

TO WAGE FIGHT ON SEAMEN'S LAW

LAFOLLETTE MEASURE DRIVES
U. S. SHIPPING FROM SEAS,
CONTENTION.

(Chronicle's Washington Bureau.)

WASHINGTON, April 25.—A finish fight to either amend or repeal the LaFollette seaman's act so that American shipping can compete with the merchant fleets of the world will be one of the developments of the present congress. Its abolition or modification so that the cost of operating American ships will not be greater than that of foreign competitors means much to the shipping of the Pacific coast and the ports of Portland, Seattle, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Already the tying up of scores of shipping board vessels because of Japanese and British competition due to low rates and low cost of operation has delayed if not impaired the development of the United States merchant marine, particularly on the Pacific. While Andrew Furuseth is coming on from San Francisco to lead the fight to keep the LaFollette bill on the statute books in its present form the head of the seaman's union has before him the fight of his life. Close observers say that there is every probability of a modification at least, of the law, which now makes the operation of merchant ships of the United States almost impossible with scant cargo available and a great differential in favor of foreign owned and operated ships.

Strange to say this fight does not start on either the Atlantic, Gulf or the Pacific coast but comes from the Great Lakes where shipping interests have always insisted that the law was never meant to operate. There have been several embryonic attempts to change the law by the owners and operators of lake vessels, but this time the whole lake country is in the collar fighting for relief. It came about in this way.

Some months ago the great Detroit & Cleveland Navigation company which has for years operated steamers to Mackinac Island announced that this service would be abandoned this summer. Following this announcement now comes announcements from all the other smaller lines which were fed by the D. & C. boats that they have also abandoned their lines. This leaves the Mackinac and northern resorts without service and many of the cities of northern Michigan face a real disaster with the summer tourist and resort traffic cut off. More than 40 of the Chambers of Commerce of Michigan held a joint indignation meeting in Detroit the other day and their representatives are now here ready to start the war to a finish on the LaFollette law which they contend is the real cause of the suspension of all steamship service to the resorts. This is but the starting point and shipping men and merchants of the middle west are going to back up the proposition, to say nothing of the ship owners of the Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific coasts. They contend that there is no chance for American shipping to compete with the merchant fleets of the world as long as that law remains for the differential forced against the American ships is too great for any corporation to overcome.

In congress in both houses there is a growing sentiment that the law is both expensive, harmful and without economic justification. Some of the senators will call attention to the fact that seamen crossing the Pacific on merchant vessels of the United States insist on their rights and collect full pay and allowances in Japanese or other ports and that amercising and spending all their wages they appeal to the United States consuls and are under this same law returned to the United States at government expense as indigent seamen.

Andrew Furuseth, the head of the seamen's union, is coming on from San Francisco to make the fight of his life, for if the opposition to the LaFollette act keeps on in volume and speed, his organization is doomed either to be wiped out or to accept some radical changes in this measure.

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GERMANY GIVES

(Continued From Page 1.)
Germany and reflect the quick recovery of German industry.

American imports from Germany in 1920 were nearly nine times as great as the imports of 1919.

Goods which the United States bought from Germany in 1920, according to department of commerce reports, were valued at \$88,836,280, as compared with \$10,508,141 in 1919. Although the 1920 trade was not quite half the value of pre-war commerce it is considered significant in view of the labor troubles, fuel shortage, export restrictions and other factors which have hampered Germany in her remarkable recovery.

The American experts are expected to take a somewhat paradoxical view, holding that Germany must be allowed to develop her export trade, thus insuring her ability to pay reparations, despite the competition which she may offer to American and allied foreign trade. In this connection, the question of imposing a tax on German export is foreseen as one of the chief points of debate between America and the allies.

By Ed L. Keen
(United Press Staff Correspondent)
LONDON, April 25.—Great Britain will support France in the occupation of Westphalian coal fields, if the new German proposals are not acceptable, Lloyd George today announced in the house of commons.

The prime minister said that this action had been decided upon as necessary, but that plans for the military movement would be submitted to parliament before any action was taken.

HYETH, England, April 25.—The allied conference today adjourned without having received Germany's latest reparations offer. Lloyd George waited until 11 o'clock and then left for London. Briand at noon motored to Dover to take the channel boat. Officials had understood that cop-

ies of the German note which had been addressed to the United States, would be sent to them.

By A. E. Johnson:

(United News Staff Correspondent.)
HYETH, England, April 25.—Continuing his drive for American intervention or mediation in the reparations dispute, the German government gave into the hands of the American commission at Berlin at noon Sunday a new note containing a revision of Germany's previous offers to the allies.

The British and French premiers, in session here throughout Sunday, were officially informed by Berlin that a new offer had been transmitted to the American government. Their attitude will be guided, it is felt, largely by what disposition is made of the latest note by the Harding administration.

The eleventh hour attempt of Fehrenbach and Von Simons to bring America into the negotiations, either for the purpose of gaining amelioration of the actual terms, or a delay in application of the threatened penalties for non-payment on May 1, has exercised a disturbing influence on the entente leaders. As a diplomatic move, it has forced them into the position of waiting for President Harding's attitude before rendering a final decision on the question.

They have, accordingly, devoted a greater part of the two days since Premier Briand's arrival on English soil to consideration of the French scheme for occupation of the Ruhr district, and to discussing the probabilities, in the event Von Simons' latest offer is found unsatisfactory.

The new proposals, it is said here, constitute a flat statement of the maximum sum Germany is capable of paying, according to her own estimates but the note will leave the door open for alteration, even after it has received consideration at President Harding's hands.

It is conceded here that if the latest

move has no more effect than the previous notes to Washington, Germany will adopt an attitude of "passive resistance," and await the penalties, Berlin depends greatly upon the psychological effect of diplomacy.

She hopes to win over the conservative element in entente countries.

The British military forces, it was practically decided Sunday, will have little or no part in the occupation. Troops to be sent into Germany will be constituted almost entirely of French, possibly with the support of a few Italian units. The general strategical plan has been adopted substantially as outlined by Generals Foch and Weigand.

The next entente conference will

be held at London either upon the arrival of new proposals direct from the German government or upon Germany's defaulting on the payments demanded.

At the conclusion of Sunday's conferences, an official communique was issued stating that a final decision regarding the imposition of further penalties upon Germany would be made next Saturday when the supreme council will meet.

If the British coal strike is settled in the meantime, the meeting will be called in Paris instead of the British capital. Otherwise the session will be held at London.

It is understood that Lloyd George has adopted as a whole the proposals made by Premier Briand, including the taking of military measures for

the occupation of the Ruhr district.

Lloyd George is convinced that Germany can, if she will, accept the proposals made at the Paris conference. In conversation with newspapermen Sunday he implied that the British government had no desire to impose impossible penalties on Germany and that anything approximating the sum demanded by the entente would be acceptable to Great Britain.

No decision was made, or would be made at Hyeth, according to the premier, because the meeting was wholly informal. The British and French views, it was added, were in complete harmony.

Lloyd George's views are that nobody wants to occupy the Ruhr simply for the sake of pleasing Germany but merely as a means to an end.



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