WAR FRAUD CHARGES DIFFICULT TO PROVE

Stir Caused by Republicans Declared Boomerang.

SITUATION IS MAGNIFIED

Proof of Looting Government Has Not Been Found Sufficient in Many Cases Probed.

BY MARK SULLIVAN.

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WASHINGTON, D. C., April 18.—(Special.)—It is difficult to arrive at a clear judgment on the merits of the charges that the administration has lacked diligence in the prosecution of claims against some war contractors. In the nature of the case, each one of the suits includes such a mass of detail that no one person can arrive at a fair judgment about the merits of it without weeks of investigation. Nevertheless, a person who moves about Washington from day to day acquires certain impressions.

As to some of these charges, it is a case of chickens coming home to roost with the republicans. During the campaign in 1920 the republican spellbinders made the heavens ring with charges that the democrats in their conduct of the war had been guilty of extravagance, incompetence and even fraud. These charges were accompanied by declarations of intention, direct or implied, to put a lot of persons in jail, and now the new administration is accused of negligence.

People Demand Action.

Some of these charges during the campaign made a particularly strong impression in certain communities in which the corporations or others accused were prominent. As a result, there have been cases where local republican leaders have complained that the party would lose caste in their communities unless something were done to make good on the charges made during the campaign.

To this sort of pressure the republican administration does not respond. Neither President Harding nor Attorney-General Daugherty is the sort of official who would prosecute a man or a corporation for political motives or under political pressure. The consequence is that there appears to be a discrepancy between the charges the republicans made during the campaign and the prosecutions they can see their way clear to making now.

Charges Are Exaggerated.

The answer, of course, is that there was not so much fraud, or even so much unnecessary extravagance, in the management of the war as the republicans made out when they were trying to win the election on that issue. Any person who wants to be fair about the management of the war by the party which happened to be in power when it occurred should remember one fixed principle. Time and money are equivalent. In peace money is to be saved at the expense of time, but in war, money is nothing and time is everything.

An engineer whose career had been in civil life, once told me the hardest thing he had to learn when he entered the army during the war was that money never should be considered if the prodigal spending of it would save time. It was the reversal of fundamental principle that had been drilled into him in his peace-time training.

Expense Is No Object.

On the roads leading to the front when long lines of automobiles were carrying up supplies, if a tire burst and if you could scrap the entire automobile in the ditch and open the road in five minutes less time than you could repair the tire, then the quick thing was the right thing, however more expensive it might seem. This principle went through the entire conduct of the war, all the way from the front line back to the factories in America.

When a war is costing two or three million dollars an hour, almost any expense that will end it a day earlier is justified. In short, much of what seems to our peace-time judgment to be wanton waste was justified and wise when the war was on. Undoubtedly in the midst of this haste—this desperate finding of the quickest way—there may have been here and there some chicanery and some advantage taken of the government.

Situation Is Magnified.

But it was by no means so great as the public was led to believe by the charges the republican spellbinders made during the campaign. All this was explained in that indignant "hell and Maria" speech which George Dawes made to a congressional committee investigating charges of waste and fraud in the management of the war.

As you move about Washington, you learn that there are all sorts of queer motives for some of these charges. Back of a part, at least, of the charges against the management of the alien property custodian's office is a motive on the part of the German owners, or on the part of sympathizers of the German owners of the property that was taken over. These owners want to get that property back.

There are hundreds of millions of dollars in litigation and any sentiment that can be built up to the effect that the original German owners were treated fraudulently or otherwise wrongfully would be of help in the present effort to get the property.

Protection Not Extended.

The fact is the present republican management of the alien property custodian's office has gone over the past transactions with a fine-tooth comb and has found nothing more reprehensible than large fees paid to some democratic lawyers.

No one person can be familiar with all the cases; so that it is dangerous to make generalizations, but it will be difficult to convince any well-balanced person that anybody is being improperly protected against suit. Any person familiar with the mechanism of the government at Washington is pretty sure to come to the belief that outright cheating of the government is close to impossible. The government is slow and the government is incumbered with red tape, but the government is honest and it is painstaking and it very rarely fails to get all of its own.

Pull With Government Nil.

