

# SEC. DANIELS URGES MORE FLYING MACHINES FOR UNITED STATES NAVY

**SAYS EUROPEAN WAR HAS DEMONSTRATED THEIR NECESSITY AND CUT OFF SUPPLY ORDERED FOR AMERICA—VALUE OF SUBMARINES DOUBTFUL.**

(By Associated Press to Coos Bay Times.)

WASHINGTON, D. C., Dec. 12.—Startling successes of submarines in the European war have not swayed United States navy officials from their belief that all-gig-gun battleships of the dreadnought type form the main dependence of any sea power. The construction of two such ships next year was recommended by Secretary Daniels in his annual report submitted today to President Wilson. The Navy General Board urged the building of four.

The complete building program for the coming year recommended by Secretary Daniels comprises:

Two dreadnoughts, six destroyers, eight or more submarines, one to be a large, sea-going craft and the others of smaller size for coast defense operations; one gunboat and one fuel oil ship.

If this proposed program is followed out, Mr. Daniels says, "the increase will be noteworthy and will give us a well-rounded navy, equal, if not superior, to that of any navy in the world, ship for ship and man for man."

Secretary Daniels' program, he states, follows the policy of the General Board recommendations but reduces the number of ships of each class asked for. The board recommended the construction of the following as the 1916 program:

Four dreadnoughts, sixteen destroyers, three sea-going submarines, sixteen coast defense submarines, four scout cruisers, four gunboats, two fuel oil ships, one destroyer tender, one submarine tender, one navy transport, one hospital ship, one supply ship and a \$5,000,000 appropriation for navy air craft. The board was acting on its policy looking to the completion in 1919 of a fleet, the main line of which would be 48 battleships. In its report transmitted by the Secretary, it is stated that the present situation of the battleship fleet is ten ships behind that program, the total of those in commission, under construction and authorized for completion in 1919 being thirty-seven.

Submarines come in for extended discussion by the Secretary and the General Board. "Recent developments in naval warfare," Mr. Daniels says, "have strengthened faith in the efficacy of the submarine. The department urges, therefore, the construction of an increased number of submarines and the larger utilization of this weapon of warfare which has demonstrated its effectiveness. There are many (very many more than a few weeks ago) who believe the time has come when the advice of Sir Percy Scott should be taken. Months ago that able English officer declared that the submarine was the most effective ship of the navy of the future and advised a cessation in the rapid construction of dreadnoughts and the utilization of the money thus spent in building large numbers of submarines. The lay mind has accepted this view of the policy, but the trained naval officers making up the general board are convinced that, while the submarines have a large part to play in naval warfare, they do not replace the large craft. These naval statesmen hold to the opinion that the dreadnought remains the central and chief fighting force of a well-proportioned navy."

"The General Board reiterates the opinion it has always held that command of the sea can only be gained and held by vessels that can take and keep the sea in all times and in all weathers and overcome the strongest enemies that can be brought against them." It declares other types are valuable and have their particular uses but "the backbone of any navy that can command the sea consists of the strongest sea-going, sea-keeping ships of its day, or, of its battleships."

"The department feels that it is upon safe ground in looking to the Board to prescribe the character of the ships to be constructed. The large increase in submarines is most desirable, but nothing in the present war has disproved their faith in the modern dreadnought. The fact that there has been no encounter between these powerful ships does not justify the conclusion that their further construction should be discarded in favor of the smaller craft which has astonished the world by its ability to sink cruisers and other craft, giving its severest and most fatal blow before its presence is discovered. It may be that naval engagements later on will teach lessons that will change expert opinion, but as long as the bulk of the ablest naval officers believe the increase of the navy should em-

brace, in fair proportion, the dreadnought, the destroyer, and the submarine, the Secretary would not feel warranted in recommending a widely different program of construction.

"However, in view of the demonstrated power of the submarine, I would impress upon Congress the importance of making a larger increase in the submarine craft, appropriations for other craft. The estimates for these were reduced to the minimum.

