

THE SPANISH REPORT

Barely Admits There Was an Explosion.

DIFFERS MUCH FROM OURS

A Full Synopsis of the Report of the Spanish Naval Commission - Complete Text of the American Court of Inquiry Into the Maine Disaster.

Washington, March 30.—A full synopsis of the report of the Spanish naval commission which investigated the destruction of the battle-ship Maine is here given. It is taken from a copy of the original report, which is now on its way here from Havana, the synopsis being cabled and today being in the hands of this government.

The conclusions are directly opposite to those in the report of the court of inquiry submitted to congress today. The synopsis is as follows:

The report contains declarations made by ocular witnesses and experts. From these statements it deduces and proves the absence of all those attendant circumstances which are invariably presented on the occasion of the explosion of a torpedo.

The evidence of witnesses comparatively close to the Maine at the moment is to the effect that only one explosion occurred; that no column of water was thrown into the air; that no shock to the side of the nearest vessel was felt, nor on land was any vibration noticed, and that no dead fish were found.

The evidence of the senior pilot of the harbor states that there is abundance of fish in the harbor, and this is corroborated by other witnesses. The assistant engineer of the works states that after explosions were made during the execution of works in the harbor, he has always found dead fish. The divers were unable to examine the bottom of the Maine, which was buried in the mud, but a careful examination of the sides of the vessel, the rents and breaks, which all point outward, shows without a doubt that the explosion was from the inside.

A minute examination of the bottom of the harbor around the vessel shows absolutely no sign of the action of a torpedo, and the judge-advocate of the commission can find no precedent for the explosion of the storage magazine of the vessel by a torpedo.

The report makes clear that owing to the special nature of the proceedings following, the commission has been prevented from making such an examination of the inside of the vessel as would determine even the hypothesis of the internal origin of the accident. This is to be attributed to the regrettable refusal to permit a necessary connection of the Spanish commissary with the commander and crew of the Maine, and the different American officers commissioned to investigate the cause of the accident, and later with those employed on salvage work.

The report finishes by stating that an examination of the inside and outside of the Maine, as soon as such examination may be possible, as also of the bottom where the vessel rests, supposing that the Maine's wreck be not totally altered in the process of extrication, will warrant the belief that the explosion was undoubtedly due to some interior cause.

AMERICAN REPORT IN DETAIL.

Full Text of the Findings of the Maine Court of Inquiry.

U. S. S. Iowa, first rate, Key West, Fla., Monday, March 21, 1898.—After a full and mature consideration of all the testimony before it, the court finds as follows:

First.—That the United States battle-ship Maine arrived in the harbor of Havana, Cuba, on the 21st day of January, 1898, and was taken to buoy No. 4, in 5 1/2 to 9 fathoms of water, by the regular government pilot. The United States consul then at Havana had notified the authorities at that place the previous evening of the intended arrival of the Maine.

Second.—That the state of discipline on board the Maine was excellent, and all orders and regulations in regard to the care and safety of the ship were strictly carried out. All ammunition was stowed away in accordance with instructions, and proper care was taken whenever ammunition was handled. Nothing was stored in any one of the magazines or shellrooms which was not permitted to be stowed there. The magazines and shellrooms were always locked after having been opened; and after the destruction of the Maine the keys were found in their proper place in the captain's cabin, everything having been reported secure that evening at 8 P. M. The temperature of the magazines and shellrooms were taken daily and reported. The only magazine which had an undue amount of heat was the after 10-inch magazine, and that did not explode at the time the Maine was destroyed. The torpedo warheads were all stowed in the after part of the ship under the ward room, and neither caused nor participated in the destruction of the Maine. The dry gun-cotton primers, and detonators, were stowed in the cabin aft,

