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VITAL QUESTIONS IN BALANCE WHEN BRITISH ENVOYS ARRIVE

Delegation Which Has Just Sailed for United States to Negotiate War Debt Agreement Expected to Bring to Climax Matters Which Have Been Hanging Fire for Several Months.

By DAVID LAWRENCE
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Washington, Dec. 27.—Great Britain's delegation which has just sailed for the United States to negotiate an agreement whereby the rate of interest and the annual payments on the war debt shall be definitely fixed for a period of years will bring to a climax a half dozen vital questions which have been hanging fire for several months.

Representative Mondell, Republican leader, who talked at length today on the question of an economic conference, disclosed after leaving the White House some of the difficulties which stand in the way of negotiating with the allied governments.

"The very people," he said, "who recently were limiting the powers of the debt commission are now loud in their clamor for an economic conference."

In other words, the administration finds its hands tied by the act of Congress which not only fixed an interest rate admittedly too high for the Allies to pay at once but fixed 25 years as the period of payment for the whole debt.

The administration has been considering whether to ask Congress to amend the law creating the funding commission and give that body more flexibility. But to do so might disclose the administration's hand in the negotiations with the foreign governments. To make an agreement with the British delegation, however, and then go to Congress with a request for amendment would not be so satisfactory to the foreign delegates. They have plenary powers. They are accustomed to deal with governments which have the power to do what they say they will. If the agreement has to be thrown into Congress to be debated and possibly delayed unduly while foreign exchange fluctuates from day to day according as the prospects for passage of the agreement go up and down, the British would naturally wait till Congress acted.

The dilemma is one of the most perplexing that has ever faced the American Government. The executive has the power to negotiate agreements with foreign governments which do not commit the United States to certain obligations. If it had not been for the law passed by Congress which specifically requires submission to both Houses there would not be any difficulty. If its broad question really whether the executive couldn't make an agreement anyhow covering the funding of the debt but in the face of what Congress has specified, Mr. Harding will not try it. He will either ask for an amendment to the existing law when it is apparent the negotiations have reached a vital point or he will ask for broad powers before the negotiations begin. In that case he will have to keep the British delegation waiting while plenary powers are obtained from Congress.

The negotiations arise from the fact that when five billions were borrowed by Great Britain, only a promissory note was given in return. That note has now to be converted into bonds with a definite maturity date and a fixed rate of interest. Otto Kahn's proposal that the interest for a few years be deferred altogether or that the rate be made very low at the start and gradually increased, meets with a good deal of favor here.

While very little progress has been made in the negotiations with the French government on the debt question, the feeling prevails that the agreement made with the British will stand as a sort of precedent or example and that when once England and the United States have arranged their debt difficulties satisfactorily, the negotiations with the other governments will be simplified.

Incidentally there is already a good deal of discussion here as to what shall be done with the five billion dollars of bonds to be given to the United States Government by the British. There are those who advocate a refunding campaign whereby these bonds are sold to the public at large by the American Government thus turning into the treasury five billions of dollars with which to reduce some of the liberty loan bonds which now carry a high interest rate than the British bonds would

TWO WOUNDED IN GUN FIGHT

And Town Of Follansbee Is Recovering From Last Night's Terrors

Steuensville, Ohio, Dec. 28 (By The Associated Press)—Joseph Jones, mill worker and Deputy Sheriff Harry Jones of Brook County, West Virginia, lay wounded in hospital and Follansbee, a little town just across the river, was recovering today from the terrors of a gun-battle between Jones and officials last night during which houses were pelted with hundreds of bullets from machine guns, pistols, rifles and riot guns. The fighting started when officers tried to arrest Jones on his wife's complaint that he forced her to sign over her property to him.

MRS. W. R. SMITH DEAD

Mrs. W. R. Smith died Wednesday night at eleven o'clock at the Community Hospital, where she was taken Wednesday morning following a serious illness of two weeks. She was forty-four years old and is survived by her husband; one daughter, Louise; four sisters, Mrs. L. W. Pigott of Norfolk, Misses Nettie, Florence and Mattie Markham of this city; two brothers, T. J. Markham and J. B. Markham of this city.