That our navy has not neglected the construction of submarines will be seen by a comparison of our strength in this craft with that of foreign navies. It is roughly estimated that there are built or building for the various navies the following number of submarines: England, 84; France, 76; United States, 51; Germany, 31; Japan, 17. This estimate was made in July of this year.

"When the relative sizes of the fleets of the great nations enumerated above are considered, it will be seen that the United States has a submarine flotilla relatively and actually very powerful. England's fleet is more than twice as great as ours, yet she has but little more than half as many more submarines. France has a considerably larger submarine fleet than ours, with a smaller navy, but she has in the past taken the lead in submarine building. Some years ago she abandoned the dreadnought policy to acquire large numbers of submarines, but in the last two or three years has made unusual exertions to repair her deficiency in dreadnoughts. England has overcome this lead, and we are on that road, having in addition to the 51 ships already mentioned 8 or more authorized by last year's bill, on which work will shortly commence, and we are asking for eight or more this year, which will swell out total to at least 67 in the next three years. Germany, with a larger fleet than ours, has less submarines, and Japan, with a fleet smaller than our in strength, only half as many submarines.

"What we have done, however, in submarine construction is but a part of what must be done in the future. When we shall have a division of sea-going submarines in commission, we will have added to the battleship fleet a strong fighting unit which must be of large importance in any over-sea operations.

"As far as the submarines themselves are concerned, it is believed that ours are on a par with any in the world. In the appropriation made by the last Congress two types for the first time were included—one of high surface speed, to accompany the fleet, and one for coast and harbor defense. In the building of two such distinct types we are in accord with what foreign countries are doing, and submarine flotillas in the future will probably be composed of vessels of these two types.

Of aviation the Secretary says: "Air craft have demonstrated in the present war in Europe that no military army is complete which lacks them. They will not replace vessels of war, but will extend the field of operations to the air as well as on the surface of and underneath the water. They provide the best means for discovering submarine mines, and have now become an indispensable naval adjunct.

"We are but in the infancy of aircraft. The development in the manufacture of these craft in this country needs to be stimulated, and the success of this arm of the military service abroad will be a mighty stimulus to American manufacturers.

"Orders were given, early in the year, for some foreign built aeroplanes, in addition to larger orders for aeroplanes made in this country. Unfortunately, the war made it impossible for the orders placed abroad to be filled, and the trial of such craft must be postponed. The best types of American manufacture have been ordered, and the department will develop this modern branch of the naval service steadily and rapidly."

The General Board does not take the same view. Its report refers to its recommendations in 1913 which "brought to the attention of the department the dangerous situation of the country in the lack of air craft and air men in both the naval and military services. At the present time, the total number of air craft of any kind owned by the Navy consists of twelve aeroplanes, not more than two of which are of the same type, and all reported to have too little speed and carrying capacity for service work.

"In our present condition of unpreparedness, in contact with any foe possessing a proper air service, our scouting would be blind. We would be without the means of de-

tecting the presence of submarines or mine fields or of attempting direct attack on the enemy from the air, while our own movements would be an open book to him. The General Board cannot too strongly urge that the department's most serious thought be given to this matter, and that Congress be asked for an appropriation of at least \$5,000,000 for the purpose of establishing an efficient air service."

The General Board lays great stress on the question of personnel.

"The Board," the report says, "cannot too strongly urge the repeated recommendations to provide the

fleet with a personnel active list and trained reserve, equal to the manning of the fleet for war. In the opinion of the General Board this is a matter of even more serious import than that of construction, for it can not be too often repeated that ships without a trained personnel to man and fight them are useless for the purposes of war. The General Board recommends legislation for an active personnel, officers and enlisted force, capable of keeping in full commission all battleships under fifteen years of age from date of authorization, all destroyers and submarines under twelve years of age from author-

ization, half of the cruisers and all gunboats, and all the necessary auxiliaries that go with the active fleet; and of furnishing nucleus crews for all ships in the navy that would be used in time of war, and the necessary men for the training and other short stations."

The entire record of Vera Cruz, the Secretary states, is "a remarkable demonstration of the all-around efficiency of the Navy."

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