

HUGHES' BREVITY DISILLUSIONING TO GERMANY'S HOPES

By David Lawrence

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Washington, May 4.—The United States government has notified Germany that she can expect neither aid nor comfort from the Harding administration in the controversy over the payment of damage done in the war.

This, in effect, is the plain meaning of the note dispatched by President Harding and Secretary Hughes, advising Germany not only that her recent reparations offer made through the medium of the United States was unacceptable even as the basis of discussion, but telling Berlin to negotiate directly hereafter with London and Paris.

What particularly aroused the folks here was the cablegram from Berlin to the effect that Germany would pay no attention to the allied conference in London on last Saturday, so long as the door to the White House was open.

HYPHENATES WALLOWED

The Germans hoped for American diplomatic intervention as a means of splitting the allies or at least softening the French demands, but the Harding administration, sensitive about the taunts of certain Americans of German descent who had been telling Berlin that as soon as the Wilson administration passed out of power President Harding would prove himself the friend of Germany as opposed to the allies, has taken occasion to remove any doubt concerning the administration's pro-ally stand. So determined is the United States to arrange itself alongside the allies in the reparations controversy that the White House has again and again asked the press to emphasize the point. The decision of the American government not to forward the German proposals is exactly what has been expected and confirms the information contained in these dispatches a week ago even before the text of the German note was published in Berlin.

NO DOUBT IN WASHINGTON

The Washington government from the beginning has had no doubt that the German offer was unacceptable and, though there was a brief period when it was considered good policy for officials to deny they had been advised of the allied viewpoint, the move was taken to gain time in sizing up the situation itself. The ambassadors of the foreign governments never had any doubt of the ultimate step which America would take. The new development really is the decision to return the German note unanswered and the notification to Germany to conduct her negotiations with the allies direct.

ALLIES ARE PLEASED

This refusal on the part of the United States to act either as an umpire or mediator or even as a messenger of communication pleases the allies more than they dare publicly express. They do not want to read into the American action more than is apparent on the face, but it is a fact that there is more hope of allied solidarity at the present time than when Germany began her efforts to drive a wedge between the United States and her associates in the war.

Balked by the United States the Germans must after all deal with the allies. The viewpoint here is that the American government's firm attitude will hasten rather than retard a settlement, for it will convince Germany that further negotiation or parleying is out of the question.

HARDING SHOWS INTEREST

The president took a deep interest in the phraseology of the note to Germany and the communication may be said to represent unanimous agreement inside the cabinet. The move has another significance, it means that the United States is unwilling to discuss at this time the merits of the reparations controversy and that all expressions purporting to put the American government in the position of taking sides are unauthorized.

The Washington government has views of its own as to how much Germany should pay and as to the wisdom of drastic measures, but these opinions will not be volunteered at this time.

IRRECONCILABLES ON TOP

The Hughes note is one of the shortest on record. Since it is in line with the

physical coercion will solve the situation has been the dominant factor in the whole issue.

Since the British and French have not been in entire accord the American government is unwilling to add further fuel to the flames by siding with the British as against the French. On the other hand, the decision to give the Germans a week or more with which to frame new proposals meets with favor here because of the conviction that Germany will at least see the handwriting on the wall and bow to the inevitable.

SCHOOL REVENUE DEBATED PRO AND CON AT MEETING

Good natured banter between opposing parties on the question of revenue for Portland's school building program enlivened the special meeting of the school board held Tuesday night for discussion with representatives of civic and other organizations of the merits of a tax levy, bond issue and an economy program.

Director W. F. Woodward delivered speeches urging recognition of the needs of the children as equal to the needs of the port. Director Frank H. Shull, opposed to Woodward, presented figures to show that the three mill levy will take care of the increased school population, replace several portables and build several permanent buildings.

REMARKS ARE APPLAUDED

The taxpayers were represented by E. B. MacNaughton and R. L. Sabin of the Chamber of Commerce, Herbert Gordon and Cos. A. McKenna of the Realty board, U. D. Maxson of the East Side Business Men's club, all of whom support Shull's stand, and S. E. Seaman of Gregory Heights district, Dr. Moore of Laurelhurst and a large group of parents throughout the city, who applauded Woodward's remarks.