and remote from the scene of the explosion. The waste was carefully looked after on board the Maine to obviate danger. Special orders in regard to this had been given by the commanding officer. Varnishes, dryers, alcohol and other combustibles of this nature, were stowed on or above the main deck, and could not have had anything to do with the destruction of the Maine. The medical stores were stowed aft, under the ward-room, and remote from the scene of the explosion. No dangerous stores of any kind were stowed below in any of the other storerooms, or in the coalbunkers. Of those bunkers adjoining the forward magazine and shellrooms, four were empty; namely, B3, B4, B5, B6. A15 had been in use that date, and A16 was full of new river coal. This coal had been carefully inspected before receiving it on board. The bunker in which it was stowed was accessible on three sides at all times, and the fourth side at this time, on account of bunkers B4 and B6 being empty. This bunker, A16, had been inspected that day by the engineer officer on duty. The fire alarms in the bunkers were in working order, and there had never been a case of spontaneous combustion of coal on board the Maine. The two after boilers of the ship were in use at the time of the disaster, but for auxiliary purposes only, with a comparatively low pressure of steam and being tended by a reliable watch. These boilers could not have caused the explosion of the ship. The forward boilers of the ship have since been found by the divers, and are in fair condition. On the night of the destruction of the Maine, everything had been reported secure for the night at 8 P. M. by reliable persons, through proper authorities to the commanding officer. At the time the Maine was destroyed the ship was quiet, and therefore the least liable to accident caused by movements from those on board.

Third.—The destruction of the Maine occurred at 9:40 P. M. on the 15th day of February, 1898, in the harbor of Havana, Cuba, being at the time moored to the very same buoy to which she had been taken upon her arrival. There were two explosions, of a distinctly different character, a very short but distinct interval between them, and the forward part of the ship was lifted to a marked degree at the time of the first explosion. The first explosion was more in the nature of a report, like that of a gun, while the second explosion was more open, prolonged, and of a greater volume. The second explosion was, in the opinion of the court, caused by the partial explosion of two or more of the forward magazines of the Maine.

Fourth.—The evidence bearing on this being principally obtained from divers, did not enable the court to form a definite conclusion as to the condition of the wreck, although it was established that the after part of the ship was practically intact, and sank in that condition a very few minutes after the destruction of the forward part. The following facts in regard to the forward part of the ship are, however, established by the testimony:

That portion of the short side of the protected deck which extends from about frame 30 to about frame 41, was blown up aft and over to port. The main deck from about frame 30 to about frame 41 was blown up aft and slightly over to starboard, folding the forward part of the middle superstructure over and on top of the floor part. This was, in the opinion of the court, caused by the partial explosion of two or more of the forward magazines of the Maine.

Fifth.—At frame 15 the outer shell of the ship from a point 11 1/2 feet from the middle line of the ship, and six feet above the keel, when in its normal position, has been forced up, so as to be about four feet above the surface of the water, therefore about 34 feet above where it would be had the ship sunk uninjured. The outside bottom plating is bent into a reversed V-shape, the after wing of which, about 15 feet broad and 22 feet in length (from frame 17 to frame 25), is doubled back upon itself, against the continuation of the same plating extending forward.

At frame 30 the vertical keel is broken in two, and the flat keel bent into an angle similar to the angle formed by the outside bottom plating. This break is now about six feet below the surface of the water, and about 10 feet above its normal position. In the opinion of the court, this effect could have been produced only by the explosion of a mine, situated under the bottom of the ship, at about frame 18, and somewhat on the port side of the ship.

Sixth.—The court finds that the loss of the Maine on the occasion named was not in any respect due to fault or negligence on the part of any of the officers or members of the crew of said vessel.

Seventh.—In the opinion of the court, the Maine was destroyed by the explosion of a submarine mine, which caused the partial explosion of two or more of her forward magazines.

Eighth.—The court has been unable to obtain evidence fixing the responsibility for the destruction of the Maine upon any person or persons.

CAPTAIN SIGSBEE'S STORY.

His Detailed Testimony Before the Board Regarding the Disaster.

WASHINGTON, March 30.—Captain Sigsbee, in testifying before the court of inquiry, said that he assumed command of the Maine April 19, 1897, and that his ship anchored in the harbor of Havana the last time January 24, 1898. The authorities at Havana knew of the Maine's coming. Consul-General Lee having informed the authorities according to official custom. After he took on an official pilot, sent by the captain of the port of Havana, the ship was berthed in the man-of-war anchorage, off the Mechna, or the Shears, and according to his understanding, it was one of the regular buoys of the place. He then stated that he had been in Havana in 1872, and again in 1898. He could not state whether the Maine was placed in the usual berth for men-of-war, but said that he had heard remarks since the explosion, using Captains Stevens, temporarily in command of the German man-of-war, the Gritsenau, as authority for the statement, that he had never known, in all his experience, which covered visits to Havana for five or six years, a man-of-war to be anchored there, but that he had seen the ship, a merchant vessel to be anchored there, and that it was the least used buoy in the harbor.

