

NEGOTIATIONS NOW SEEK COMPROMISE WITH THE PACKERS

One of Plans Being Considered is the Withdrawal of the Packers from Side Lines—Grand Jury is Still Investigating Complaint.

Washington, Dec. 18.—Negotiations between the meat packers and the government, it became known today, have been going on for some time with the object of compromising the anti-trust prosecution which is still in the stage of a grand jury investigation.

It is understood that one of the plans considered is the withdrawal of the packers from side lines such as the wholesale grocery business, which various reports of the federal trade commission have charged them with seeking to dominate.

The grand jury proceedings, begun in Chicago, was interrupted by decision of the government's attorneys and for a time there was a prospect of its being transferred to New York. Meanwhile negotiations were begun, at whose instance it has not been disclosed, which it was planned would remove some of the causes of the government's complaint. It is understood that the packers represented that they already had begun withdrawing from the grocery business and were willing to carry the plan still further.

Plans also have been under consideration by some of the packers for the separation of their corporations into separate entities somewhat such as the Standard Oil case, in which the various companies, accepted, after the supreme court's dissolution decree.

Attorneys for the "big five" packers were in conference again today with officials of the department of justice. Assistant Attorney General Garvan, with whom the packers' counsel conferred, said there would be no statement until late today, indicating that a settlement might be reached. Attorney General Palmer said, however, no agreement had yet been reached.

WON'T AFFECT THEM.

Chicago, Dec. 18.—Dislocation of the wholesale grocery interests of the "big five" packers would not seriously affect any of them, Louis F. Swift, head of Swift & Co., said today in discussing a report that Attorney General Palmer would announce today or tomorrow an agreement of the packers to dissolve all interests except those involved in production of meat, poultry, butter, and cheese. The meat canning, soap making and fertilizer sidelines would not be affected, Mr. Swift said.

Tanning interests of Swift & Co. were dissolved last summer, when a corporation known as National Leather was formed.

Of the other members of the group known as the "Big Five," Wilson & Co. announced some time ago that it had disposed of its branches of industry affiliated with the wholesale grocery business, and Armour and Company several weeks ago announced that they were arranging a plan looking to segregation and separate financing of its more than 100 subsidiary properties.

"I know nothing about a statement that the packers intended to make here, because of assurance that the government would win its dissolution suit against the United States Steel Corporation," Mr. Swift continued. "I have never heard of any such statement. I am unable to comment upon the effect this decision or agreement will have upon foodstuff prices. Whether they will be decreased or go still higher, remains to be seen."

"This decision probably means that the packers must discontinue their wholesale grocery interests. The dislocation of these interests will not seriously affect Swift & Co., nor any of the packers, for these interests are comparatively small."

"Since the reported decision enjoins dealing in food commodities other than the products of animals, the meat canning, soap making and fertilizer sidelines cannot be affected."

"Swift & Co. already have dissolved their tanning interests. Of course, the announcement cannot affect the individual stockholders who may elect to buy in the organizations which will be formed out of the dissolutions."

WILL BE DISPOSED OF.

Chicago, Dec. 18.—A dozen or more important side line industries of the Chicago meat packers involving investments of many millions of dollars will be disposed of under the stipulated decree soon to be entered in the United States court at Washington on motion of Attorney General Palmer.

While representatives of the packers today declined to discuss the details of the decree under which the packers in the future will be required to confine the business activities to the production of meat, poultry, butter, eggs and cheese, it was learned from an authoritative source that the outline of the plan had been agreed upon.

Among the lines of business from which it is said the packers will be ordered to withdraw under the stipulated court decree are the following: Leather, canned fruits and vegetables, soap, cleaning powders, groceries, fertilizers, cold storage, fish, refrigerator cur lines, cereals, gins, sporting goods and the control of stock yards.

Representatives of the packers expressed the view that under the proposed plan they might continue to manufacture soap and fertilizer as they are natural products of the meat packing industry. Some doubt was expressed as to whether the packers would be permitted to continue to produce an animal product.

One purpose of the proposed reorganization, it is said, is to prevent the packers from engaging in the whole sale grocery business.

Swift & Co. already has segregated its South American and Australian meat business, its fruit and vegetable canning industry and its manufacture of leather. Wilson & Co. recently disposed of its wholesale grocery lines to a New York firm.

