

REDFIELD FAILS TO INVESTIGATE CAUSE

Eastland Tragedy Investigation Dropped After Farcical Probe.

WHITEWASH FREELY USED

Only Government Inquiry Is for Purpose of Preventing Punishment of Federal Officers Whom Coroner's Jury Blamed.

(Continued From First Page.)

were not biased, but who were competent.

Public sentiment, backed by Federal Judge Kenesaw Landis, finally drove Secretary Redfield from Chicago, but when he departed, the Federal inquiry was dropped, and it has never been resumed.

Secretary Redfield, after returning to Washington, promised a "searching investigation into the entire steamboat inspection service," but that promise has not been fulfilled.

All that came of the Redfield investigation was a report which, summed up the investigation, was not prepared at this time to express an opinion as to who is to blame, nor what agencies contributed to the capsizing of the steamer Eastland.

The Redfield board, which made that report, has never held another meeting; there is no prospect that it will again be called together. In that one sentence is given the full result of what the President promised would be an investigation "thorough enough to satisfy the public and to bring to light the cause of the disaster."

Some Changes Recommended. It is true the Redfield board did recommend certain changes in the steamboat inspection laws—changes that, if authorized, tend to avert similar disasters in the future.

But neither Secretary Redfield nor President Wilson pressed that legislation before Congress during the extraordinary long session of the Congress, and the steamboat inspection laws are today just what they were when the Eastland turned over.

The seaman's law has since become operative, but that law was passed more than a year ago, and there has been no legislation since then, and so far as the law is concerned, there is no adequate Federal safeguard today to protect the public.

Experts Not in Charge. After viewing the Eastland, as she lay on her side in Chicago River, Secretary Redfield summoned inspectors from the Milwaukee to conduct the investigation he had ordered, but when the investigating body convened, it was not one of the local inspectors, but a man who was not competent to pass as an expert.

Responsibility Never Fixed. The Eastland went down more than a year ago; to this day no competent expert has determined the cause; the responsibility has never been fixed; the guilty have not been punished; the accused Government inspectors are still in the employ of the Government.

It was on Saturday morning, July 24, that more than 2500 happy women and children were on board the Eastland as she lay at her dock in the Chicago River. They had no fear, for the vessel had been many times inspected by Government officials and pronounced both safe and seaworthy.

Among shipping men the Eastland was known as the "Gink of the Lakes." But the public knew naught of this; the Government inspectors, presumed to look after her safety, had pronounced the vessel safe and sound, otherwise she would have had no license to carry passengers.

As the crowd on that fine morning boarded the Eastland the ship began to lean toward midstream; as the crowds on her deck saw the ship lean more and more; her toppling was observed by river men, and was recorded in her engine room; it could not have come unnoticed by the crew.

But no effective effort was made to right her; half her water-ballast compartments had long since been abandoned by the crew because the valves could be operated only with great difficulty. And so, in the presence of her full complement of officers and crew, the Eastland leaned and leaned, until she lost her balance, and toppled over on her side, precipitating into the Chicago River the thousands of passengers who were not trapped between decks.

Out of the 2500 who were aboard only 1500 escaped, and 2000 were drowned in the heart of the great metropolis of the Middle West.

Department Often Warned. When the Eastland disaster occurred Secretary Redfield was in Northern New York on his vacation. Assistant Secretary Sweet was in charge of the Department of Commerce in Washington. Secretary Redfield, acting in his own jurisdiction, secured indictments by the county grand jury of the men named in the coroner's jury verdict, and in announcing the result declared they had done their duty as set forth in the Federal statutes, and could not be held to blame, and that, therefore, the grand jury was without jurisdiction to take cognizance of the Eastland.

Probe Is Quashed. All this time United States District Attorney Cline was proceeding with a Federal grand jury investigation and had given evidence in the coroner's jury verdict. He had done so far by way of exonerating those under suspicion, and particularly trying to whitewash Assistant Secretary Sweet, who was in charge of the department. To stand up there and argue that the Eastland was seaworthy and that his Federal inspectors had done their duty was to bring into being on its side in the Chicago River was enraging.

"It came out here while we are mourning over our dead and we are everything was all right and no one to blame; that his inspection service was above reproach and that we were mistaken, after the President had ordered a thorough investigation, was enough to make us lose our self-control. I am in favor of recalling the coroner's jury and making a special re-

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SCHOOL BOARD REPLIES CHARGES OF MRS. ALEXIA ALEXANDER ARE DENIED. Mrs. Alexia Alexander was elected to the roster of the school department subject to transfer to positions paying more or less a month than the one she began with, asserts the School Board.

Special Suggestions for A Soldier's Use of Benetol. While in Camp.—You will need Benetol for countless minor troubles. Your hands will become sore, your back will ache from unaccustomed exercise in your early training days.

Benetol products are sold by all druggists. If you experience any difficulty in procuring your Benetol, simply enclose the price and write direct to The Benetol Company, Benetol Bldg., Minneapolis, Minn., U. S. A.

Benetol Preparations Sold by All Druggists as Follows: BENETOL 1-ounce bottles in red cartons, \$1.00; 2-ounce bottles in red cartons, \$1.50; 4-ounce bottles in red cartons, \$2.00; 8-ounce bottles in red cartons, \$2.50; 16-ounce bottles in red cartons, \$3.00; 32-ounce