The funeral will be conducted at the home on Raleigh avenue Friday afternoon at three o'clock by Rev. H. E. Myers and interment will be made in Hollywood.

Lodge and Hughes Talk With Harding

Washington, Dec. 28 (By The Associated Press)—Chairman Lodge of the Senate foreign relations committee was summoned to the White House today and after a talk with the President indicated that Harding probably would send a letter to the Capitol during the day indicating his attitude toward the new economic and disarmament conference plan. Lodge's visit was followed closely by a conference between the President and Secretary Hughes.

Washington, Dec. 28 (By The Associated Press)—The President asked the Senate not to adopt the Borah proposal saying in a letter to Lodge that formal Congressional action now would embarrass him in negotiations he is already conducting looking to such a conference. Just what steps have been taken or are in contemplation was not revealed. Lodge said negotiations for the conference did not include cancellation of the Allied debt.

SEARCH FOR BODY

Gastonia, Dec. 28 (By The Associated Press)—The search is continued for E. J. Eddings, believed to have been burned to death in the Underwood boarding house fire at Bessemer City, which claimed two lives.

Says Misdemeanor Rather Than Felony

Senator Brown Of Seventeenth District Would Amend Baggett Anti-Klan Bill

Madison, N. C., Dec. 28 (By The Associated Press)—Announcement that he would support legislation to make a person appearing off his premises disguised so as to destroy identity guilty of a misdemeanor; to provide aid for the family of an officer killed while lawfully discharging his duties; and to establish uniform traffic laws in the State was made to The Associated Press today by Senator Junius C. Brown, of the Seventeenth district.

"I have never read the bill which Senator Baggett proposes to introduce with regard to the Ku Klux Klan," said the senator. "but I see no reason why a person seen off his premises disguised so as to destroy identity should be declared guilty of a felony, which I understand is proposed in the Baggett measure. I would support a bill making such an offense a misdemeanor. I will present a measure, or an amendment to Senator Baggett's bill, making the offense a misdemeanor rather than a felony."

"I believe that the traffic laws of this and adjoining states should be made uniform in order that owners of motor vehicles may better understand them; that all vehicles operating upon the highways at night should be provided with lights. It can be worked out, and I think it can be. I favor requiring the purchaser of a second hand car to obtain a certificate showing the important facts concerning it, which information could be used in the apprehension of thieves."

Smoker Tonight At Eight O'clock

Tonight at eight o'clock every member of the Chamber of Commerce, accompanied by a friend who is or ought to be interested in his town, is urged to attend a smoker at the Community Building.

One of the matters which the Chamber of Commerce will discuss will be the recent removal of Coast Guard equipment and personnel to Manteo. A good time socially is on the program, as well as matters of vital importance to the growth and betterment of Elizabeth City.

SPORTSMEN DINE AT CHARLOTTE

Movement Inaugurated At Dinner For Statewide Game And Fish Law

Charlotte, Dec. 28 (By Associated Press)—A movement to substitute a State-wide game and fish law in North Carolina for the present system by which the individual counties control hunting and fishing will be inaugurated at a dinner here tonight, to which sportsmen from all sections of the State have been invited.

Plans for fish and game conservation also will be discussed, and Geo. A. Lawyer, chief game warden of the United States department of Agriculture, has accepted an invitation to address the meeting and describe how this is accomplished in other states. Mr. Lawyer will be introduced by Governor Cameron Morrison, who also will deliver an address.

H. H. Brimley, curator of the State Museum at Raleigh and president of one of the largest hunting clubs of the State, is slated as another speaker. John M. Moorehead, of Charlotte, formerly congressman from the Fifth district, and numbers of other sportsmen from this section have taken an active part in plans for the conference.

Preliminary arrangements call for formation of an association the representatives of which will go before the General Assembly in January to urge enactment of a uniform State game and fish law, which would provide for charging hunters and fishermen a nominal license fee. The funds from this would be used to maintain the law and to provide eventually for State game preserves and fish hatcheries.

