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POWERS ASKED TO GIVE PEACE TERMS

President Sends Note to All Belligerents.

DISCUSSION BASIS SOUGHT

Action Taken Without Notice Amazes Entente and German Diplomats.

MEDIATION NOT OFFERED

Mr. Wilson Points Out He Is Merely Proposing That Soundings Be Taken.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—President Wilson has appealed to all the belligerents to discuss terms of peace. Without actually proposing peace or offering mediation, the President has sent formal notes to the governments of all the warring nations suggesting that "an early occasion be sought to call out from the nations now at war such an avowal of their respective views as to the terms upon which the war might be concluded and the arrangements which would be deemed satisfactory as a guarantee against its renewal or the kindling of any similar conflict in the future, as would make it possible frankly to compare them."

Action Taken Without Notice. Wholly without notice and entirely contrary to what Administration officials have described as his course, the President last night dispatched the notes to all the belligerents and to all the neutrals for their information. Summarized in the President's own words as contained in the notes, his attitude is as follows: "The President is not proposing peace; he is not even offering mediation. He is merely proposing that soundings be taken in order that we may learn, the neutral nations with the belligerent, how near the haven of peace may be for which all mankind longs with an intense and increasing longing. He believes that the spirit in which he speaks and the objects which he seeks will be understood by all concerned, and he confidently hopes for a response which will bring a new light into the affairs of the world."

Notes Possibly at Destination. This latest development in the rapidly moving world events toward a discussion of peace was not permitted to become known until tonight when the notes were well on their way to the American Ambassadors in the belligerent capitals and probably already in the hands of some of them. It was a most distinct surprise to all official Washington, which had been led to believe that with the formal transmittal of the proposals of the Central Powers the offices of the United States would await further moves between the belligerents themselves and that certainly, in view of the speech of Premier Lloyd George and the announcements in Russia, France and Italy, further action by neutrals would depend upon the next careful and delicate moves of the belligerents.

Peace Prospects Improved. The whole tenor of official opinions throughout Washington, when the President's action became known, was that it immeasurably improved the prospects for some sort of exchange looking toward an approach to peace discussions between the belligerents without impairing the position of the United States should they finally be unable to find a good ground on which to approach one another. At the White House no statement whatever could be obtained as to whether any of the powers even had intimated how they would receive the note, and there was every indication that the same careful secrecy which had prevented anything whatever becoming known about the President's action until it had been taken, would surround any of the succeeding moves.

British Embassy Surprised. Nowhere on the surface appears any indication of the history-making events which diplomats generally are convinced must have transpired

CHRISTMAS BONUS PLAN STRIKES CITY

SEVERAL BIG CONCERNS WILL REMEMBER EMPLOYEES.

Pacific Telephone Company, Standard Oil, Southern Pacific, General Electric, Among Several.

Seven hundred Portland telephone girls will have for Christmas a present of added salary from the Pacific States Telephone & Telegraph Company. All employees of the company, 1300 in number, will receive a like bonus. Those in service from three months to one year will be given two weeks' salary and those employed more than one year will get three weeks' salary.

The Standard Oil Company announces that beginning January 1 the employees of the Standard will all go on an eight-hour basis. Employees who work by the day and whose wage is less than \$2 will be advanced to \$2. Those paid by the month whose salaries are less than \$75 will be raised to that figure. All other employees will receive an advance of 5 per cent in salaries. This will affect several hundred employees.

The Southern Pacific Company will give a bonus of 10 per cent of salaries for the year to employees whose pay for the year, including the bonus, will be \$2500 or less. Several hundred railroad workers in Portland will benefit.

The General Electric Company employees in this city will receive a bonus of 10 per cent on the month's earnings, confined to those who earn \$2500 or less a year. Until further notice another 10 per cent bonus will be added to each monthly pay check. The Northwestern National Bank will hand each employee \$25 with wishes for a merry Christmas. The Hibernia Savings Bank will make the usual presents to all on its staff.

The Portland Gas & Coke Company will give each of its men a box of cigars and each girl a box of candy.

BRITAIN MAY BE BONE DRY

Absolute Prohibition of Manufacture and Sale Said to Be Decided.

LONDON, Dec. 21.—The newspapers learn that the government is preparing measures for the future control of the production and sale of alcoholic beverages, which may go as far as absolute prohibition. It is stated from one source that it has already been decided that the manufacture and sale of whisky in Scotland will virtually be prohibited, and that this is likely to be followed by a similar step in England and Wales.

As regards Ireland, it is said that the government, from the first of January, will take over the Irish distilleries for the manufacture of munitions.

CONVICTS TO VISIT HOMES

North Carolina Governor to Parole Trustees for Holidays.

