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UNITED STATES STANDS PAT FOR NEUTRAL RIGHTS

Administration Holds Merchant Ships Have Right to Carry Arms for Defense—Lodge Declares to Accept German View Would Be Unneutral and Step Towards War.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18.—All American diplomatic and consular officers abroad have been notified in a circular communication from the state department that the position of the United States is that merchant ships have a right to carry defensive armament. This move, which became known today, is the first formal announcement that the United States does not accept as legal the announced intention of Germany and Austria to sink armed merchant ships without warning after February 29, as coming within international law.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18.—Senator Lodge, ranking minority member of the foreign relations committee, made a speech in the senate today, declaring that abandonment by the United States at this time of the principle that its ports were open to and its citizens free to travel upon merchantmen of belligerent nations armed solely for defensive purposes would be an unneutral act and a step toward war. He said it would make the United States the ally of the belligerent whose merchant marine had been swept from the seas. As late as the president's note of May 13, 1915, signed by Mr. Bryan, Senator Lodge said, this government recognized that "American citizens were within their undisputed rights in taking their ships and in traveling wherever their legitimate business calls them upon the high seas."

Casual Practices. "Such" he added, "has been the practice of all nations in regard to the armed merchantman. It seems utterly incredible that this position should be in any way altered now or that our government should be ready to surrender the unquestioned rights of Americans to travel or ship goods on a belligerent merchantman subject to all the rules which have been established by the courts and by all international authorities for at least two centuries. The abandonment of those rights by any neutral government on the ground that the invention of submarines with the necessary limitations upon the powers of capture possessed by those boats is inconceivable. Such abandonment could rest on the ground that the rights of neutrals, the rules which for centuries have been agreed upon by all nations for the protection of innocent lives upon vessels captured in war, must be thrown aside and discarded in order that a new instrument of maritime destruction must not be impeded in its work of death and murder. Such a doctrine is revolting to every instinct of humanity, to every principle of law and justice. There is, however, another side to this matter which is of even graver importance. There can be no question that any act by a neutral which alters conditions created by the war is an unneutral act and places the neutral upon the side of one belligerent or the other.

An Unneutral Act. "This is eminently true of any form of embargo, and there is no need that I should repeat the unanswer-

WAR COSTS BRITAIN TEN BILLION DOLLARS

LONDON, Feb. 18.—New votes of credit amounting to approximately 400,000,000 pounds sterling will be asked by Premier Asquith of the house of commons. The new vote will bring up the total of war appropriations to 2,902,000,000 pounds sterling.

ASKS FORGIVENESS UPON THE SCAFFOLD



Hans Schmidt and Anna Aumuller, whom he murdered, cutting up body and throwing torso in river.

SCHMIDT PAYS FINAL PENALTY FOR HIS CRIME

OSSINING, N. Y., Feb. 18.—Hans Schmidt was electrocuted at Sing Sing prison this morning for the murder of Anna Aumuller, September 2, 1913.

Schmidt went quietly to the death chamber, accompanied by the principal keeper and the Rev. Father Cashin, the prison chaplain. Leaving the death house he said goodbye to those who remained. When he entered the chamber the guards attempted to direct him toward the chair but Schmidt gently shook them off and insisted upon addressing the seventeen witnesses. The guards desisted from their efforts and with Father Cashin standing at one side and the keeper on the other Schmidt said: "Gentlemen, I ask forgiveness of all those I have injured or scandalized. I forgive all who have injured me. My last wish is to say goodbye to my dear old mother." Schmidt then seated himself in the electric chair and the current was applied three times. Within a minute he was dead. He had spent the night up to midnight in prayer and talking with Father Cashin and slept from midnight to five o'clock when he was awakened for breakfast. He would take only a cup of coffee.

SPANISH INTERNE GERMAN ESCAPES

CADIZ, via Paris, Feb. 18.—A concentration camp has been prepared for the Germans who escaped into Spain, and the first important contingent is expected soon.

February 11 an official report issued at Madrid stated that the total number of German soldiers interned in Spanish Guinea was 2000; that there had also been interned 1400 members of families of the German soldiers and that all would be transferred to Spain. A previous statement had announced that along with the German soldiers, 14,000 German colonial troops had retreated from Kamerun into Spanish Guinea to escape from the advancing French-British troops.