North Carolina is one of the few states which has not already adopted State-wide laws on hunting, promoters of the movement stated, and with the hunting season opening at different times in various counties much confusion has been caused among sportsmen.

Local and nearby sportsmen have subscribed funds for the dinner, which is to be held at 7:30 o'clock at the chamber of commerce. More than 500 invitations have been mailed, according to Bailey Groome, sporting editor of The Charlotte Observer, who is in charge of reservations.

LAUGHLIN-COBB

Miss Bessie Cobb, daughter of Mrs. Margaret Cobb of this city, and G. L. Laughlin, automobile tire manufacturer of Salisbury, were married Wednesday morning at about 7 o'clock at the home of the bride's sister, Mrs. Jasper Garris, at Norfolk, and left on the 8 o'clock train for Florida and Cuba, where they will spend the months of January and February, after which they will be at home at Salisbury.

IN POLICE COURT

Frazier Miller, in police court Thursday morning, was taxed with the costs for crossing an intersection of highways at a speed greater than ten miles.

SAILBOAT TURNS OVER BUT BOYS ARE GAME

When the sailboat, Seagull, turned over in the harbor here Thursday morning all the boys nearby went rushing to the rescue, but the four boys who had taken the stormy morning for a sail were safely perched on the side of the boat and only one of them so much as got wet. The boys were Mahlan Raper, owner of the Seagull, Harry Rollinson, Sam Lamb and Ebenezer Leary. Stewart Twiddy from Sanders railways went out in a boat and helped the boys right the Seagull, after which they cheerfully sailed home, perhaps wiser, but very little sadder. The Seagull is a surf boat and better fitted to undertake such an experiment than the average sailboat, says Raper.

REX BEACH VISITS CITY

Dramatist Of Open Trail Likes Brant Shooting At Christmas Better Than New York

"Shooting wild fowl on the North Carolina banks is a better way to spend Christmas than staying in New York."

At least that's what Rex Beach thinks of it, for the words just quoted were his own and they were spoken to a reporter for this newspaper in the lobby of the Southern Hotel Thursday morning. But perhaps Mr. Beach is a prejudiced witness. His stories and his love of the great outdoors have won him the title of "dramatist of the open trails."

Mr. Beach became acquainted with the North Carolina Banks twelve seasons ago, and he has been visiting them every season since. Many folks here in Elizabeth City read his story, "The White Brant," in the September Cosmopolitan, because somehow word had got about around the town that Beach had spent the past season on the banks getting the local color for this story. But the author wrote of an island on which there was no jail, on which there were wide stretches of "marsh, devoid of life except for a few head of half wild cattle," and at one end of which was a village "loosely sprawled around and about a high white lighthouse" with "a sandy road that served as a main street," with "weather beaten dwellings set down at random amid luxuriant growths of cedar and of fragrant bay bushes through which meandered many paths and crooked roadways," and of a day of shooting ducks, brant and geese from a battery in the course of which a white brant was saved from a hawk, with an intimacy born of twelve seasons of good shooting along the banks for himself. And all this was, of course, but the background for a love story that had to do with a girl snatched from the claws of a millionaire bird of prey in the nick of time told in typical Rex Beach style.

Though a regular sojourner on the Carolina banks, this was Mr. Beach's first stop in Elizabeth City. Heretofore he had hunted from Hatteras southward. His party went farther northward because of a report that the wild fowl were more plentiful on the more northerly banks this season. "We did not find the wild fowl in their usual abundance," he said, "but we got some good brant shooting just the same." Rex Beach is as big and friendly looking as his pictures with bushy brows that meet over deep set eyes. He has the typical hunter's quickness of motion and the typical New Yorker's quickness of speech. Mr. Beach left for New York on the afternoon Norfolk Southern train Thursday.

TODAY'S COTTON MARKET

New York, Dec. 28 (By The Associated Press)—Bids at 11:45 a. m. today were: January 26.32, March 26.80, May 26.64, July 26.37. Tone, steady.

New York, Dec. 28 (By The Associated Press)—Futures closed today: January 26.47, March 26.69, May 26.69, July 26.42, October 24.66. Spots closed, middling basis, 26.70. Tone, quiet.