RALEIGH, N. C., Dec. 20.—So they may spend Christmas at home, "trustees" in North Carolina prisons and prison camps will be paroled for three days beginning Sunday by Governor Craig. The convicts will be required only to give their word of honor that they will return to the prisons by noon, December 27.

Governor Craig last Christmas paroled more than 800 prisoners under similar conditions and all reported to the authorities at the time designated.

MAYOR'S GAVEL IS MISSING

Relic of Dozen Years Mysteriously Disappears for First Time.

An old mahogany gavel which has been wielded at Council meetings by every Mayor in the last 12 years has mysteriously disappeared from the Council Chamber. The relic was missed yesterday at the regular Council session. Apparently it has been stolen. The gavel was installed prior to the administration of Mayor Harry Lane and has been on the job ever since. This is the first time it has disappeared.

NEW MACHINE GUN TESTED

Weapon Throwing 3000 Projectiles a Minute Worked Electrically.

VALEJO, Cal., Dec. 20.—A centrifugal machine gun, said to throw 3000 projectiles a minute at an initial velocity of 4000 feet a second, was tested by naval authorities here today. The initial velocity of the Army rifle is 2000 feet per second.

The centrifugal gun is operated wholly by electricity.

CHINA TO REMAIN NEUTRAL

Rumor of Preparations to Join Entente Denied.

PEKIN, Dec. 20.—Hsia Yi Ting, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, appeared before the lower house of Parliament today and answered a rumor that China was preparing to join the entente. He declared that China absolutely was not considering entering the European struggle and that she would maintain the strictest neutrality.

TREATY RATIFIED BY DANES

Folkething Passes Bill for Sale of West Indies.

COPENHAGEN, via London, Dec. 20.—After a single reading the Folkething today passed the bill ratifying the treaty for the sale of the Danish West Indies to the United States. The vote was 90 in favor of and 16 against ratification. Five members were absent.

LONDON LIKELY TO REPLY THIS WEEK

Answer to Berlin Proposal to Be Rushed.

WAY FOR PEACE LEFT OPEN

Note Expected to Make Direct Offer of Terms Possible.

UNITED ACTION EXPECTED

Lloyd George's Speech to Be Followed in Main—Desire Is to Dispatch Note Before Christmas—All Allies to Act.

LONDON, Dec. 20.—There is a strong probability that Great Britain's reply to the German peace proposal might be made before Christmas. This was the opinion in well-informed government circles today, where it is also believed the reply will be brief and will likely follow the lines of Mr. Lloyd George's maiden speech as Prime Minister, insofar as it will leave the door open for Germany to make concrete peace proposals.

Great Britain's official reply to Germany, as prominent officials preferred to term it, will be dispatched simultaneously with that of her allies.

Note Cause of Many Councils.

Ever since the German note was handed to the Foreign Office by the American Ambassador it has been the subject of discussion between Premier Lloyd George and his cabinet council, which meets daily. The note and the nature of the reply also have been discussed with Great Britain's allies and it is stated that these conversations have progressed so rapidly that preliminary drafts have already been made.

It would, therefore, not be surprising if the allies' reply were ready by the end of the week. Especially, it is said, would this be true in the case of Great Britain's note, which the Prime Minister is declared to be anxious to dispatch without delay.

Note May Be Sent Direct.

When the terms of the note are definitely agreed upon and the document is signed by Lord Robert Cecil, who is acting Foreign Secretary in the absence of Mr. Balfour, it may be handed to Ambassador Page with the request that he forward it to the State Department at Washington for transmission to Germany. This is said to be the most likely method, inasmuch as the United States represents the allies' interests in Germany.

It is just possible, however, that Great Britain may desire to dispatch the reply direct to the British Ambassador at Washington, with instructions to turn it over to the State Department. A dispatch to Reuters' Telegram Company from Zurich says information (Continued on Page 17, Column 4.)

STORMS AND WRECK HOLD BACK MAILS

ROTARY SNOWPLOWS BUSY IN EASTERN OREGON.

Meacham Is in Grip of Storm and Is Scene of Derailment, Tying Up Traffic Several Hours.

LA GRANDE, Or., Dec. 20.—(Special.)—Storms in the East and two boxcars off the track at Meacham tied up transcontinental traffic this morning several hours.

Mail trains from the East are an average of 12 hours late each day, and are again tonight, but a stub train is being run into Portland as No. 13 tonight. The Meacham trouble was righted after about six hours and traffic was running normally again by noon except for trains which come to the division late from the East.

A seven-inch snowfall in Eastern Oregon necessitated the presence of two rotary snowplows on the mountain tracks most of last night and this morning.

