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THE COMMONWEALTH

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CONGRESS HEARS WILSON'S MESSAGE

President's Address to Both Houses Is Quite Short.

RAIL TROUBLES COME FIRST

Further Legislation on That Line Is Strongly Recommended—Bill Giving Foreign Commerce Promoters Free Hand Necessary.

Washington, Dec. 5.—President Wilson today delivered his message to both houses of congress in joint session. The address was as follows:

Gentlemen of the Congress: In fulfilling at this time the duty laid upon me by the Constitution of communicating to you from time to time information of the state of the Union and recommending to your consideration such legislative measures as may be judged necessary and expedient, I shall continue the practice, which I hope has been acceptable to you, of leaving to the reports of the several heads of the executive departments the elaboration of the detailed needs of the public service and confine myself to those matters of more general public policy with which it seems necessary and feasible to deal at the present session of the congress.

I realize the limitations of time under which you will necessarily act at this session and shall make my suggestions as few as possible; but there were some things left undone at the last session which there will now be time to complete and which it seems necessary in the interest of the public to do at once.

In the first place, it seems to me imperatively necessary that the earliest possible consideration and action should be accorded the remaining measures of the program of settlement and regulation which I had occasion to recommend to you at the close of your last session in view of the public dangers disclosed by the unaccommodated difficulties which then existed, and which still unhappily continue to exist, between the railroads of the country and their locomotive engineers, conductors, and trainmen.

Railway Troubles First. I then recommended: First, immediate provision for the enlargement and administrative reorganization of the interstate commerce commission along the lines embodied in the bill recently passed by the house of representatives and now awaiting action by the senate; in order that the commission may be enabled to deal with the many great and various duties now devolving upon it with a promptness and thoroughness which are, with its present constitution and means of action, practically impossible.

Second, the establishment of an eight-hour day as the legal basis alike of work and of wages in the employment of all railway employees who are actually engaged in the work of operating trains in interstate transportation.

Third, the authorization of the appointment by the president of a small body of men to observe the actual results in experience of the adoption of the eight-hour day in railway transportation alike for the men and for the railroads.

Fourth, explicit approval by the congress of the consideration by the interstate commerce commission of an increase of freight rates to meet such additional expenditures by the railroads as may have been rendered necessary by the adoption of the eight-hour day and which have not been offset by administrative readjustments and economies, should the facts disclosed justify the increase.

Fifth, an amendment of the existing federal statute which provides for the mediation, conciliation, and arbitration of such controversies as the present by adding to it a provision that, in case the methods of accommodation now provided for should fail, a full public investigation of the merits of every such dispute shall be instituted and completed before a strike or lockout may lawfully be attempted.

And, sixth, the lodgment in the hands of the executive of the power, in case of military necessity, to take control of such portions and such rolling stock of the railroads of the country as may be required for military use and to operate them for military purposes, with authority to draft into the military service of the United States such train crews and administrative officials as the circumstances require for their safe and efficient use.

Renews His Recommendations. The second and third of these recommendations the congress immediately acted on: it established the eight-hour day as the legal basis of work and wages in train service and it authorized the appointment of a commission to observe and report upon the practical results, deeming these the measures most immediately needed; but it postponed action upon the other suggestions until an opportunity should be offered for a more deliberate consideration of them. The fourth recommendation I do not deem it necessary to renew. The power of the interstate commerce commission to grant an increase of rates on the ground referred to is indisputably clear and a recommendation by the congress with regard to such a matter might seem to draw in question the scope of the commission's authority or its inclination to

do justice when there is no reason to doubt either.

The other suggestions—the increase in the interstate commerce commission's membership and in its facilities for performing its manifold duties, the provision for full public investigation and assessment of industrial disputes, and the grant to the executive of the power to control and operate the railroads when necessary in time of war or other like public necessity—I now very earnestly renew.