NAMED DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAY CONTRACTORS

Richmond, Dec. 28 (By The Associated Press)—Robert W. Woodley of Fairfax, former member of the Interstate Commerce Commission and director of publicity for the Democratic national committee, has accepted a position as managing director of the Virginia Highway Contractors Association. R. B. Allport announced today.

Wholesale Grocery At Charlotte Burns

Charlotte, Dec. 28 (By The Associated Press)—The building and contents of Thomas & Howard Company, wholesale grocers, was destroyed by fire of unknown origin today. The loss is estimated at as high as a hundred thousand dollars.

S. S. ENTERTAINMENT AT CITY ROAD TONIGHT

A Christmas entertainment will be given at City Road tonight for the Sunday school. The hour is 7:30 and Superintendent G. F. Seyffert hopes that the boys and girls will be on hand, with their mothers and dads.

WITH OPEN MIND GOES TO RALEIGH

Senator P. H. Williams Has No Statewide Legislative Program, But Would Amend Charter

Without any pet legislative program and with open mind on many of the proposals for the enactment of laws of State-wide scope, Senator P. H. Williams of the First North Carolina Senatorial District will leave Elizabeth City for Raleigh next week to represent his district in the upper house of the General Assembly.

"I am a new man," said Mr. Williams, "and even such proposals as that to take the State banks under the supervision of the Corporation Commission, creating a new commission to supervise the banks, I do not feel sufficiently informed on to express an opinion. I will say, however, that some of these proposals seem rather radical to me."

"I do plan, however, to offer certain amendments to the charter of Elizabeth City, the most important of these, in my opinion, is one to create a public utility commission for Elizabeth City. I am thoroughly persuaded that such a commission is a necessity for the town that owns and operates its own utilities. I recall, for instance, that at Greenville we found a most capable man indeed in charge of the public utilities. Good men," he said, "were slow to accept a position to operate municipal plants on account of the politics that usually hampered such a man. The Greenville superintendent declared, however, that with the Greenville utilities under a public utility commission, politics had not bothered him."

"The Council's bill proposes a commission of three men elected to serve for terms of from two to six years. In the future only one commissioner would be changed at the time and thus a consistent policy could be formed and adhered to."

"Another amendment to the charter that I expect to propose would prevent a complete change of the personnel of the City Council every two years. This amendment would provide that at the next election the candidate from each ward receiving the highest number of votes would be declared elected for four years. The other candidate chosen from that ward would be declared elected for two years, and at the end of two years and every two years thereafter four new members of the Council would be elected, leaving always four old members to be retained. When the present administration went into office, for instance, seven of the eight members of the Council were new and had dealt with the city's problems in an intimate practical way."

Mr. Williams also spoke favorably of the idea of creating a city planning commission, though he did not go to the length of saying that he would introduce a bill amending the city charter to that end.

NINE MEN ARE KILLED WHEN FORT BLOWS UP

Rome, Dec. 28 (By The Associated Press)—Nine men were killed today when Fort Neartren blew up when the accidental explosion of a shell set off other ammunition. Debris is scattered for miles around.

ARMOUR MAKES STATEMENT

Chicago, Dec. 28 (By The Associated Press)—Armour & Company of Delaware, the new corporation in the Armour string, was organized to acquire from the Illinois company "certain of its properties and assets for the purpose of facilitating the administration and financing of its business," said a statement issued by J. Ogden Armour today.

EXPLOSION INJURES THIRTY

Kansas City, Dec. 28 (By The Associated Press)—More than thirty persons were injured as the result of a dust explosion and fire in the flour mills here Wednesday.

UNEASINESS SPREADS IN CONFERENCE CIRCLES

Lausanne, Dec. 28 (By The Associated Press)—Great uneasiness spreads through conference circles as the time for the final reckoning approaches on unsettled questions between the Turks and Allies.

EXTENDS TIME ONE YEAR

Washington, Dec. 28 (By The Associated Press)—The President has signed a bill extending for one year the time for German and Austrian citizens to sue to recover property seized by the alien enemies.