Many persons distant from Washington who have business with the government have a grotesque and entirely wrong notion of the value of pull. They pay big fees to lawyers who think they have some sort of inside track, when, as a matter of fact, they would do better to send their own local lawyers, who are familiar with the facts in the case.

It would be difficult to find an instance in which pull counts in a financial or legal transaction with the United States government. Occasionally lawyers of the political sort who are known to have political or personal associations with men in the government will, by adroit implication, capitalize that connection. But in all such cases it is the client and the outsider who loses and not the government.

Successful Frauds Rare.

It is pretty nearly certain that the legal affairs of the government are looked after slowly, to be sure, but with minute fidelity to the government's interest. The government's operations as a business institution are frequently costly, because they are carried on slowly and through red tape, and with all the complexities of checks and balances inherent in government as distinguished from private business. But the cases of successful, willful fraud against the government are so rare as to be almost negligible.

DAUGHTER OF TENOR HEADS "IRENE" COMEDY COMPANY.

Patti Harrold.

"Irene," the vivacious musical comedy which has broken many records for attendance, will pay a return visit to Portland and will be seen at the Heilig theater tonight, tomorrow and Saturday. This time it will be presented by what is called the New York company, which is headed by Patti Harrold, whose reputation is partly due to the fact that she is the daughter of Orville Harrold, the famous grand opera tenor, but more particularly because she played the name part in "Irene" in New York city at the Vanderbilt theater for 65 consecutive weeks. The other members of the cast, while not always the originals, were also in the company for long periods during the time "Irene" remained in the metropolis.

Cleanliness and entire absence of suggestiveness are the keynote of the success of "Irene" and are doubtless the reasons why it continues to draw such large houses on its second and even third and fourth reappearances.

SEMENOFF IS OUT OF JAIL ON BONDS

Cossack Chieftain Greeted by Jeering Thousands.

BOMB THROWING FEARED

Crowd Howls When Friends of Russian Hurry Into Prison With $25,000 in Currency, Bonds.

NEW YORK, April 19.—A demonstration, typical of his turbulent Russia, greeted General Gregogie Semenoff, Cossack chieftain, as he left Ludlow-street jail late this afternoon. Released on $25,000 bail, furnished by his friends, the Cossack ataman, surrounded by a detachment of the police department's bomb squad, appeared at the jail door and cringed into his coat collar as the jeers of thousands fell uuon his ears.

Ludlow street was black with the crowd, which had stood in a driving rai for several hours awaiting Semenoff's release. When his friends, accompanied by the sheriff, hurried into the building, carrying $20,000 in currency and $5000 in liberty bonds, the crowd sent up a howl and moved closer to the entrance.

Police Fear Bomb Throwing.

Extra details of police were ordered to preserve order. Hundreds of persons stood on roofs of tenements and hung on fire escape ladders. They were driven off by the police, who feared bomb throwing.

Semenoff, who has been called the "stoneheart" and accused of murdering American soldiers, betrayed nervousness as he descended the jail steps. He kept close to his guards and quickened his step as the crowd, breaking through the police line at one point, gathered around a taxicab at the curbing.

He entered the cab, accompanied by several policemen and his friend George Kroupsky, his former military aide in Siberia, and was whisked away.

Soldiers Prefer Charges.

General Semenoff was arrested here two weeks ago in connection with a civil suit involving the theft in trans-Bakalia in 1919 of goods valued at $475,000 the property of the now bankrupt Youroveta Home & Foreign Trading company. In the meantime members of the Siberian expedition of the American army preferred charges against him in Washington, claiming that hecaused the murder of soldiers in the American expedition.

BORAH REACHES NEW YORK

Senate Committee to Investigate Charges Against Semenoff.

NEW YORK, April 19.—Senator William E. Borah, chairman of the senate committee investigating the charges against General Semenoff, arrived here tonight.

He said that three persons here had communicated to him certain information bearing on the case and that he had come to interview them.

"Their information is important, if true," he added. The senator expects to return to Washington tomorrow night.

HEATHEN IDEAS PERSIST

Tahitians Converted to Christianity More Than 100 Years.

PAPEETE, Tahiti.—Many remnants of old heathen beliefs persist among natives of Tahiti, despite the fact that Tahitians have been converts to Christianity for more than 100 years.

