

THE WILMINGTON DISPATCH

FULL LEASED WIRE SERVICE

FINAL EDITION

WEATHER FORECAST. North Carolina—Cloudy tonight and Tuesday. Cold Tuesday in extreme western portion.

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WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA, MONDAY AFTERNOON, FEBRUARY 26, 1917.

PRICE FIVE CENTS.

BIG STEAMER, WITH AMERICANS, SUNK

British Get Stronghold From Turks

PRESIDENT APPEALS TO CONGRESS FOR POWER

DEMANDS BIG GUNS TO BACK RIGHTS OF THE UNITED STATES

Times Too Critical For President and Congress to Be at Cross Purposes

NO DECLARATION OF WAR IS SOUGHT

President Details What Has Taken Place and Impresses Seriousness of Times on Congress — Wants Power to Back Up American Rights On the High Seas

Washington, Feb. 26.—President Wilson appeared before Congress at 1 o'clock this afternoon and asked for authority to place the United States in a state of "armed neutrality" to resist the German submarine menace.

Continued invasion of the plain rights of neutrals on the high seas, further sacrifices of American lives and ships, the intolerable blockade of American commerce—almost as effective as if the country were at war—have taken the place of a dreaded "overt act" which was expected to shock the world—and have forced the President into the next step toward war.

President Wilson asking to be empowered to take whatever steps are necessary, which includes the arming of ships, the conveying of merchantmen by war vessels and what other steps are necessary, made it plain again that he wanted peace, but not at the price of American lives and rights, driving the American flag from the seas.

Congress is expected not only to authorize the President to use the armed forces of the country, but also to provide money.

Once before in the infancy of the republic a state of armed neutrality was proclaimed to check "predatory violence" upon American rights in the war between France and England, but it did not result actually in war for the United States.

News of the sinking of the liner, Laconia, with Americans aboard, was received here as the President was on his way to address Congress. Although without details, its grave possibilities added emphasis to the President's words.

Whether armed neutrality will mean war depends on whether Germany realizes that the United States is ready to protect its neutral rights by whatever means are necessary.

With a full realization of the solemnity of the occasion, the President took his action today with calm confidence and the Congress and the country will stand behind him.

The grim-faced body of Senators and Representatives who less than a month ago heard the President pronounce the words which announced a severance of diplomatic relations with Germany—an act which in all the history of first-class nations always has led to war—heard today in tense silence the grave attention the words which carry the American republic a step further in its stand against the ruthless sacrifice of neutral rights and lives—and a step nearer war if it must be.

President Wilson arrived at the Capitol just before 1 o'clock and promptly at that hour, stepped up to the clerk's desk in the hall of the House where both branches of Congress were assembled before him. He spoke as follows:

"Gentlemen of the Congress: I have again asked the privilege of addressing you because we are moving through critical times during which it seems to me to be my duty to keep in close touch with the House of Congress so that neither counsel nor action shall run at cross purposes between us.

"On the Third of February, I officially informed you of the sudden (Continued on Page Eight)

WILSON DECIDES NOW IS TIME TO PRESS FOR ACTION

Summoned Tumult to White House Early and Announcement Then Made

ARMED NEUTRALITY BEFORE OVERT ACT

President Can Wait No Longer On Account of Paralysis of American Commerce

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AWAITING TO ARM.

(By Associated Press) New York, Feb. 26.—If President Wilson is authorized by Congress to arm ships to protect American merchantmen on the high seas, the American Line steamships tied up here will resume sailings as soon as guns can be provided, it was stated by the line's officials here today.

It was also stated that the vessel would sail unarmed if conveyed by American warships.

"Any method which will safeguard the lives of the passengers and crews will be satisfactory to us," an official of the American Line said.

THREE MORE SHIPS IN FROM WAR ZONE

(By Associated Press) New York, Feb. 26.—Two freight steamships, the Falkland, Norwegian, from Manchester, and the Manxman, British, from Genoa, arrived here today after passing through the German submarine zone. The Belgian steamship Escout sailed for an unnamed port in Europe.

FOURTEEN DIED IN AIR FIGHT

Hot German Defensive Fire Brought Down Big Enemy Airship Berlin Reports

Berlin, Feb. 26.—(Via London.)—Fourteen men were killed by the destruction of the French airship reported in yesterday's official communication having been brought down by the German defensive fire. Additional details were given out here officially today as follows:

"The French airship brought down on Friday night was set ablaze by our anti-aircraft fire. It fell in flames near Weislingen, west of Saargemund (in Lorraine). When it landed the ammunition which it carried exploded. The crew, consisting of 14 men, were killed. The damage to the airship does not prevent ascertaining the details of its construction."