The opinion of those favoring the economy program was that while there is no question of the need of more school rooms, now is not the time to make great expenditures; that the portables are not so bad as made out and are more healthful than many permanent buildings; that it would be folly to undertake a great building program now, when costs are on the decline; that it were better to get along with building a few new buildings each year, and that the \$50,000 as provided in the three-mill levy voted last year, if again voted this year, will not only take care of the urgent needs, but provide a few new buildings.

POINT TO OTHER CITIES

The advocates of a big building program, on the other hand, pointed to the achievements of other cities in floating big bond issues to take care of the building that had not been done during the war, and dwelt upon the "unsanitary, unsightly and insufficient number" of buildings in which Portland children are housed.

Sentiment was about equally divided between a tax levy and a bond issue, some debaters opposing any increase of indebtedness and urging non-building until the district can pay for it. Others held that since it was the children of today who would receive the benefit of the new buildings, it was right that they should pay for them when the bonds mature.

WHAT \$250,000 WOULD DO

Shull's figures showed that the \$250,000 available this year would build the James John high school, the Hawthorne-Buckman, Alameda, Rose City Park and 43 portables, and that, figured on present costs which may decline, \$67,815 will be left, and if a permanent building is erected at Marysville, replacing proposed portables, there will be a surplus of \$28,000.

Discussion, which at times waxed lively over the building program, centered finally in a verbal tilt between Maxson and Director Thomas over the boilers recently purchased by the board, which was ended only by Director Newell's making an immediate move for adjournment.

MAXSON URGES BIDS

Maxson suggested that the board should give taxpayers the privilege of submitting bids on equipment to be purchased. Thomas replied that the board did, but would not stand for any gouging by these taxpayers of other taxpayers, referring to the recent high prices asked desire of the Harding administration to keep hands off European affairs, it

pleases the "irreconcilable" element in the senate who, by the way, are on top these days. It disappoints to some extent those who believed American leadership might have intervened to bring the Germans and allies together. The insistence of the French, however, that by Portland contractors for school portables.

"I mean boilers," explained Maxson. "Did you advertise for competitive bids on those boilers you got at St. Johns?" "Titters were heard over the room. Thomas jumped to his feet. "That is no laughing matter," he exclaimed. "I am going to show you I know something about boilers, if you don't. Are you in the boiler business?" Maxson admitted he was. "I thought so," replied Thomas. "You

can't furnish that type of boiler for \$15 a horsepower."

"It is not necessary to get a Cadillac to do the duty of a Ford," was the rejoinder of Maxson.

Thomas started a heated reply when motion was made to adjourn.

Weather Man Is Not Certain, But Looks For Rainless Day

"Portland stands a mighty fine chance to get by today and tonight without rain," speculated E. L. Wells, weather

forecaster, as he stood in front of the weather map this morning plotting with the elements on what kind of weather to hand the city.

Only four places in the United States reported rain this morning, this being one of the lowest rain reports this year. None of the rain areas appeared close to Portland.

But Wells has grown cautious in making his predictions and instead of coming out in the open and predicting fair weather, he qualifies. The prediction for tonight is "generally fair."

New Firms Are Started in City; Papers Are Filed

Salem, Or., May 4.—The Dundas-Martin corporation, capitalized at \$200,000, filed articles of incorporation with the state corporation department here Tuesday. The company will maintain an office in Portland and will engage in a general brokerage business. The incorporators are E. A. Dundas, W. L. Green and R. M. Ross.

Ball Engineering company, Portland; \$50,000; B. C. Ball, R. A. Letter and J. M. Meaney.
White Cedar Lumber company, Portland; \$50,000; William Reid, L. A. Jacobsen and L. F. Jacobsen.
Rock Creek Lumber company, Molalla.

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Clackamas county; \$50,000; W. W. White, E. E. Doyle and J. T. Edgerton.
Resolutions of dissolution have been filed by the Willamette Falls company of Portland.

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