Later Mr. Swift in a formal statement, said: "Referring to the decree in question, Swift & Co. have already made a dissolution of their leather business as well as the ownership of Libby, McNeill & Libby (a fruit and meat canning subsidiary), and also their packing house business in South America and Australia, and have been anticipating something of the kind for some time. Our earnings will not be unfavorably affected as the lines prohibited have not been especially profitable. It will give us more available cash capital for the real meat business and its allied products."

ARE CONTINUED IN COURT TODAY

Charges of Conspiracy to Limit Coal Production Before Grand Jury.

Indianapolis, Ind., Dec. 18.—Investigation of charges of conspiracy against miners and operators to limit coal production in violation of the Lever act, were continued in federal court today. The federal grand jury summoned by United States District Judge A. B. Anderson was in session most of the day yesterday, but there was nothing to indicate what progress had been made.

Only a few witnesses were in the courtroom, mostly operators and coal dealers. Neither officials of the government or the witnesses would venture an opinion on the probable outcome of the investigation.

WILL HEAR PALMER.

Washington, Dec. 18.—The senate committee investigating the coal situation will hear either tomorrow or Saturday Attorney General Palmer's explanation of the basis of the agreement which ended the strike of Cummins miners and resulted in the resignation of Fuel Administrator Garfield.

Mr. Palmer was in Chicago when the committee decided to hear him and he immediately cancelled his speaking engagements in Little Rock and Oklahoma City, where he was to speak on the high cost of living.

LESS THAN 50 PER CENT.

Pittsburg, Pa., Dec. 18.—Due to the failure of some miners to return to work, the fact that the number of mines are not in condition to be operated, coal production in the Pittsburg district has not yet reached 50 per cent of normal, according to a statement issued today by the Pittsburg Coal Producers' Association.

LEGISLATION ON SUGAR SET BACK

Protracted Opposition Debate Postpones Senate Vote on House Amendments.

Washington, Dec. 18.—Sugar legislation received another setback in the senate today when advocates of the bill to extend federal sugar control and licensing during 1920 were unable, because of protracted opposition debate, to bring to a vote the house amendments broadening the powers proposed for the United States sugar equalization board.

Senator Harrison, democrat, Mississippi, again sought senate concurrence in house amendments to the bill when the senate convened, hoping for a vote before the railroad bill came up, Senator Ransdell, democrat, Louisiana, led the fight against the house amendments in the debate that followed which prevented a vote held the floor during the entire hour and a half allotted by unanimous consent for consideration of the bill.

Managers of the sugar bill planned to send it to conference and were doubtful of its enactment before the proposed holiday recess of congress.

In opposing the Stanley motion, Senator Underwood declared some remedy against a nation-wide strike which would tie up transportation throughout the country must be provided. Labor, he said, claims it as a human right to strike, but ignores the right of every man when it insists upon the closed shop. If the right to strike is not to be used as a weapon, Senator Underwood asked what was organized labor's objection to the anti-strike clause.

The sugar legislation, Senator Gay, democrat, Louisiana, asserted had stiffened Cuban quotations and would force the sugar board to buy at inflated prices in the market. He also predicted normal conditions by February 1.

Attorney General Palmer was asked in a resolution passed today by the house to report by what authority he fixed 17 and 18 cents as the price for the Louisiana sugar crop.

Representative Tinkham, republican, Massachusetts, author of the resolution, said living costs had increased \$340,000,000 because of this price fixing.

Objection was made by republicans to an arbitrary price in Michigan of 10 or 11 cents for beet sugar, while the price of the Louisiana cane crop was fixed at 17 cents for yellow clarified and 18 cents for granulated.

"The attorney general has absolute no legal authority to fix the price of any commodity," Representative Tinkham said.

Representative Byrnes, democrat, South Carolina, said private interests offered from 25 to 27 cents a pound for Louisiana cane and that the arbitrary prices of 17 and 18 cents were fixed by Mr. Palmer when the sugar growers asked at what price it could be sold.

I. W. W. CASE TO JURY.

Kansas City, Kan., Dec. 18.—The case of 22 members of the Industrial Workers of the World on trial in federal court charged with violation of the espionage act, went to the jury

"NOW LET'S HAVE ACTION!"



