it will be impossible to reach every paper and news agency directly, I will ask all papers to carry this request which is made as an appeal to patriotism to all journalists and disseminators of news. The best news the readers can have is that the government will protect the rights of America to the freedom of the seas. The publication of details can serve no good purpose and might jeopardize human life. All readers will surely applaud the papers' in responding to this appeal."

With the departure of the first armed American ship will be necessary for the navy department to issue instructions to gun crews as to the manner in which the weapons are to be employed. In that will be involved a declaration of policy as to the appearance of the nearest navy yard in the neighborhood of a ship is sufficient warrant for opening fire. Officials would not discuss this aspect of the situation.

When the application of a ship owner for arms has been approved by the navy department, the commandant of the nearest navy yard will be instructed to place the guns aboard. Most of the work probably will be done at the yards where facilities are available for handling heavy weights quickly. In some cases structural changes in ships' decks may be necessary to carry the gun

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KAISER CONDOLES WITH THE COUNTESS ZEPPELIN

Sends Telegram to Widow of Man Who Invented Big Airships.

AMSTERDAM, Jan. 9 (Via London.)

Emperor William, says a Berlin dispatch, has sent the following telegram of condolence to Countess Zepplin: "With deep regret I have just learned of the death of your husband, General of Cavalry Count Zepplin. I personally feel most painfully the death of this excellent man, distinguished by rare gifts of genius and of the heart. The whole German people stands with me in mourning at the loss of one of the greatest sons of the fatherland."

In the tenacious, indefatigable struggle for the mastery of the air he experienced successes which made his name immortal far across the frontiers of the empire—around the entire world. Called away in the midst of gigantic war in which he so energetically co-operated in combating our enemies, it was unfortunately not given to him personally to participate in the end of the fight, but his work will be continued in his spirit by the army and navy.

"The Almighty may console you and your family in the great sorrow for the deceased, whose fame is immortal. The memory of him will always remain sublime and dear to me."

(Signed) "WILHELM."

APPAM WIRELESS ONLY CAPABLE OF RECEIVING

Could Not Send Messages and Was Known to U. S. Marshal.

NORFOLK, Va., March 9.—

That the wireless apparatus discovered today on the prize ship Appam was only capable of receiving but could not send messages, and that its presence on the vessel was made known to the United States Marshal John C. Saunders, by a petty German officer on the day that Lieutenant Bow and his crew left the Appam for internment at Philadelphia, are the latest developments following this afternoon's investigation.

Over the long distance telephone this afternoon Marshal Saunders said that on the morning of February 2, when he went aboard the Appam, to remove the prize crew and send them to Philadelphia for internment, he was informed by a German petty officer of a system of flashing messages ashore by the use of electric bulbs. The means of communication were used then to receive a message from a deputy on the Yamacraw. Marshal Saunders was told of the system, he said, at the time.

Naval experts who examined the wireless apparatus declared positively that the system could have been employed only for what is known as "listening in." They further declared that had any other equipment been used for sending messages, it would have led to immediate discovery.

Further investigation is not probable.

DECISION IS IN HANDS OF PRESIDENT WILSON

So Declares Dr. Zimmermann in Statement in Dutch Papers.

AMSTERDAM, (Via London, Mar. 9.)

Dutch newspapers publish the following statement made by Dr. Alfred Zimmermann, the German foreign secretary, to a representative of a Budapest newspaper as follows: "As far as the United States is concerned, we have spoken our last word and the decision is in President Wilson's hands."

"We are determined to carry through the refusal of our peace offer Germany still stands by the words of the imperial ambassador and is prepared to place a fleet at the head of an alliance of states for the maintenance of the world's peace."

"As to European neutrals, I believe there will be no change in their present relations with us in the course of the war. Neutral ship owners should give up their trade with England. They have made enough money and can afford to bear the loss of English trade. They will soon recognize that it is to their interest to keep their ships at home so that they may use them to the best advantage after the war."

Dr. Zimmermann added that the military situation is entirely satisfactory to Germany.

BITTER FIGHTING HAS TAKEN PLACE ON FRENCH FRONT

French Troops Take Prisoners and Make Further Gains in West.

EVERYBODY RAIDS ON WESTERN FRONT

Austro-German Forces Take Prisoners in Battle With Russians.

Bitter fighting has taken place in Champagne, with the French withstanding German attacks and taking further trenches, says the latest French official communique. Between Butte Du Meuil and Maisons de Champagne, French troops took prisoners and made further gains north of the road running between the two places. The number of Germans taken by the French in the past two days in this region now totals 170.

Three Attacks. Three violent attacks were launched by the Germans in the Maisons de Champagne sector. The German efforts failed, Paris says, and the attackers were repulsed by the French in their attacks, but the positions later were regained, except for a farm near Height 185. Increased artillery action in the Champagne region is also announced by Berlin.

German trenches on Height 185 and at Maisons de Champagne, Berlin reports, were entered by the French in their attacks, but the positions later were regained, except for a farm near Height 185. Increased artillery action in the Champagne region is also announced by Berlin.

Nine Raids. Elsewhere on the western front there have been raids by French, British and German troops. Nine raids, London says, were made by the Germans against British trenches north of Wulverghem, between Armentieres and Ypres. Berlin says thirty-seven prisoners and two machine guns were captured in this region. London reports the capture of some prisoners from the German raiders and a successful British raid south of Blaches, Coldwater again has been reported by the French, accompanied by gales and snow, and is interfering with operations on a large scale.

Six hundred prisoners were taken (Continued on Page Two.)

GERMANS FOUND GUILTY OF SINKING LIEBENFELS IN CHARLESTON HARBOR

Tried in United States District Court on Sinking Charge.

IS SERIOUS CHARGE.

FLORENCE, S. C., March 9.—Eight officers and men of the German Hansa line freighter Liebenfels, which began sinking in Charleston harbor on the night of January 21, were found guilty of sinking the vessel in a navigable stream, by a United States district court here, late today. They were acquitted, however, of a charge of conspiracy to sink the steamer. Captain Johann R. Klattenhoff, master in ill at Charleston and was the only one of the indicted men not tried.

The convicted men are Johann Lubken, chief officer; George Sunke, third officer; Jonas Edward Jansen, chief engineer; Heinrich Wattenburg, assistant engineer; Johann Wilhelm Huse, second assistant engineer; Moritz von Thulen, third assistant engineer; August Neuse, fourth assistant engineer; Wilhelm Schwarting, machinist. All are Germans except Jansen, who is a Dane. Several of the men are German naval reservists.

Counsel for the defense argued that the men should not be punished, intimating that they were only carrying out orders. The defense offered no testimony. Its motion for a new trial was denied. Sentence will be passed tomorrow.

The government introduced testimony to show that the seal of the United States government had been broken on the wireless apparatus, which had been wrecked; that the machinery had been seriously disabled and that the sea-cocks were open. There also was testimony to show the wreck of the Liebenfels constituted a possible menace to navigation of the channel leading to the United States navy yard at Charleston.

THE WEATHER.

WASHINGTON, March 9.—Forecast for North Carolina: Fair Saturday and Sunday, little change in temperature.