The necessity for such legislation is manifest and pressing. Those who have entrusted us with the responsibility and duty of serving and safeguarding them in such matters would find it hard, I believe, to excuse a failure to act upon the grave matters of my unnecessary postponement of action upon them.

Not only does the interstate commerce commission now, in its present membership and organization, to perform its great functions promptly and thoroughly, but it is not unlikely that, if I may presently be found advisable to add to its duties still others equally heavy and exacting. It must first be perfected as an administrative instrument.

The country cannot and should not consent to remain any longer exposed to profound industrial disturbances for lack of additional means of arbitration and conciliation which the congress can easily and promptly supply. And all will agree that there must be no doubt as to the power of the executive to make immediate and uninterrupted use of the railroads for the concentration of the military forces of the nation wherever they are needed and whenever they are needed.

This is a program of regulation, prevention and administrative efficiency which argues its own case in the mere statement of it. With regard to one of its items, the increase in the efficiency of the interstate commerce commission, the house of representatives has already acted; its action needs only the concurrence of the senate.

For Control and Operation. I would hesitate to recommend, and I dare say the congress would hesitate to act upon the suggestion should I make it, that any man in any occupation should be obliged by law to continue in an employment which he desired to leave. To pass a law which forbade or prevented the individual workman to leave his work before receiving the approval of society in doing so would be to adopt a new principle into our jurisprudence which I take it for granted we are not prepared to introduce. But the proposal that the operation of the railroads of the country shall not be stopped or interrupted by the concerted action of organized bodies of men until a public investigation shall have been instituted which shall make the whole question at issue plain for the judgment of the opinion of the nation is not to propose any such principle. It is based upon the very different principle that the concerted action of powerful bodies of men shall not be permitted to stop the industrial processes of the nation, at any rate before the nation shall have had an opportunity to acquaint itself with the merits of the case as between employee and employer, time to form its opinion upon an impartial statement of the merits, and opportunity to consider all practicable means of conciliation or arbitration.

I can see nothing in that proposition but the justifiable safeguarding by society of the necessary processes of its very life. There is nothing arbitrary or unjust in it unless it be arbitrarily and unjustly done. It can and should be done with a full and scrupulous regard for the interests and liberties of all concerned as well as for the permanent interests of society itself.

Other Legislation Urged. Three matters of capital importance await the action of the senate which have already been acted upon by the house of representatives: the bill which seeks to extend greater freedom of combination to those engaged in promoting the foreign commerce of the country than is now thought by some to be legal under the terms of the laws against monopoly; the bill amending the present organic law of Porto Rico; and the bill proposing a more thorough and systematic regulation of the expenditure of money in elections, commonly called the Corrupt Practices Act. I need not labor my advice that these measures be enacted into law. Their urgency lies in the manifest circumstances which render their adoption at this time not only opportune but necessary. Even delay would seriously jeopard the interests of the country and of the government.

Immediate passage of the bill to regulate the expenditure of money in elections may seem to be less necessary than the immediate enactment of the other measures to which I refer, because at least two years will elapse before another election in which federal offices are to be filled; but it would greatly relieve the public mind if this important matter were dealt with while the circumstances and the dangers to the public morals of the present method of obtaining and spending campaign funds stand clear under recent observation and the methods of expenditure can be frankly studied in the light of present experience; and a delay would have the further very serious disadvantage of postponing action until another election was at hand and some special object connected with that election might be thought to be in the mind of those who urged it. Action can be taken now with facts for guidance and without suspicion of partisan purpose.

I shall not argue at length the desirability of giving a freer hand in the matter of combined and concerted effort to those who shall undertake the essential enterprise of building up our export trade. That enterprise will

RUMANIANS LEAVING BUCHAREST

(By United Press)

Paris, Dec. 7th, (Noon) The Rumanians are evacuating the city of Bucharest in good order, and retreating in order to save the army. This is the authoritative statement from headquarters today.