The Maine's Surroundings. In describing the surroundings when first anchored to the buoy, Captain Sigsbee stated that the Spanish man-of-war Alfonso XIII was anchored in the position now occupied by the Fern, about 250 yards to the northward and westward of the Maine. The German ship Gritsenau was anchored at the berth now occupied by the Spanish man-of-war Le Caspo, which is about 400 yards due north from the Maine. He then located the Mechna, a small schooner, which came into the harbor a day or two before the Maine was anchored to the southward of the Maine's berth about 400 or 500 yards. In describing the surroundings at the time of the explosion, Captain Sigsbee stated that the light was out, and that the Alfonso XIII was at the same berth. The small Spanish dispatch boat, Le Caspo, had come out the day before and taken the berth occupied by the German man-of-war, the Gritsenau, which had left. The steamer City of Washington was anchored about 200 yards to the south and east of the Maine's stern, slightly on the port quarter.

The Coal Was Safe. The Mechna, a small schooner, taking on about 150 tons of coal being regularly inspected, and taken from the government coal pile. This coal was placed generally in the forward bunkers. No report was made by the chief engineer that any coal had been too hot, and the bunkers and that the fire alarms in the bunkers were sensitive.

The regulations regarding inflammables and explosives, which were strictly carried out in regard to storage, and that waste also was subject to the same careful disposition. The inflammables were stored in chests and in the regulations, and inflammables in excess of chest capacity, were allowed to be kept in the bathroom of the admiral's cabin.

Regarding the electric plant of the Maine, Captain Sigsbee stated that there was no serious grounding, nor sudden flaring up of the lights before the explosion, but a sudden and total eclipse.

As for regulations affecting the taking of the magazines, Captain Sigsbee stated that he had no recollection of any work going on in the magazine or shell rooms before the explosion, nor of any work done in the usual way on the day in question, and were properly returned.

Relations With Spanish Authorities. Speaking generally of the relations with the Spanish authorities, Captain Sigsbee stated that with the officials they were outwardly cordial. The members of the autonomous council of the government, however, seem to have brought to the attention of the court the fact that he did not visit them, and that he brought embarrassment to the government at Washington. He took the ground to the department that it was unknown to the autonomous council, and that the colonial government of the island, and the governors. Without waiting for such an order, Captain Sigsbee made a visit afterwards, and, as he states, was pleasantly received, and his visit promptly returned by certain members of the council, and by ladies and gentlemen called, and the president of the council made a speech which Captain Sigsbee could not understand, but which was interpreted to him, to which he replied:

"My reply," said Captain Sigsbee, "was afterwards printed in at least two papers in Havana, but the terms made me favor the autonomous government in the island. I am informed that the autonomous government in Havana is unpopular among a large class of Spanish and Cuban residents. I have no means of knowing whether my apparent interference in the political concerns of the island, and my relation to the destruction of the Maine."

Exhibition of Antimosity. When asked whether there was any demonstration of antimosity by people aboard, Captain Sigsbee stated there was never on shore, and he was informed there was aboard. He related that on the first Sunday after the Maine's arrival the ferry-boat, crowded densely with people, civil and military, returning from a bull-fight, Regata, passed close to the ship, and about 40 people on board indulged in yelling, whistling and derisive calls.

Every Precaution Taken. During the stay in Havana, Captain Sigsbee took more than ordinary precautions for the protection of the Maine by placing sentries on the forecastle and poop, quarter line and single decks, on the bridge and the poop.