YOUNG GLOVER NAMED TO BE A MIDSHIPMAN

(By George H. Manning) Washington, D. C., Feb. 26.—Horace Dale Glover is nominated by Congressman Godwin to be midshipman at the Annapolis Naval Academy for the class which enters this spring. Mr. Godwin has not named the alternates yet.

WOULD EMPOWER WILSON

(By Associated Press) Washington, Feb. 26.—After a conference Chairman Flood, of the Foreign Affairs committee, announced he would introduce late today a bill granting power to the President to arm ships and all other authority necessary to protect those ships.

Back From Brazil.

New York, Feb. 26.—Commander Philip Williams, U. S. N., arrived here today on the steamship Saga, from Brazil, where he had been instructing the Brazilian navy in gunnery. He has been on a leave of absence.

BOTH SENATE AND HOUSE BUCKLING DOWN TO WORK

Last Week Finds Legislature Busy On a Big Calendar

BUT NO CHANCE OF ENDING ON TIME

Southport Advocates of Referendum for Removal of Court House Win Before Committee.

(Special to The Dispatch.) Raleigh, N. C., Feb. 26.—Opening the last week of the session the general assembly today began to make up for some of the time that has been lost in splitting hairs and in talking for some consumption.

The Senate, convening at 10 o'clock, passed more bills than in any four hours of last week, and at 1:45 recessed to meet with the House in joint session at 2 o'clock to elect university trustees, more of a job than usual on account of an additional twenty provided for by a bill passed at this session.

The House did not meet until noon, but had torn off quite a chunk of work, when the time came for the joint session.

Before the House convened this morning a hearing had been held in regard to the Brunswick county referendum, as to the county seat and court house. Before the committee the advocates of a referendum of the question of whether the court house shall remain at Southport, and be remodeled, or moved to Supply or Bolivia won out.

Both houses face the prospect of a week which will tax their working powers, the Constitutional amendments falling utterly in respect to warding off local legislation at the end of the term. No hope is entertained of concluding the session within the constitutional limits of sixty days, and not a few expect to be kept here during the greater part of next week.

LATIN-AMERICA WANTS PEACE

Movement to Bring About Mediation Gets Under Way — United States Left Out

(By Associated Press.) Buenos Aires, Feb. 26.—According to La Nación, the Argentine government is endeavoring to bring about joint action by the Latin-American republics in offering mediation for ending the war.

The United States will not be asked to take part because of its rupture with Germany.

Negotiations with the diplomatic representatives here of other Latin-American republics will be initiated by Argentina, the newspapers say.

TENNESSEE SALOONS AGAIN IN SESSION

(By Associated Press.) Nashville, Tenn., Feb. 26.—The Tennessee legislature reconvened this afternoon after a three weeks recess. There remain forty-one days of the session. In the houses several hundred bills are yet to be acted on.

Two of the most important matters before the Legislature are to be finally disposed of, the anti-pass bill and the bill allowing women to vote in city and presidential elections. Other important legislation includes workmen's compensation bill, Torren's Land Title bill, new scheme of taxation, and bill changing the manner of apportioning educational funds between the common schools and higher state institutions.

GIANT LINER FROM PORT OF NEW YORK IS SENT TO DEPTHS BY GERMAN SUB.

BRITISH CAPTURE KUT-EL-AMARA.

(By Associated Press) London, Feb. 26.—Kut-el-Amara has been captured from the Turks by the British forces, according to a statement in the House of Commons today by Andrew Bonar Law.

The Turks on the Tigris river front are in full retreat towards Baghalla, 24 miles to the west of Kut-el-Amara, says an official statement issued today by the British war department. The fleeing Turks are being engaged by pursuing British cavalry.

Mr. Bonar Law announced that as a result of the operations on the Tigris river front all of the Turkish positions from Sannalyat to Kut-el-Amara have been secured and that the town of Kut-el-Amara automatically passed in to the hands of the British.

SHOT AT OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

Man Awaiting Trial for Murder in Tennessee Killed Today.

(By Associated Press.) Memphis, Tenn., Feb. 26.—John Ward, awaiting trial for the alleged killing of Louis Hooker, of Fishersville, last September, was shot and killed at the court house this morning by Thomas Hooker, brother of Louis Hooker. The shooting occurred at the entrance to the sheriff's office and only a short distance from the criminal court room where the trial was to have started. Hooker walked to the attorney general's office where he surrendered. He declined to make a statement.

MILITARY SCHOOL TRAINING DISCUSSED

(By Associated Press.) Kansas City, Mo., Feb. 26.—Military training in schools thrift among children in schools and the effort of State normal schools to increase their courses of study from two to four years, where subjects before the sub-intendency division of the National Education Association which began its annual convention here today.

Officials said the registration forecasts a large attendance for the National Association Convention at Portland, Ore., June 7 to 14.

GERMAN DESTROYERS BOMBARD.