BAYONETS TOOK ERZERUM AFTER BRIEF SHELLING

Turkish Fortress Yielded to Bayonet Attack After 36 Hours' Bombardment—Thermometer 30 Degrees Below Zero When Capture Made—Turk Defenders in Retreat.

PETROGRAD, Feb. 18.—The fall of Erzerum, the most important Turkish stronghold in Asia Minor, and for a long time considered impregnable, offers the unprecedented spectacle of a first-class fortress built on a steep mountain ridge nearly a mile above sea level yielding to bayonet attack after only thirty-six hours' bombardment.

In Severest Weather. The operations were conducted under the most severe weather conditions, the snow being deep and the thermometer registering at times more than thirty degrees below zero Fahrenheit. The Turkish army defending Erzerum, taken by surprise under the methods adopted by the Russians, is now said to be in disorderly flight on the roads leading to Sivas.

As the garrison apparently scattered in all directions, it is assumed here that large numbers of men were taken prisoners although official figures are still lacking. After the taking of Niksala, it appeared that the Russian attack would be directed upon the Turkish right flank and by rapidly transferring troops the Turks made all plans to resist the main assault from this quarter. Apparently they had little fear of the success of this attack because of the strong character of the fortifications in that direction and even less apprehension of danger from a frontal attack.

Taken by Storm. Nevertheless after the Russians took by storm the first line forts on February 2 there began a persistent bombardment of the Turkish center, followed by a bayonet charge, the impetuosity of which swept the defenders off their feet. The highest tribute is paid to the bravery of the Caucasian troops, whose charge is considered likely to go down in history as one of the most brilliant feats of the war.

It is recognized here that the success of the assault was due almost entirely to the bayonet work of these troops, since the artillery preparation was insufficient in intensity, according to military experts, to reduce even a strong field position. The wiping out of this Turkish base tends to disrupt the whole Caucasian campaign of the Turks, as it not only served as a base of the operations in the Caucasus, but also of those in Mesopotamia.

Open Way to the Ports. Its fall leaves no strongly fortified point between Erzerum and Sivas, about 230 miles to the west, and brings more to the front consideration of an eventual attack upon Constantinople from the east.

An attempt to re-take Erzerum is anticipated, but there are enormous difficulties attending the bringing up of Turkish reinforcements as it is assumed that Turkish forces in Mesopotamia cannot be spared. The alternative for the Turks seems to be to draw up on those at Constantinople from which all possible routes to Erzerum are long and arduous. The most practicable is by railway to Urfa, whence it would be necessary to march overland more than 200 miles.

The Black Sea route to Trebizond has become impracticable because of the Russian domination of the Black Sea littoral.

Sivas is regarded as the next probable objective of the Russian armies.

INTERVIEW WITH KAISER A FAKE

BERLIN, Feb. 18.—"It is stated officially that the correspondent of the London Daily Mail who wrote descriptions of the meeting at Nish of Emperor William and King Ferdinand of Bulgaria never existed," says the Overseas News Agency, "and that the whole report was a swindle."

GIRL VICTIM AND YOUTH ARRESTED IN LAKE FOREST'S POISONING MYSTERY



Miss Marian Lambert and Wm. H. Orpet. Finding of the girl's body, in a wood near Lake Forest, Ill., was followed by the arrest of Orpet, a junior at Wisconsin University, said to have confessed intimacy with the girl and to have asserted she took poison after they quarreled in the woods. Orpet intended to marry another, he had told the girl, according to the police.

SAYS HARVESTER TRUST FINANCED YUCATAN REBELS

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18.—Chargés that the International Harvester company had furnished money for arms and ammunition for the Ortíz-Argüelles revolution against the Carranza government in Yucatan, Mexico, were made today by Levy Mayer, of Chicago, in the senate agricultural committee's investigation into an alleged monopoly for control of the sisal market.