A corporal of the sentries was especially instructed to look out for the port gangway, and the officer of the deck and quartermaster were especially instructed to look out for the starboard gangway, a quarter watch was kept on deck all night, sentries' cartridge boxes filled, their arms kept loaded, a number of rounds of rapid-fire ammunition kept in the pilot-room and in the spare captain's pantry, and under the superstructure, were kept additional supplies of shells, close at hand for the second battery; steam was kept up in two boilers instead of one, and positive instructions were given to watch carefully all the hydraulic gear and report definitely.

He said he had given orders to the master-at-arms to keep a careful eye on everybody that came on board, and to carefully observe any packages that might be held, on the supposition that dynamite or other high explosives might be employed, and afterwards to inspect the routes these people had taken, and not to lose sight of the order, the state of the ship, and the position of the ship, Lieutenant-Commander Wainwright being rather severe on visitors.

Spanish Officers on Board. There were only two or three of the Spanish military officers came on board, but, according to the captain, they were constrained, and not desirous of accepting much courtesy. The visit was during the absence of the captain. He said he made every effort to have Spanish officers to visit the ship to show his good-will.

Description of the Explosion.

He then went into a description of the explosion when he felt the crash. He characterized it as a bursting, rending and crashing sound, and of immense volume, largely metallic in character. It was succeeded by a metallic sound, probably of falling debris, a trembling and pitching motion of the vessel, then an impression of subsidence, and finally an eclipse of electric lights and intense darkness within his cabin. He thought immediately that the Maine had blown up and was sinking. He hurried to the starboard cabin, but changed his course to the passage leading to the superstructure. He detailed the manner of meeting Private Anthony, which is much the same as has been published.

Lieutenant-Commander Wainwright was on deck when Captain Sigsbee emerged from the passageway, and turning to the orderly he asked for time, which was given as 8:40 P. M. Sentries were ordered to place about a ship to the forward magazine flooded. He called for perfect silence. The surviving officers were about him at the time on the poop. He was informed that both forward and aft magazines were under water. Then came faint cries and white floating bodies in the water. Boats were at once ordered lowered, but only two were available, the gig and the scull. They were lowered and manned by officers and men, and by the captain's directions they left the ship and helped to save the wounded jointly with other boats that had arrived on the scene.

Fire amidships by this time was burning fiercely, and the spare ammunition in the pilot-house was exploding. At this time Lieutenant-Commander Wainwright said he thought that a magazine forward had been thrown up into the burning mass, and might explode any time. Everybody was then directed to get into the boats over the stern, which was open, and the captain getting into the gig, and then proceeding to the scull, and then to the scull, where he found the wounded in the dining saloon being carefully attended by the officers and crew of the vessel. He then went on deck and observed the wreck for a few minutes, and then returned to the City of Washington and other vessels, and sat down in the captain's cabin and dictated a telegram to the navy department.

Various Spanish officials came on board and expressed sympathy and sorrow for the accident. The representatives of General Blanco and of the admiral of the station were among the Spanish officials who did their sympathies. About four or five men were found that day who survived. By the time Captain Sigsbee reached the quarterdeck it was his impression that an overwhelming explosion had occurred. When he came from the cabin he was practically blind, and for a few seconds. His only thought was for the vessel, and he took no note of the phenomena of the explosion. In reply to the question of whether any of the magazines or shellrooms were blown up, the captain said it was extremely difficult to come to any conclusion. The center of the explosion was beneath and a little forward of the scull, and on the port side. In the region of the center, or axis of the explosion was the six-inch reserve magazine, which contained very little powder, about 300 pounds. The 10-inch magazine, in the same general region, but on the starboard side, and the 10-inch magazine in the loading room of the turret, and in the adjoining passage, a number of 10-inch shells were scattered about the deck. Captain Sigsbee said it would be difficult to connect the explosion involved the 10-inch magazine, because of the location of the explosion, and none of the reports show that shells were hurled into the air because of the explosion.

Details of the Second Explosion. The captain went into details as to the location of the small explosion. He said that he did not believe that the forward 10-inch magazine blew up. The location of the explosion, in the same general region, but on the starboard side, and the 10-inch magazine in the loading room of the turret, and in the adjoining passage, a number of 10-inch shells were scattered about the deck. Captain Sigsbee said it would be difficult to connect the explosion involved the 10-inch magazine, because of the location of the explosion, and none of the reports show that shells were hurled into the air because of the explosion.