NIGHT SESSIONS IN THE SENATE?

Make Effort to Have Cummins' Railroad Bill Passed Before Holidays.

Washington, Dec. 18.—Night sessions of the senate, leaders said today, probably will be continued in an effort to have the Cummins railroad bill passed before the holiday recess. Anti-strike clauses in the bill, which is framed to meet the requirements of the railroads when they revert to private control, were up for consideration again today, including substitutes offered by Senators McCormick, republican, Illinois, and Jones, democrat, New Mexico, designed along the lines of the Canadian law. The McCormick substitute would prohibit strikes or lockouts of employees until 60 days after decisions by an arbitration board, which would be required to render decisions within 90 days.

From the white house, it was announced that President Wilson's mind was still open on the question of returning the railroads to private control. The announcement was in response to a petition presented by a delegation representing union labor and some farmers' organizations urging that the president delay the return of the railroads for two years.

In opposing the Stanley motion, Senator Underwood declared some remedy against a nation-wide strike which would tie up transportation throughout the country must be provided. Labor, he said, claims it as a human right to strike, but ignores the right of every man when it insists upon the closed shop. If the right to strike is not to be used as a weapon, Senator Underwood asked what was organized labor's objection to the anti-strike clause.

CAUSES OF FIRE ARE SOUGHT FOR

Four Buildings Burned at Picatinny Arsenal—Five Men Injured.

Dover, N. J., Dec. 18.—Causes of the spectacular fire which swept over part of the Picatinny arsenal following an explosion in the research laboratory late last night were made the subject of an official investigation by army officers today.

The fire destroyed four buildings, entailing a loss estimated as high as one million dollars. Five men were injured, one possibly fatally, but so far as could be ascertained there was no loss of life. The plant was said to be deserted at the time, save for guards.

The explosion rocked buildings in this town and was heard 40 miles away. Major O. L. Miles, in charge of the plant, summoned volunteer firemen from Walton and Rockaway and manning from the nearby barracks at Lake Denmark. The work of fighting the fire was made hazardous by exploding shells and it was several hours before the flames were brought under control.

TEST ELECTION EARLY IN YEAR?

Great Britain Seeks to Test Country's Confidence in Coalition Cabinet.

London, Dec. 18.—Predictions that a general election will be held in the near future are revived by several newspapers in connection with rumors current in the parliamentary lobbies yesterday. Parliament will be prorogued next week until the second week in February, when, according to widespread belief, the government will immediately prepare for a dissolution of parliament and an election to test the country's confidence in the coalition cabinet.

Members of the labor party, it is stated, are convinced this is the government's intention and are pushing plans to put 400 candidates in the field. The sole plank of the party, it is said, will be the nationalization of coal mines, although one section is asserted to believe this to be a mistake, claiming there was more a better chance in presenting a definite program for social and political reform.

Lobby gossip further attributed to the government a realization of the labor party's supposed mistake and it is said to be satisfied to meet labor on this issue at the polls. In the meantime, the laborites are arranging to stump the country energetically during January in the interest of the nationalization question.

TCHAIKOVSKY HAS AN IMPORTANT POST

New York, Dec. 18.—The veteran Russian social revolutionary, Nicholas Tchikovsky, will arrive in New York from Paris in a week or ten days on his way to Siberia, where he has accepted an important post under the all-Russian government, it was announced today.

For more than two years he has been in the provisional government in Archangel. Tchikovsky, who is about 70 years of age, was the founder of the "Chaikovsky circle," composed of Russian "intelligentsia," whose object is to read and write, spread good books among them and give them the idea of a better social order. The circle, it is said, played an important part in the Russian revolutionary movement of the seventies.

LABOR PROBLEM OF FARMS DISCUSSED

Memphis, Tenn., Dec. 18.—Labor problems confronting the Southern farms and means of holding the negro laborer in the South were among the most important subjects planned for discussion at the annual convention here today of the Southern Alluvial Land Association.

Governor Lowden, of Illinois, who owns plantations in Arkansas and Texas, in addition to his farm land holdings in Illinois, arrived this morning to address the convention at its afternoon session. The morning session was devoted chiefly to the reading of reports.