Walter L. Fisher, former secretary of the interior, counsel for the harvester company, displayed to the committee a bundle of bills, part of 3,500,000 pesos issued by the Yucatan commission, formed for controlling the sisal crop. He was undertaking to explain that the bills had come into the possession of the harvester company from a draft of \$480,000 gold issued to Angelino Montes, a sisal purchaser, who the Yucatan planters assert represented solely the harvester company when he was interrupted by Mayer, who declared they gave the draft to raise money for stirring up a revolution.

"That's just talk," retorted Mr. Fisher. "We will be able to show and introduce into the record the invoices and bills showing that at least part of the money went to an arms purchasing company of New York to buy rifles and ammunition," replied Mayer. Mr. Fisher asserted that the money from the draft was given the Yucatan government in exchange for the commission's money in order to have currency to pay the sisal planters.

HOUSTON FAVORITE FOR WAR SECRETARY

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18.—The impression grew in official circles today that Secretary Houston would be transferred to the war department to succeed former Secretary Garrison.

On the way to the cabinet meeting today Mr. Houston smilingly refused to answer questions on the subject, but volunteered the information that he had completed presenting the needs of his department to the house agricultural committee. The impression was given that he had the department's affairs in such condition that he could make the change

NATION FACING GRAVEST CRISIS STATES STERLING

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18.—Senator Sterling of South Dakota spoke in the senate today on his resolution to declare the senate's concern at the recent German naval order to sink all armed allied merchantmen. He said the issue brought the United States to its "gravest international crisis."

"Instead of yielding to the claims of the German admiralty," he said, "their very mention should meet with vigorous protest. Instead of denying this old right of the seas we should now, of all times, vie with this or any other nation in seeking to uphold it. It is possible some danger will be incurred, but I do not much fear dangers will be increased beyond what they are at present, but I do know that, let horror occur in which American lives are lost and this administration and the world will know that there is a real America not supine, apathetic and hesitating, but strong, militant, if need be, and ready to respond to those noble impulses of liberty and humanity which have been our heritage from the beginning.

"For peace commissioners, for international jurists, there will be a new problem, and that will be to limit the destructive operations of the submarine to war craft, and to prohibit for ever the destruction of commerce and passenger carrying vessels by means and at risks that shock humanity and shame our civilization."

STEAMERS RESCUE FLOOD REFUGEES

NATCHEZ, Miss., Feb. 18.—Three government steamers arrived off Jewellton to take away as many as they could carry of the 2500 persons, mostly negroes, marooned there 48 hours or more by floods. Many refugees were brought here. Food was provided for many who had eaten nothing for two days. The steamers found hundreds of negroes huddled along the levees for twenty miles.

Headwaters of the flood from Buck Ridge plantation early today neared the town of Waterproof and Ferriday and spread out over the territory west.

SENATOR AIRS ARMY SCANDAL AVIATION CORPS

Defective Equipment, Favoritism and General Inefficiency Alleged by Robinson of Arkansas—Photographed Copies of Letters Prove Officers Recognize Poor Service.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18.—Charges of a scandal in the army aviation service, involving defective equipment, favoritism to certain officers and general inefficiency of the aero corps were laid before the state military committee today by Senator Robinson of Arkansas in support of his resolution for a congressional investigation.

With photographic copies of letters which he said had passed between Colonel Samuel Reber, head of the corps, and Captain Arthur S. Cowan in charge of the San Diego aviation station, Senator Robinson told the committee in executive session that the documentary evidence proved that the officers recognized the inefficient condition of the aero service that Reber had instructed Cowan to keep it secret.

Goodlier Court Martial.

Lieutenant Colonel L. E. Goodlier, judge advocate general of the western division of the army, was recently tried by court martial charged with having altered or added to charges preferred by other officers against Captain Cowan. The charges against Cowan were that for two years he drew the 35 per cent extra pay of an aviator officer when he was not an aviator. The case is now waiting President Wilson's action. The court martial at San Francisco attracted wide attention and threatened an investigation of the aviation service. One letter from Cowan read:

"I wish you would have your engineering department get me out some drawings for the size of sheets to be placed under the seats of aviators for alleged armor protection. I will have several of these plates made so we can say we have armored aeroplanes, not that I think it vitally essential, but in order that we can meet any change that our machines are not armored."