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A WARNING TO SPAIN.

Two Notes Cabled by the President to Minister Woodford.

Madrid, March 29.—President McKinley has cabled two notes to Spain through Minister Woodford. One deals with the Maine, the other with President McKinley's plan of humanitarian intervention in the Cuban war. Both notes are expressed in strong, firm language, without a suggestion of a threat. They are, perhaps, merely preliminary.

For the destruction of the Maine, the president demands no indemnity. He merely acquaints the Madrid government with the fact that the court of inquiry finds that the ship was blown up in Havana harbor by an external agency and that nothing but a mine or torpedo of the largest size could have wrought the destruction. The president submits the facts to the Spanish government, and waits a reply. Mr. Woodford did not even demand an early response.

As to the war in Cuba, President McKinley advised the Spanish government in the politest terms that the time is fast drawing near when the United States would be compelled to act upon the warning so often given to Spain since the struggle in Cuba began. The president clearly intimated that the war in Cuba must cease, but he fixes no date. The note makes the question of Cuban intervention paramount to the Maine case, which the president's memorandum refers to merely as a lamentable incident. The issues and problems of the Cuban war, the United States government now calls urgently to the attention of Spain, declaring that the conditions prevailing in Cuba, so near to the shores of the United States, have long been intolerable to the American people.

Negotiations to End the War.

Washington, March 29.—The developments of the day in the Cuban situation indicate progress in the negotiations of this country and Spain looking to the maintenance of peace, for the present at least. There is good authority for saying that Spain's wish is to secure a cessation of hostilities in Cuba, rather than to engage in a war with the United States, and that it is more than probable that the negotiations with the Sagasta ministry will take such a turn in the immediate future. The present Spanish ministry has expressed a pacific disposition from the beginning, and the indications are strong now that it will avail itself of the good offices of the United States to the fullest extent that public opinion in Spain will allow in bringing to an end the hostilities in Cuba.

To what extent the United States may go in assisting Spain in her present design of securing an armistice is not determined, but the conservative element in the administration consider the manifestation of this desire on the part of Spain for even a temporary peace a direct result of President McKinley's diplomacy, and they naturally are disposed to contend that the president should be left free, for the present at least, to pursue a policy which promises much in the way of preventing war between this country and Spain; also of bringing to a close the hostilities in Cuba. Hence there will be an effort on the part of the peacefully inclined in congress to hold that body in check and to prevent inflammatory utterances there until this promising diplomatic lead may be exploited.

On the part of the administration it is stated that the development of the situation will not require a great length of time, and hence there will be no extended delay.

A policy has been fully determined upon by the president. It is to bring the Cuban war to a close. This will be accomplished by pointed intervention, if necessary, but it is considered far preferable that the end should come as the result of peaceful negotiations than that it should be accompanied by hostile demonstrations on the part of the United States. Hence the disposition of the president is to give Spain an opportunity to secure an armistice with the Cubans and allow her a reasonable time to come to an understanding with the hostiles.

It is stated that there is no abatement of the president's intention to see that the war is terminated, and that it is closed on terms that will render the Cubans practically a free people.

Friends of the administration feel that the situation is very delicate, and much will depend upon the course the Cubans may pursue.

The Spanish Elections.

Madrid, March 29.—The elections for the popular branch of the cortes have passed quietly. The indications are that the government of Senor Sagasta will have an enormous majority, estimated at 300 of the 432 seats in the chamber. Disorders are apprehended at Bilbao, where the polling caused great excitement. The military judge at Bilbao issued a warrant for the arrest of three socialist municipal councilors. One of them was taken into custody, but the other two escaped.

Spain's Refusal.

Berlin, March 29.—The Madrid correspondent of the Berliner Tageblatt says: "Spain will not only refuse to allow American interference in assisting the suffering Cubans, but will decline to pay indemnity, unless it is shown unmistakably that the Spanish authorities were responsible for the Maine explosion. If President McKinley demands these two things, war is unavoidable."