Fishermen still firmly think that their success or failure in securing a large catch depends upon the favor of the fisherman's god, represented by a stone carved in the form of a fish and deposited in some cave in the nearby hills. It is said by the natives that if this figure is pointed with its head in, the fish will be plentiful around the barrier reef. If, however, some evid-disposed person should turn the head toward the sea, the fishing grounds will be barren.

Residents Promote Beach Road.

SOUTH BEND, Wash., April 19.—(Special.)—The residents of the lower end of Pacific county have subscribed $6000 to apply on a road which will be built from McGowan, a ferrying point opposite Astoria, on the Columbia river, to the famous North Beach district along the ocean. This road is being built under the Donohue road bill. The county will appropriate $60,000 for the road, the road distict will give $30,000, and $24,000 will be directly assessed against property within two miles on either side of the road. Most of it will be bitulithic paving. This road will be used by thousands of autoists who come over from the Oregon side to visit the beach. Washington tourists come down the Ocean Beach highway from Chehalis.

Dr. Hicks Is Honored.

SPOKANE, Wash., April 11.—Dr. W. C. Hicks of Seattle, direcor of Americanization of the Washington department of the American Legion, has been named a member of the legion's national commission on Americanization and Washington state chaplain of the United States veterans' bureau for the 13th district, he announced here today.

Rancher's Dwelling Burns.

CHEHALIS, Wash., April 19.—(Special.)—Lucien Gumm, a rancher whose home was a mile north of Evaline, lost his dwelling and most of the contents by fire Tuesday. He was engaged in boiling wax for grafting trees, when the pot boiled over and started the blaze. Mr. Gumm had lived near Evaline 35 years. The loss was $500, with no insurance.

Rotary Club Elects Officers.

CENTRALIA, Wash., April 19.—(Special.)—The Centralia Rotary club at its weekly luncheon yesterday elected the following new officers for the coming year: Alva Heaton, president; George Ellsbury, vice-president; Dave Monfort, secretary; Robert Edmisson, treasurer, and John Wonderly and Earl Colson, directors. They will be installed on May 3. Arthur Haight is the retiring president of the club.

Stock Prices Low at Sale.

CHEHALIS, Wash., April 19.—(Special.)—At a neighborhood sale of livestock held by Colonel C. E. Payne, auctioneer, yesterday at Evaline, 17 cows averaged only $45 each. A 22-month-old Jersey bull of inferior breeding sold for $20. A grade Holstein that will freshen soon topped the sale at $69. No one would bid on a small work horse. Two hogs were bid in by the owner. S. W. Porter, R. K. Owens and Charles F. Conradi were owners of the stock offered.

Farmers' Petition Denied.

THE OREGONIAN NEWS BUREAU, Washington, D. C., April 19.—Secretary of War Weeks today denied the petition of a group of farms living adjacent to Camp Lewis for permission to graze their stock on the military reservation. The secretary of war said Camp Lewis was one of the few posts affording sufficient area for the training of large bodies of troops and that it was important that it be kept ready for such use.

Student Leaders to Visit College.

OREGON AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE, Corvallis, April 19.—(Special.)—Lyle Bartholomew, president of the University of Oregon student body, accompanied by Helen Carson, secretary, and Floyd Maxwell, editor of the Oregon Daily Emerald, will be guests at the student body meeting here Wednesday. The university student body president will speak to the assembly in regard to the friendly relations existing between the university and the college. This is the first of a series of exchange visits between the officerse of the two student bodies.

Aged Aberdeen Woman Dead.

ABERDEEN, Wash., April 19.—(Special.)—Mrs. Frank Johnson, 79 years old, died at her home, 400 North F street, Monday night. The funeral will be held Sunday from the Whiteside chapel. Mrs. Johnson was born in Sweden, but had resided here 28 years. She is survived by her husband and two stepsons, residing here.

Body Taken to Reedsport.

ABERDEEN, Wash., April 19.—(Special.)—The body of George H. Butler, 70 years old, who died Monday morning, was taken to Reedsport, Or., where funeral services and interment will take place.