Sit Tight—Draw Pay.

Captain Cowan in a letter to Colonel Reber declared if the "service ever came under investigation by any one from outside our own corps, it would be impossible to explain the rotten way in which the work has been handled."

Colonel Reber wrote July 21, 1914, to Captain Cowan, Senator Robinson said, as follows:

"We have until the 18th of September to qualify these men and get them in without having them detailed as students. All you have to do is to sit tight and draw your pay."

"It would be understood that you will not be required to fly in time of peace, although nothing need be said about this in the official communication."

Dummy List Prepared.

"As conclusive evidence that Colonel Reber prompted Captain Cowan to make false reports concerning the true condition of the service, I quote from his letter of February 25, 1915, as follows:

"He (the chief general servitor) will probably ask you for the personnel of the first aero squadron, and I suggest that you have prepared a list showing the officers who, shall I say theoretically, belong to the same. If you find it necessary to fill up by putting in the names of some of the aviator students, put them in and give him the list."

NAVY PLANS TO MEET EMERGENCY

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18.—War plans for the navy to meet any emergency are kept well up to date at all times, Captain McKean of the bureau of operations today told the house naval committee. His statement was affirmed by a letter from Admiral Dewey to Chairman Padgett. Captain McKean saw no benefit from creation of a general staff.

TEMPEST BOILS IN LITHIA TEAPOT AT SPRINGS CITY

Manager Duryea of Publicity Department Resigns—Commissioner Stevenson of Springs Commission Resigns in Protest Over Acceptance of Project From Contractors.

ASHLAND, Feb. 18.—The tempest in the lithia teapot has broken out, though not unexpected, as the disturbance has been brewing for weeks. Uneasiness was manifest some time ago. In the interests of economy, now that the funds are almost gone, the discharge of the stenographer in Manager Duryea's publicity department was ordered, this work to be taken over by an employe of the springs commission and the contracting firm. Duryea entered a demurrer, forbade the ban, and there has been no lachrying out to welcome what the manager terms an intruder. At the time the resignation of Duryea was looked for about April 1. It seems he has anticipated this action fully a month and formally last Tuesday asked that his connection with the bureau should cease March 1, a request to which the commission acceded at once.

Among expenses of his department Duryea personally got \$200 per month; stenographer, \$50; office rent, \$10, and heat, \$5. This was nominally paid by the springs commission, but in the final analysis the dear people settle the bill. The cause of his resignation Duryea will not discuss until he ceases to be connected with the work in hand.

Stevenson Resigns.

Tuesday evening another spectacular resignation was pulled off at the city council meeting. Chester Stevenson arrived at the parting of the ways with his fellow members of the springs commission. The council accepted his resignation on the spot, the mayor applying the closure as to rights of discussion over the matter. The underlying trouble in Stevenson's contention that the Smith-Emery \$100,000 contract should not be accepted until after a ninety-day try-out, a period which he later reduced to thirty days. The commission voted to accept on a ten days' trial, hence the disagreement and resignation. There have also been other disturbing factors which the commission has ignored.

Stevenson was appointed over a year ago to succeed R. A. Minkler, resigned. At that time he was a special protégé of Bert Greer, chairman of the board, and the tidings of that period is full of terms of endearment and affection as expressed by Pythias for Damon. The salary in cash is nil, but there is a heap of painstaking work connected with grief on the job.

Stevenson's Reasons.

The method of awarding the contract to Smith, Emery & Co. last spring without a competitive bid aroused considerable opposition at the time, and the method of settlement has brought forth protest from many of those who, in the interest of community harmony, had kept quiet on the contract award.

Mr. Stevenson, of the commission, on February 7 filed the following protest with the other members of the springs commission: "It appears that the work of Smith, Emery & Co. in connection with our springs development is practically completed and that proposals for turning the plant over to the city are to be considered at this time. "I have given this matter most careful consideration and have come to the conclusion that we should de-

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FIRST TRAIN SINCE FLOOD FOR SAN DIEGO

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 18.—The first train for San Diego since January 17 left here early today. Bridges and long stretches of roadbed were washed out by the heavy rains during January. Freight to all points between here and San Diego was accepted today by the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railroad.