The Rumanian rear guard is being forced strenuously by the Austrian-Teutonic troops, but are holding positions in order to cover the retreat of the main army.

Petrograd, Dec. 7.—The Russian army is covering the left flank of the Rumanian army in its retreat from Bucharest.

BRITISH PARLIAMENT ADJOURNS UNTIL TUESDAY

(By United Press)

London, England, Dec. 7.—The House of Commons adjourned until next Tuesday morning without making any announcement concerning the formation of the new cabinet under the leadership of the new premier, David Lloyd George.

\$100,000,000 BOND ISSUE FOR FEDERAL FARM LOANS

(By United Press)

Washington, D. C., Dec. 7.—It is announced today that the government will authorize an issue of one hundred million dollars in a bond issue shortly after New Year's in connection with the plan to finance the Federal Farm Loan Act, the plan being today discussed and will take concrete shape before Congress adjourns.

ENGLAND'S PREMIER RESIGNS

Government Crisis Causes Excitement

London, Dec. 7.—Herbert H. Asquith tonight resigned the British Premiership which he had held through eight stormy years of domestic and foreign history, and the government crisis found a solution which has been considered the least probable of practical alternatives.

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* The Judges of the Santa Claus Letters will be announced in our next issue.
* Tuesday, December 12th, which will be our Christmas Special Edition
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presently, will immediately assume, has indeed already assumed, a magnitude unprecedented in our experience. We have not the necessary instrumentalities for its prosecution; it is deemed to be doubtful whether there could be created upon an adequate scale under our present laws. We should clear away all legal obstacles and create a basis of undoubted law for it which will give freedom without permitting unregulated license. The thing must be done now, because the opportunity is here and may escape us if we hesitate or delay.

Porto Rico Needs. The argument for the proposed amendments of the organic law of Porto Rico is brief and conclusive. The present laws governing the island and regulating the rights and privileges of its people are not just. We have created expectations of extended privilege which we have not satisfied. There is uneasiness among the people of the island and even a suspicious doubt with regard to our intentions concerning them which the adoption of the pending measure would happily remove. We do not doubt what we wish to do in any essential particular. We ought to do it at once.

There are other matters already advanced to the stage of conference between the two houses of which it is not necessary that I should speak. Some practicable basis of agreement concerning them will no doubt be found and action taken upon them.

Inasmuch as this is, gentlemen, probably the last occasion I shall have to address the Sixty-fourth congress, I hope that you will permit me to say with what genuine pleasure and satisfaction I have co-operated with you in the many measures of constructive policy with which you have enriched the legislative annals of the country. It has been a privilege to labor in such company. I take the liberty of congratulating you upon the completion of a record of rare serviceableness and distinction.

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More Shopping Days Until Christmas



CONGRESS TO INVESTIGATE HIGH FOOD PRICES

Washington, Dec. 7.—Members of Congress think that a Congressional investigation should be ordered so that a report can be made and legislation enacted to remedy existing conditions. They do not believe that an inquiry by the Federal Trade Commission will be quick enough to do any good this session of Congress.

Representative Adamson, chairman of the Interstate Commerce Committee of the House, declared that the embargo bills referred to his committee would not be called up by him.

"If those bills wait until I call them up they will wait a long time," said he. "I am against every sort of an embargo. Perhaps some friend of the measures will try to get the Fitzgerald bills up, but I have not been notified of any such intention on the part of any member of the committee."

Two resolutions, calling for investigations of foodstuff prices, were introduced in the House and one embargo bill in the Senate.

Representative Edmonds, of Pennsylvania, presented a resolution for an embargo on food carrying ships when the haul foodstuffs after they have reached a certain price in this country. The limits fixed by him are \$1.50 for wheat, 50 cents for oats, \$1.25 for rye, \$1 for corn and \$1.25 for potatoes. Mr. Edmonds would investigate to ascertain the cause of the high cost of living.