MONTFAUCON HILL TO BE MONUMENT

Paris, Wednesday, Dec. 17.—Montfaucou Hill, in the Argonne, on which are hundreds of graves of American soldiers, who fell in battle in September and October, 1918, may be made an historical monument by the French government. It is expected that the ruins of the village of Montfaucou, which surround the top of the hill, will be left in their present condition to further commemorate the work of the Americans during the great struggle.

TWO SHIPMENTS OF ARMS SEIZED

Germany Was Sending Guns to Mexico, Officials in Coblenz Learn.

Coblenz, Tuesday, Dec. 18.—(By the Associated Press.)—Two shipments of machine guns and machine gun accessories being sent to Mexico from Germany and discovered in transit across Holland have been held up by the allied military authorities, according to information reaching the American officials here.

The exportation of war material by Germany is a violation of the armistice and peace treaty. The German government has been asked to explain the shipments and notified not to attempt any further exportation of such arms. The first shipment consisted of four carloads of second-hand machine guns, all boxed and ready for ocean transport. This shipment consisted of 2,695 machine guns and, according to Marshal Foch, the guns arrived in Holland on November 25, the sender being the firm of Brockelman and Senetgrun, of Cassel. The consignee was the Johan Munz Arms and Trading Company, of Amsterdam.

A communication to the inter-allied armistice commission at Cologne giving notice of these shipments, says that Marshal Foch has information showing that the shipments had been made across Holland with destination Mexico.

SNOW FLURRIES ARE FORECAST IN SOUTH

Washington, Dec. 18.—Below zero temperatures were registered last night and early today in parts of New York state and New England. The lowest temperature reported to the weather bureau was 22 below at Northfield, Vt.

Zero temperature was registered in New York city; at Boston it was 6 below and at Albany 8 below.

WAR BRIDES? 2,289 ARE ALREADY HERE

New York, Dec. 18.—Two thousand, two hundred and eighty-nine war brides of American soldiers have reached the United States, according to the Young Women's Christian Association, and they represent 16 nations. Eight hundred and ninety-three do not speak English, but approximately half of the total number have trades or professions and are self-supporting.

The grand total includes 1,505 French brides, 428 English, 47 Irish, 43 Belgian and 46 Scotch.

FIUMAN SITUATION TAKES A NEW TURN; PRESSURE EXERTED

Feeling is Running at the Highest Pitch Preparatory to the Plebiscite—Many Soldiers Wish to Remain Until After Formal Annexation is Promised.

Fiume, Wednesday, Dec. 17.—(By the Associated Press.)—Obstacles to the withdrawal of Captain Gabriele D'Annunzio's forces brought about a new turn in the Fiuman situation today and may block acceptance of proposals made by General Baddoglio, Italian chief of staff. Strong pressure is being exerted by a large number of soldiers who wish to remain in Fiume until formal annexation to Italy is promised and there are also various elements of the annexationists waiting stronger guarantees, even insisting that the present garrison be maintained here as a regular Italian garrison under the command of D'Annunzio.

CONFERENCE TO SELECT LEADER

Senate Democrats to Choose Leader to Succeed the Late Senator Martin.

Washington, Dec. 18.—A call for a conference of democratic senators Saturday to select a leader to succeed the late Senator Martin, of Virginia, was issued today by Senator Hitchcock, of Nebraska, who is contesting with Senator Underwood, of Alabama, for the place.

Settlement of the contest between Senators Hitchcock and Underwood is the only business to come before the conference. The outcome was said to be in doubt.

Friends of Senator Underwood intimated today that they might endeavor to postpone a vote until after the holidays when the full democratic membership, including Secretary Glass as the successor of Senator Martin, from San Francisco, is expected to meet. Supporters of Senator Underwood are said to desire disposition of the treaty before the question of endorsing Senator Hitchcock's management of the treaty might not be an issue in the vote for leader.

The action of Senator Hitchcock, who now is vice chairman of the democratic conference, in issuing today's call, was taken by his friends to indicate that he feels confident of having enough pledged votes to insure his election, although a number of democratic senators are not in the city.

The minority leadership contest, according to democratic senators, has become a bitter party issue, particularly in the immediate outcome. Senators Hitchcock and Underwood have differed regarding future procedure, the former opposing a letter of agreement as a last alternative to the plan of Senator Knox, republican, Pennsylvania, to ratify the peace terms of the treaty excepting the league of nations.