PENDLETON, Or., Dec. 20.—(Special.)—With three feet of snow on the ground and snow still falling, Meacham is in the grip of a heavy storm. The storm started yesterday and continued throughout last night.

A small freight train wreck at Meacham caused a delay of many hours in east and westbound trains. Several inches of snow fell at Pendleton last night and this morning, but was melted by a rain this afternoon. The wet snow here caused many telephone and electric light wires to break under the weight.

GUARDS' PEOPLE TO GET AID

Appropriation for Families of Soldiers Ready for President.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—An urgent deficiency appropriation bill, carrying approximately \$4,500,000, was passed today by House and Senate and sent to the President for approval.

It provides \$4,250,000 for dependents of National Guardsmen engaged in Mexican border service, \$210,000 for the Philadelphia, \$17,000 for the Denver, and \$25,000 for the San Francisco units, and \$45,000 for the New York Assay Office.

ADAMSON MEASURE WAITS

Attempt to Continue Newlands Committee Delayed by Holidays.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—Attempt to obtain action on the Adamson resolution to extend the life of the Newlands railroad committee, now investigating all phases of the railway situation, until January 7, 1918, were abandoned today.

They will be taken up after the holiday recess of Congress.

JAPAN DOUBTS SINCERITY

Foreign Minister Motono Says Reply Will Await Consultations.

TOKIO, Dec. 20.—Viscount Motono, Foreign Minister, today told members of Parliament that he believes the German peace proposal lacked sincerity and that Germany does not really desire peace.

He added that Japan's reply to the proposal would be made after consultation with her allies.

TILTS ARISE OVER MILITARY SYSTEM

Charge of Inefficiency Rouses Congress.

SHARP CONTROVERSY LOOMS

General Scott Says Little Is Expected of New Order.

RECRUITING COST CITED

Members of House Committee Declare Men Refused to Enlist Because of Assurance They Would See No Active Service.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—Sharp controversy in Congress over the future of the National Guard in the Federal military system was foreshadowed today at hearings before committees of both the House and Senate.

Major-General Hugh L. Scott, chief of staff of the Army, encountered vigorous cross-examination by several members of the House military committee when he touched upon results of the mobilization of the state troops for border duty as shown in the General Staff report. Conclusions drawn from the figures to support the contention that the guard system is inefficient and unreliable were questioned.

47,000 of 95,000 Report.

When General Scott before the House committee quoted from the mobilization report to show that out of an enrolled strength of 95,000 men in certain units of the Guard, called for border duty, only 47,000 actually were available for the Federal service, Representative Anthony, of Kansas, asked whether it was fair to judge the National Guard system on a mobilization of what was in reality the old organized militia. Representatives Hull and Greene joined in this view.

"Is it not a fact," insisted Representative Greene, "that neither the National Guard nor the regular Army as contemplated by the National defense act of 1916 was in existence when the border call came?"

New Plan Regarded Dubiously. General Scott admitted this was true, as the act did not go into effect until after the call was made.

He reiterated his opinion, however, that completion of the new organization would produce little better results.

Representative Tilson, of Connecticut, who commanded a Guard regiment on the border, asked if the order that men with dependent families be discharged was "not enough to disorganize any military organization." "That order was issued by the Secretary of War and I cannot discuss its merits," General Scott said. He explained later that the Secretary issued

MAYOR SEIZES CAR OF COAL FOR POOR

DIRE NECESSITY IS GIVEN AS REASON FOR ACTION.

Prosecutor to Be Asked Whether Coal Is Being Shipped Out to Keep Up Prices.

DES MOINES, Dec. 20.—By order of Mayor MacVicar today the police here seized a carload of coal in the yards of the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad. The Mayor announced that the coal was to be delivered to the poor. The Mayor informed the railroad and the owners of the coal that it had been seized "by virtue of dire necessity and in accordance with the law."

A check paying for the coal at the prevailing wholesale rate was mailed to the coal company. Mayor MacVicar, in a statement, said he would place in the hands of the County Attorney for presentation to the grand jury evidence which, it is alleged, points to a combination on the part of the mine owners to ship coal out of Polk County with the purpose of maintaining high prices here.

NEW WORK TRAIN MODEL

Western Union Linemen Will Travel With Every Convenience.

EUGENE, Or., Dec. 20.—(Special.)—Linemen in the employ of the Western Union Telegraph Company in Western Oregon will travel and live in Pullman cars in the future. The old work cars have been discarded. The new model work train put into commission on the Coos Bay branch of the Southern Pacific system consists of a sleeper, a smoker, a car fitted with a bathroom, reading-room and lavatories, a dining car and a car fitted up for the use of the foreman of the crew.