THE ARABIA CONTENTION

(By United Press)

Washington, D. C. Dec. 7.—12:45 p. m.—Germany has set up a contention in answer to the note of the American Government, concerning the submarining of the steamship Arabia, that she was a troop transport, and admitted sinking her under that impression. At the same time Germany agrees to immediately draw up appropriate apologies if the United States can show that the vessel was an ordinary liner rather than a transport, in which event Germany would be willing to make reparation of a character agreeable to the United States.

When questioned, Secretary Lansing refused to state what the administration would do, and what further course was possible to compel a compliance of international law.

In the state department it is privately stated that the Arabia case was the main issue upon which the relations between the United States and Germany hinge.

There is an undercurrent of intense excitement at the foreign office, as some domestic action is liable to be taken by the American government unless Germany instructs her commanders to observe international law as pointed out in the last note sent to Germany through the American Ambassador in Berlin.

Washington, Dec. 8.—Corrupt practice legislation, the Owen bill to limit expenditures by any political party for election of President and Vice-President to \$400,000 and to further restrict expenditures for election of Senators and Representatives was made today the unfinished business of the Senate. Senator Owen said he would press the bill at every possible opportunity.

WESTERN UNION VOTES TO GIVE BONUS TO EMPLOYEES

Those Receiving Less Than \$2,000 A Year Will be Benefitted

New York, Dec. 8.—Directors of the Western Union Telegraph Company at a special meeting, voted a bonus to employes receiving less than \$2,000 a year—seven per cent of their annual salary to those receiving less than \$1,200 and 6 per cent to those receiving between \$1,200 and \$2,000. Messengers will receive \$25 each.

The resignation of W. H. Baker, secretary of the company, was announced, Andrew F. Burleigh, was appointed his successor.

BRITAIN REFUSES COAL TO NEUTRAL SHIPPING

Washington, Dec. 8.—Curtailed ports is threatening far-reaching effects on American shipping and while representations have been made to Great Britain by the State Department, it is realized here that it may be difficult to secure any alleviation of the constantly tightening restrictions imposed by the British authorities.

Officials point out that the right to coal at foreign ports is based almost entirely in international comity, and that treaty pledges in the present instance are not of the nature to make the case entirely clear.

Great Britain's inability to guarantee bunker coal to any vessel not utilizing it "in such a way that British or allied interests are benefitted was announced today in a statement by the British embassy in the form of a memorandum drawn up in London.

The announcement is the first public expression, officials say, of a policy which has in fact been in operation for sometime, and which has brought forth protests by this country in several cases. Many American ships have been refused coal, it is declared, and consequently held up for some three days to a week with a resulting heavy loss to their owners.

BELGIANS DEPORTED TO GERMANY

(By United Press)

London, Dec. 7.—The latest reports received with regard to Belgian deportations by the Germans show that the process is steadily on in the provinces and the taking of the unemployed is expected to begin immediately in Brussels.

Deportations from Antwerp have become methodical with 4,000 men under orders to present themselves every day at the railroad station. Of this number up to the middle of November, slightly under 6,000 had been sent to Germany from the city of Antwerp alone, not including the country districts nearby.

When the men present themselves at the station, the reports say, the Germans make every effort to induce them to sign contracts for work, among the inducements being an offer of wages of six marks daily. Those failing to sign are told that they will receive only three marks and be forced to work in the camps. Married men who sign receive an advance of forty marks and single men 20 marks and are allowed to go home for two or three days before starting. They are also promised that they will be sent to Liege or Longwy if they sign.

Despite strong pressure, most of the Belgians have refused to sign. Those presenting certificates of employment in general are released but those without certificates are placed on trains and sent to Germany. More than 100 men employed in a guano factory were sent to Germany in one contingent some of the workers being more than 50 years old.

In the provinces the men are placed in single file; those selected are told to go to the right, and those released are told to go to the left.

Many were so stunned or so bewildered that they failed to do as directed but as their cards contained no indication that they were released if they happen to turn to the right, they went to Germany.