Some of Senator Underwood's friends were outspoken in criticizing Senator Hitchcock's call.

"It's an outrage," said Senator Harrison, republican, Ohio, who has been active in behalf of the Alabama senators. "Up to now Hitchcock forces have been urging that the conference be postponed, until after the treaty is settled and also until after the election of 1920. Now they are back in town. There are half a dozen of Mr. Underwood's friends absent now who can not be gotten back in time with this notice of only 48 hours."

A compromise was suggested in some quarters today, proposing that Senator Hitchcock be made leader and Mr. Underwood be promoted to Mr. Hitchcock's present position of vice chairman. Burke county is the democratic conference, a position which would give Mr. Underwood management of many important measures.

HOEY MAJORITY CUT DOWN SOME

Burke Switches Back to Republicans; Lead Now is Around 1,500.

Shelby, Dec. 18.—The official vote in Tuesday's election is still lacking owing to the fact that the returns from Mitchell, Madison, Yancey and Avery are still incomplete, but no revision has occurred to show that Clyde Hoey's majority has been sensationally reduced as some in republican headquarters are attempting to explain. A spokesman of Burke county is practically a standoff, the changes occurring being the estimate that Madison had given Morehead a majority of between 1,000 and 1,100 as against an estimated majority of 900; Yancey, it appears, has fallen to give Hoey the 200 accredited to him while no gains have been made in the following majorities originally given Hoey: Gaston 205; Lincoln 132; Cleveland 1,911 and Mecklenburg 2,162.

The elimination of Burke as a possible majority county for Hoey together with the increase in the Madison majority for Morehead brings about a reduction of about 250 votes from the original estimate which would easily give the democratic candidate a majority of about 1,500.

Mr. Hoey contends that he has won the election by such figures, agreeing with the semi-official returns from the mountain counties, which have received an even break and which give Morehead an increase of about 200 votes in Madison.

ENGLAND-AMERICA AIRSHIP SERVICE?

London, Dec. 18.—A weekly airship service to America is contemplated by a combination of aviation firms, which are credited with the intention of acquiring the famous R-34 and her sister ship, the R-39. These are being altered to meet passenger and cargo requirements.

BILL CARLISLE? JUST A NUMBER

"Hello, Bill"—"Howdy, Cap"—And a Life-Term Was Back in Pen.

Rawlins, Wyo., Dec. 18.—High walls of the Wyoming penitentiary once more shut Bill Carlisle, bandit and train robber, from the world. Early today, a Union Pacific train—one of the kind Carlisle was wont to rob so deliberately—paused here long enough to discharge the bandit and his guards, and they drove up the long straight hill from the depot to the prison, exciting scarcely any attention.

At the door of the prison, Carlisle was met by Warden Brine, from whose custody he had escaped November 15. "Hello, Bill," was the warden's greeting.

"Howdy, Cap," replied the bandit. "That was all, and Bill Carlisle became again nothing but a number and so he is known for the remainder of the life sentence from which he had escaped."

MEXICAN REPLY RECEIVED TODAY

Official Text Differs Only Slightly from That of the Associated Press.

Washington, Dec. 18.—Mexico's reply to the last American note on the case of American Consul Agent Jenkins was received today at the state department. The official text was said to differ only slightly from that contained in Associated Press dispatches Tuesday night from Mexico City.

While Carlisle said they would have no comment to make until they had had time to thoroughly study the note, it was indicated that at first reading the communication had not made a favorable impression.

SOUGHT OBREGON'S LIFE?

San Antonio, Texas, Dec. 17.—Two Mexicans prominent in political affairs have been arrested at Mexico City through the activities of General Benjamin Hill, charged with attempting to assassinate Lieut. Col. Alvaro Obregon, candidate for the Mexican presidency. It is reported here today in dispatches from Mexican newspapers, General Hill recently resigned from the federal army to take charge of Obregon's campaign.

A TENSE SITUATION.

Washington, Dec. 17.—Refusal of President Carranza to permit General Alvaro Obregon, to retire from the army and appear as a civilian candidate for the presidency, has created a tense situation in Mexico City, according to advices today from the Mexican capital.

THE WEATHER.

For Charlotte and Vicinity: Fair tonight and Friday; rising temperature. Gentle to southeast winds.