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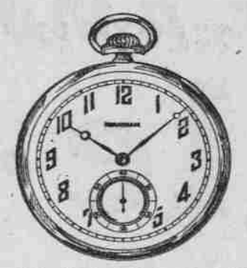

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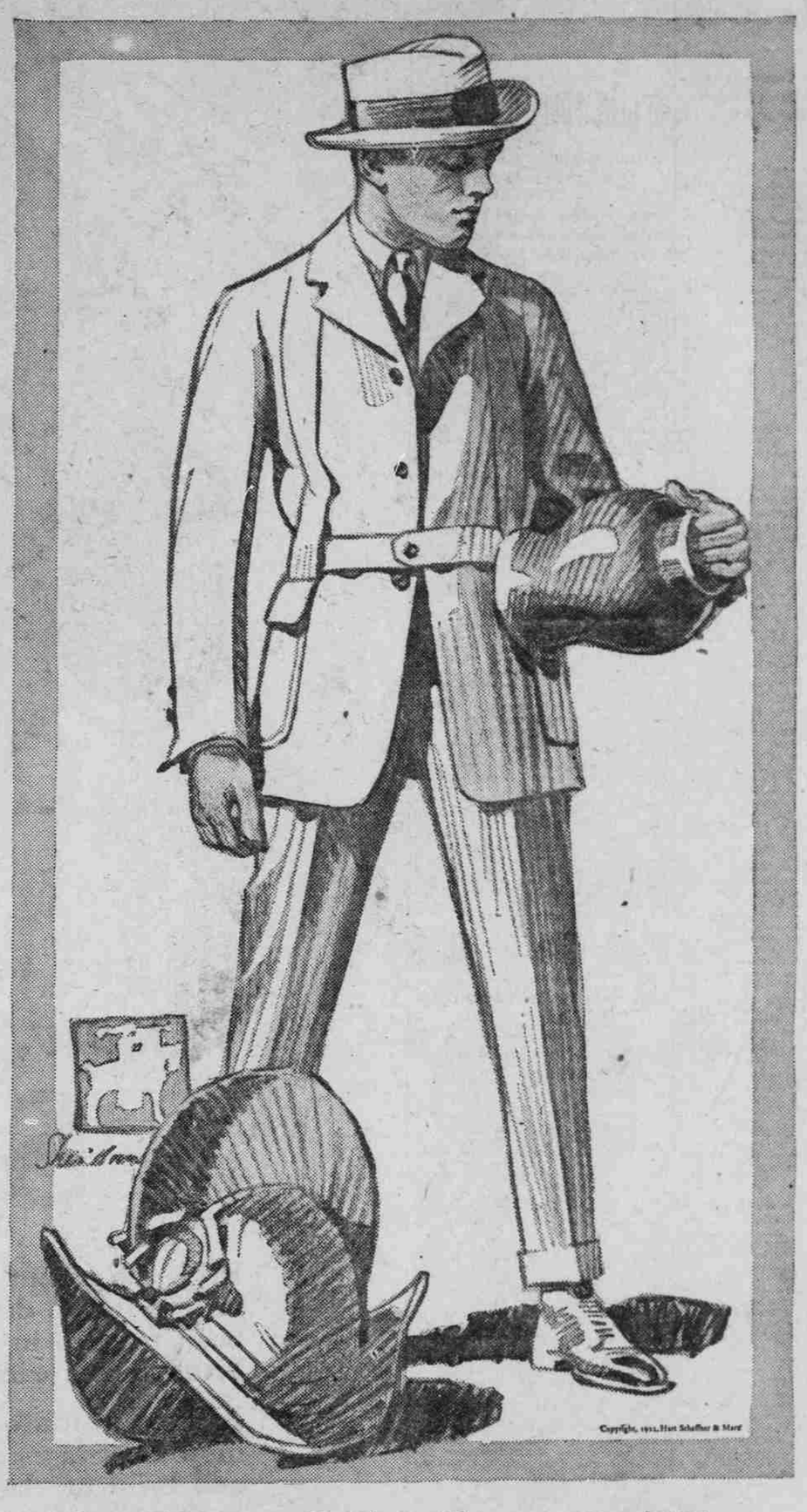

The Hart Schaffner & Marx
NORFOLK

IT'S new; short high lapels; fairly straight front; easy drape and fit This is the season for sport clothes; this is one of the smartest styles

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Hart Schaffner & Marx Clothes Shop—Wash. at W. Park