

ARMOR PLATE SITE FOR GOVERNMENT YET IN DISTANT FUTURE

Selection of Site Only First Step as It Will Take Years to Construct Plant.

11,000,000; 3000 MEN

Washington, Feb. 3.—(I. N. S.)—While the selection of a site for the government armor plate plant appears imminent, actual realization of the government's idea to supply its own armor plate for war vessels is yet in its distant future.

According to a member of the general board which has the task of recommending a government location for the federal industry, it will be at least two or three years before the plant is in actual operation.

The fight for the plant has aroused keen competition among cities in every section of the country, which started long before a government-owned and operated plant was assured.

Daniels recommended the plant in his annual report for 1913, and again in 1914 and 1915. The last session of the forty-fourth congress passed the necessary measure, which was approved August 29, but not without opposition from private steel companies.

Briefs from cities seeking the location of the plant were filed with the secretary of the navy, and hearings were held in Washington in September and October.

In the latter part of November, Daniels transmitted the briefs to the general board, requesting a report on the list of cities which would satisfy the provisions of the act—to be located at a place or places approved by the secretary of the navy, with special reference to the consideration of safety in time of war.

The secretary grouped the claimants according to rail and water facilities

and proximity to coal and iron fields, and called the board's attention to the fact that an armor plate plant to produce 20,000 tons of armor, as required, would necessitate 50,000 tons of pig iron and about 300,000 tons of coal or the equivalent in gas and oil.

With this data the board eliminated cities in the New England states, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, and also cities of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas within 200 miles of the coast, and cities in Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio situated within 200 miles of the great lakes, which serve as a boundary between the United States and Canada.

The board in its investigation, was guided by the military principle laid down by the war college, viz.: "As a general military principle, no supply depot, arsenal nor manufacturing plant of any considerable size, supported by a department appropriation for military purposes, should be established or maintained east of the Appalachian mountains, west of the Cascade or Sierra Nevada mountains, north within 200 miles of our Canadian or Mexican border, and steps should be taken gradually to cause to be moved depots or manufacturing plants east of the line in violation of this military principle."

Requirements for Site. The board further reported that the principal requirements for an armor plate plant are: (1) A location near a bureau of ordnance in 1914, were: "Geological character of site; facilities for securing raw material; the principal market, and facilities for delivering completed material."

The following cities have been left in the field: Birmingham, Tuscaloosa and Gadsden, Ala.; Rome, Ga.; Lomax, Cal.; Metropolis, Ill.; Evansville and Rockport, Ind.; Louisville, Ky.; Louisville and Middletown, Ky.; Tulsa and Muskogee, Okla.; Elizabethton, Bristol, Chattanooga, Kingsport and Knoxville, Tenn.; Charleston and Huntington, W. Va.; and Gilmer City, Texas.

The board is now considering the merits of these sites.

Realtors are advised that the following cities have been left in the field: Birmingham, Tuscaloosa and Gadsden, Ala.; Rome, Ga.; Lomax, Cal.; Metropolis, Ill.; Evansville and Rockport, Ind.; Louisville, Ky.; Louisville and Middletown, Ky.; Tulsa and Muskogee, Okla.; Elizabethton, Bristol, Chattanooga, Kingsport and Knoxville, Tenn.; Charleston and Huntington, W. Va.; and Gilmer City, Texas.

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Irish Girls Inspect Shells. London, Feb. 3.—(U. P.)—A bevy of Irish girls are studying shell inspection in an English munitions factory, preparatory for the opening of a similar plant in Ireland, where feminine Irish patriots may do their bit.

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