St. Paul, March 28.—The Bank of Merriam Park, this city, failed to open today, on account of a time-check fraud. The bank's capital is \$50,000, of which \$30,000 is reported to have been invested in Southall government time checks.

Robbers Make a Rich Haul.

Traver, Cal., March 28.—North-bound passenger train No. 18 was held up at Cross creek bridge, four miles south of Traver last night, about 10:55, by two trainrobbers. The men boarded the train at Goshen, and soon after pulling out climbed into the engine and compelled the fireman to cease firing. When the train reached Cross creek the steam gave out and the train stopped. The express car was then blown up with dynamite. It was completely demolished.

A Fund to Buy Warships.

Madrid, March 29.—The latest intelligence from the United States has occasioned a great patriotic movement throughout Spain. A large number of persons have announced their intention to give up a day's pay for services in order to raise a fund to purchase warships. A committee, over which the bishop of Madrid will preside, has been organized to receive the subscriptions.

POLITICAL PARTIES COMBINE.

Populists, Silver Republicans and Democrats of Oregon Join Issues.

Three state conventions met in Portland last week, the Populist, silver Republican and Democratic. A union of forces or fusion is the result. All parties united on the platform adopted by the Populists at Friday's session, and agreed to a division of the offices by a conference committee. The platform as adopted reads:

United in a common cause for the sacred purpose of preserving the principles of government by the whole people, in fact as well as in name, restoring and maintaining equality, under that government, of all classes, we, the people's Democratic and silver-republican parties of the state of Oregon, waiving all minor points of difference, and uniting for the purpose of carrying out the great underlying principles upon which we are all agreed, do make and present to the people of this state the following declaration of principles, and to the carrying out of which we solemnly pledge each and every candidate upon our united ticket:

First.—We demand the free and unrestricted coinage of silver and gold at the present legal ratio of 16 to 1, without waiting for the consent of foreign nations; and we are unalterably opposed to the policy of the present republican administration in demanding the retirement of greenbacks, and the turning over of the money-making power of the government to the national banks, as presented by the bill drawn by the republican secretary of the treasury, and endorsed by President McKinley; and we especially denounce the avowed attempt by said bill to fasten the country irretrievably and forever to the single gold standard.

We demand a national money, safe and sound, issued by the general government only, and that the intervention of banks of issue, to be full legal tender for all debts, public and private; also a just, equitable and efficient means of distribution direct to the people through the lawful disbursements of the government.

We demand that the volume of circulating medium be speedily increased to an amount sufficient to meet the demands of the business and population of this country, and to restore the just level of prices of labor and production.

We favor such legislation as will prevent for the future the demonetization of any kind of legal-tender money by private contract.

We demand that the government, in payment of its obligations, insist on its option as to the kind of lawful money in which they are to be paid, and we denounce the present and preceding administrations for surrendering this option to the holders of government obligations.

We demand that there shall be no further issue of United States interest-bearing bonds.

We demand that postal savings banks be established by the government for the safe deposit of the savings of the people and to facilitate exchange.

We demand the election of United States senators by direct vote of the people.

We demand the initiative and referendum system of law-making in its national, local, state and national, and the submission by congress of all important national questions for an advisory vote of the people, until such time as the national constitution shall have been amended so as to provide for direct legislation.

We condemn as dangerous and unjust the surrender, in all departments of the government, to the influence of trusts, corporations and aggregations of wealth generally, and the packing of the highest courts of the land with corporation lawyers, too ready to do the will of their late employers, and to set aside valid and wholesome laws passed by the legislative departments of the state and government, upon flimsy pretenses, at the behest of such institutions.

We are opposed to government by injunction.

In state matters, we demand a simple and well-guarded registration law.

A more equitable mode of appointing judges of election.

Stringent laws to regulate the operation of fish traps, fish wheels and all fishing gear in the waters within the jurisdiction of the state.

We denounce and condemn the corrupt and extravagant republican legislative assemblies, and charge that the republican party, in its eagerness for the spoils of office, has become divided into factions, so that it is incapable of government as exemplified by the condition existing in the office of the state treasurer, there being at this time more than \$500,000 of the treasury from the people by the process of taxation, while state warrants are stamped "