(By Associated Press) London, Feb. 26.—German destroyers bombarded Broadstairs and Margate early today. One woman and one child were killed and two persons were injured. Two houses were damaged. This announcement was made in the House of Commons today by Sir Edward Carson, first lord of the admiralty.

TO DETERMINE SANITY OF HARRY K. THAW

(By Associated Press) Philadelphia, Feb. 26.—Lunacy proceedings were begun in common pleas court here today to determine the sanity of Harry K. Thaw.

The petition was filed on behalf of Thaw's mother, Ellis Ann Ballard, an attorney, was appointed commissioner and he will sit with a sheriff's jury of six men to pass on Thaw's sanity.

SENATORS HAVE ACT FOR ARMING NOW BEFORE THEM

Judiciary Committee in Session When News of Wilson Visit Told

SUCH ACT WAS THEN BEING CONSIDERED

Fall Resolution to Fore But President's Desire May Be Incorporated Separately

(By Associated Press) Washington, Feb. 26.—When the word reached the capitol that the President would address Congress, the Senate Judiciary committee was in session considering one of the armed neutrality bills proposed by the Department of Justice. It would make it lawful for the President to employ land and naval forces to enforce "any or all obligations imposed by the United States, by the law of nations, by treaties or conventions to which the United States is a party, or by the statutes of the United States."

Senators admit confusion as to just what power the measure would extend. It is probable that the authority the President asks will be embodied in a separate joint resolution.

The resolution introduced Saturday by Senator Fall and now by the foreign relations committee would authorize the President to "instruct" the commanders of the armed vessels belonging to the United States to extend protection to the vessels and property of the citizens of the United States and to seize, take, and bring in port or to destroy if unable to seize any such armed vessels of either of the central powers and particularly of the Imperial German government, which shall have committed or which shall be found threatening to commit depredations on the vessels belonging to the citizens of the United States or contrary to international law, committing or threatening to commit depredations upon other vessels upon which are being conveyed citizens of the United States or their property and also to re-take any ship or vessel of any citizen or citizens of the United States which may have been captured by any such armed vessel of the Central Powers, or either of them."

It also would provide for defense of vessels against search and seizure and, in the event of a declaration of war against the United States or of imminent danger of war before the session of the next Congress, would authorize President Wilson to raise an additional army of 500,000 men.

AMERICAN CONSUL AWAITING PARTICULARS.

London, Feb. 26.—Wesley Frost, American consul at Queenstown, telegraphed the American embassy here today.

"Cunarder Laconia torpedoed 10:50 Sunday night. The hundred and seventy-eight survivors landed. Details lacking but know some missing, one dead.

GOVERNOR HATFIELD PARDONS EMBEZZLER

(By The Associated Press) Fairmont, W. Va., Feb. 26.—Less C. Race, of Cleveland, convicted here on a charge of embezzlement growing out of the failure of the Citizens' Dollar Savings Bank, of Fairmont, and sentenced to serve seven years in the State penitentiary has been pardoned by Governor H. D. Hatfield, according to advices received today from Charleston. Race was convicted one year ago, but he never began his sentence and he will sit with a sheriff's jury of six men to pass on Thaw's sanity.

Americans Among Passengers and Members of the Ship's Crew.

BIG CUNARD LINER, LACONIA, THE VICTIM

Whether Much Loss of Life Is Not Yet Known, Though Scores Known to Have Been Saved—Is Reported Sunk Without Warning.

(By Associated Press.) Queenstown, Feb. 26.—The Cunard Line steamship, Laconia, of 18,099 tons which sailed from New York February 18 for Liverpool, has been sunk.

The survivors of the Laconia are said to number 270. They will be landed tonight.

Left New York, Feb. 18.

New York, Feb. 26.—The Cunard liner, Laconia, sailed from New York on February 18, with 100 passengers, among whom were ten or more Americans.

First cabin passengers totaled 33 and second cabin 42. The crew numbered 216. There were no steerage passengers.

Twenty Americans, all native born were members of the crew of the Laconia.

The Cunard line received confirmation from the British admiralty of the destruction of the Laconia. Americans aboard: Arthur T. Kirby, Bainbridge, N. J.; Mrs. F. E. Harris, New York; P. O. Gibbons, of the Chicago Tribune; Mrs. Mary E. Hoy, of Chicago, and Rev. James Wareing, of New York.

On board were 33 first and 42 second class cabin passengers, among them six Americans. Twenty Americans were in the crew of 216. Eight of her passengers had been transhipped from the Holland-American liner Nydam. There were no steerage passengers.

Officials received confirmation of the vessel's destruction from the British admiralty with the information that one life had been lost. It was not stated whether it was a passenger or one of the crew.

The Laconia carried a large cargo including war supplies, and 5,000 sacks of United States mail, of which 1,300 were to have gone on the American liner, St. Louis.

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