'REMEMBER THE MAIL MAN'

Special Facilities Wanted to Handle the Mail

Washington, Dec. 8.—Requests from postmasters all over the country for extra allowances to provide special facilities for handling Christmas mail indicate that this year's holiday mailings will far exceed all prior records. The postmasters in nearly every case say the increase has already begun and that local prosperity guarantees a rush by the middle of December that will test the capacity of their postoffices to the limit.

In every practical way the department is co-operating in preparing offices to meet the Christmas demand. The prospect is that the unprecedented task to be put upon the parcel service this year will be performed quickly and well.

Postmaster General Burleson, however, again urges the public to "mail early."

"Remember the mail man" is a slogan everyone should keep in mind," said John C. Koons, first Assistant Postmaster General, today. "The clerks in the offices and mail cars and the carriers on the delivery routes should be spared unreasonable and unnecessary burdens. This can be done if the fellow who puts everything off to the last minute is not too numerous. With a little co-operation by the public this year's huge Christmas business will be handled right up to the minute by the postal service."

The Doll to be given away by The Commonwealth to the little girl under eight years of age for the best Santa Claus letter is now exhibited in the window of R. C. Josey and Company.

BRYAN DEFINES HIS ATTITUDE

(By United Press)

Attacks Federal Control of Railroads

MENACE OF MILITARISM

Washington, D. C., Dec. 7.—Reforms to which he hopes to commit the Democratic party and to see accomplished within the next four years were outlined last night by William J. Bryan at a dinner given in his honor. Nation wide prohibition, he urged as most important, and other causes on his list included woman suffrage by Federal amendment, election of the President by direct popular vote and changes to make the constitution more easily amendable.

"I shall take advantage of the opportunity which this dinner affords," said Mr. Bryan, "to point out a few of the issues which seem to me within the range of accomplishment during the next four years."

"An effort is now being made by the railroads to secure legislative and, if necessary, a constitutional amendment, depriving the states of all legislative power over them, and giving to Congress exclusive control over railroad regulation. The consolidation of all railroad legislation at Washington would not only transfer to the National capital an overwhelming national authority and therefore decrease the efficiency of Federal supervision, but it would bring a railroad influence into the election of every congressman and every senator, as well as intensify the railroads' interest in presidential campaigns.

"We cannot afford to shut our eyes to the menace of militarism as it is now presented in concrete form. A large increase in the number of army and navy officers drawing salaries for life, and trained in a profession which teaches reliance upon the steel blade rather than upon the sword of Truth, tends to substitute false standards of honor for the more peaceful standards that prevail among the producers of wealth."

TORPEDOED STEAMER CARRIED 47 AMERICANS

Madrid, via Paris, Dec. 8.—The Italian steamship Palermo, with 25 Americans on board, has been torpedoed off the Spanish coast.

One sailor, reported to be an American, was wounded by a shell and died in a hospital at Palafrugell, Spain where the survivors were landed. Three others seriously wounded by the torpedo.

Steamer Had 47 American Horse Tenders on Board

New York, Dec. 8.—The Italian steamship Palermo left New York November 15 for Genoa and Spezia, and was last reported as passing Gibraltar on November 28. She carried no passengers but had board 47 American horse tenders. In addition to horses she carried a general cargo.

The ship was armed, it was said here, at the offices of Hartfield, Solari & Company, agents of the Navigation Generale, Italia, owner of the Palermo. She carried two 3-inch rifles mounted aft.

"These guns," said Mr. Solari, "were carried for defense only." Besides 858 mules and 163 horses, the Palermo carried 1,452 cases of trinitrotoluol, a powerful explosive, and tons of munitions and war supplies.

Before the war the Palermo was engaged in passenger service between Naples and Palermo, Italy, and this port.

The busy twelve club met at the home of Miss Ione Kitchen Tuesday while a salad course was served.