U-BOAT SINKS BATTLESHIP

French Man-of-War Suffers Victim of Submarine Attack.

BERLIN, via London, Dec. 20.—A German submarine torpedoed and sank the French battleship Suffren, according to an official statement given out tonight. The statement reads: "One of our submarines sank on November 25 by a torpedo an enemy ship of the line northwest of Lisbon. It was the French battleship Suffren, reported lost with the entire crew by the French Admiralty on December 8."

TEMPERATURE IS VARIED

Thirty-Four Below Zero Recorded in North; 78 Above in South.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—A storm over the Mississippi Valley played havoc today with temperature normals. While it was 34 below zero at Devil's Lake, N. D., the temperature at Galveston, Tex., mounted to 78 above, the highest December reading on record.

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TODAY'S—Occasional rain; southerly winds.

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MASKED ASSASSIN SHOTS MAIL CLERK

Nathan Hankin Called to Door of Home.

BULLET FRACTURES FOREARM

"Your Time Has Come," Says Intruder as He Fires.

POLICE INVESTIGATE CLEW

Door Is Slammed Shut in Face of Assassin, Who Fires Through Wood and Hits Mark—Off-Made Threats Reported.

Nathan Hankin, an employee in Post-office Station E, at Fifth and Gilliam streets, was shot last night in his home at 1312 East Fifteenth street North by a masked assassin who called Mr. Hankin to the door and announced that he had come to kill him. Mr. Hankin tried to close the portal in the assassin's face, and the man fired through the woodwork. The shot took effect in Mr. Hankin's right forearm. He was sent to the Good Samaritan Hospital by Motorcycle Patrolmen Gouldstone and Bales. Dr. L. O. Roberts, 1395 Union avenue North, attended him.

"Your Time Has Come," He Says.

Mr. Hankin, whose wife is visiting in Australia, was playing a phonograph when his assailant knocked on the back door of the house. Mr. Hankin says the man was masked with a white handkerchief.

"Your time has come," Mr. Hankin says the intruder threatened as the door opened. The police found the mark of a .32-caliber bullet in the door. After the shooting Mr. Hankin walked to the home of P. F. Morton, 1308 East Fourteenth street North, and the Mortons called the police and a physician.

Clew to Assassin Followed.

The bullet is believed to have broken his arm, although the shot did not pass entirely through the limb. The police say Mr. Hankin has been threatened with violence before. Detectives Mallet and Price early last night were on the trail of a man they believed connected with the shooting.

The only possible clew to the identity of the assassin so far discovered by the police lies in Mr. Hankin's statement that he is at odds with some of his relatives. Mr. Hankin says he did not recognize his assailant, and has no reason to believe that any acquaintance of his was concerned in the shooting.

Mr. Hankin has been separated from his wife about a year. Mrs. Hankin has their two children with her.

Half-Policed Record on Machine.

The police carefully scrutinized the premises where the shooting took place and found that each of Mr. Hankin's assertions regarding the shooting was borne out by the evidence.

On the phonograph, which he said he was playing when he heard the knock on the door, was a half-played record, "God Save the King." The bullet hole in the door ranged slantwise, indicating that the door was partly shut when the shot was fired.

Bridgroom of Day Attacked.

Two men were seen running from the neighborhood of the house about the time of the shooting, and the police are trying to obtain a description of the fugitives to see if either corresponds with the meager description given by Mr. Hankin.

James Rinehart, 1312 East Fourteenth street North, reported that two men had thrown pepper in his eyes and robbed him of \$20 at East Fourteenth street and Alnsworth avenue, near the scene of the attempted killing. Mr. Rinehart was married only last night, and was returning to his bride, when the alleged hold-up occurred. The police are dubious concerning his story.

COAL MEN ASK PROBE

Famine Is Possibility in Chicago, Say Dealers.

CHICAGO, Dec. 20.—Following a series of conferences Chicago coal dealers, facing a possible coal famine, today announced that an appeal for an inquiry into the local situation had been made to the Federal Trade Commission.

Railroad men and coal dealers asserted today that they saw some relief for the shortage, which seriously handicapped the heating of some of the larger buildings in the city, in the fact that coal had begun to move into Chicago again from the West Virginia fields.

GUARD IN MIDNIGHT MASS

Celebration at Camp Wilson to Be First of Kind Since Civil War.

SAN ANTONIO, Tex., Dec. 20.—Midnight mass in a military camp will be celebrated at Camp Wilson here on Christmas eve for the first time in this country since the Civil War, it is said. The seventh Illinois Infantry, from Chicago, is composed mostly of Roman Catholics, and the Rev. Father A. O'Hearn is chaplain. Bishop Shaw granted the dispensation for the service.

