

### State Compensation Laws Declared Void In Maritime Cases

#### U. S. Supreme Court Holds Congress Has Sole Authority in Admiralty Matters; N. Y. Verdict Set Aside

WASHINGTON, May 17.—The act of Congress of 1917 giving the states the right to enact compensation laws in respect to injuries of persons in maritime employment was declared unconstitutional to-day by the Supreme Court.

The decision of the court was five to four, Justices Holmes, Pitney, Brandeis and Clarke dissenting.

The court held that Congress alone had the authority to legislate relative to admiralty matters.

At the same time the court declared unconstitutional the New York State compensation act, in so far as it relates to admiralty matters.

State Industrial Commission orders granting Lillian E. Stewart compensation for the death of her husband, who was drowned while employed on a barge owned by the Knickerbocker Ice Company, were set aside.

The court held that the power of Congress to regulate commerce between the states and with foreign nations is exclusive, and that the Federal Government, to relieve maritime commerce from unnecessary burdens and disadvantages incident to discordant legislation, and to establish, so far as practicable, harmonious and uniform rules applicable throughout every part of the Union.

"To say that because Congress could have enacted a compensation act applicable to maritime injuries, it could authorize the states to do as they might desire, is false reasoning."

Reversal of the government's dissolution suit against the Lehigh Valley Railroad Company and its subsidiaries was ordered.

As arguments for this term have been closed, the Lehigh Valley case cannot be heard until next fall, when it will be the first called.

The court upheld Federal Court decrees declaring invalid provisions in uniform bills of lading approved by the Interstate Commerce Commission, providing that losses incurred by shippers should be computed on the basis of the value of the property at the time of shipment.

The lower court held this placed an unlawful limitation upon the railroad's liability and conflicted with the Cummins amendment to the interstate commerce act.

Convictions of Daniel O'Connell, lawyer, and five other residents of San Francisco for violating the selective service and espionage acts were upheld.

The other defendants were E. R. Hoffman, physician, sentenced to three years' imprisonment; Thomas Carey, two years; Carl J. F. Washer, eighteen months; and David J. and Herman B. Smith, one year each. O'Connell was sentenced to seven years.

All the defendants were members of an organization known as "American Patriots" which they asserted was formed to test the constitutionality of the selective service act.

### City Employees to Get Pay Increases August 1

#### County Workers Also to Share in \$5,000,000 Available for Raising Wages

The committee on finance and budget of the Board of Estimate at a meeting yesterday agreed that a general increase in the compensation of municipal and county employees would be granted, to take effect August 1. The total amount available for the payment of such increases for the rest of the year is \$5,000,000, authorized under the bill prepared by Comptroller Charles L. Craig and passed at the last session of the Legislature.

Comptroller Craig said it is expected the increase will be continued in the budget for 1921. It is understood the majority of the members of the Board of Estimate approve a plan to provide increases on the basis of \$12,000,000 a year, which would amount to about 20 per cent for each employee. Major E. H. La Guardia, president of the Board of Aldermen, is in favor of a \$200 minimum increase for all city em-

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employees receiving less than \$1,000 a year.

The secretary of the Board of Estimate has been directed to prepare tabulations showing the number of employees to be affected and their present rate of pay. When this information has been received, the Comptroller said, the Finance and Budget Committee will determine the precise method of apportioning the increases. They probably will be made on a percentage basis to avoid complaints of favoritism.

### Omaha Stores Cut Prices

OMAHA, Neb., May 17.—One of the largest Omaha department stores to-day announced a flat reduction of 30 per cent in selling prices, and a large men's clothing establishment announced a 20 per cent reduction. Three other stores announced a 20 per cent reduction last Saturday.

### Belasco Finds Our Heroes Resting in Earthly Paradise

#### After Visit to France, He Urges Relatives of Soldiers Not to Remove Bodies; Was Abroad Six Weeks

David Belasco, playwright and producer, who went abroad six weeks ago on a threefold mission, returned yesterday on the White Star liner Baltic from Liverpool. The business end of his journey to Europe was successful, as were the social features, which he said impressed him greatly.

While in France, whether he went to confer with a representative of the composer Puccini, he found time to visit several cemeteries where American soldiers are buried. Mr. Belasco described these places as "bits of heaven" that are tenderly cared for by the French. He urged that relatives of these fallen heroes leave their kin in the terrestrial paradise where they now lie.

"I went abroad for three reasons," said Mr. Belasco. "I wanted to see how plays are being presented, to discuss details with certain men who have asked me to found a Belasco Theater in London and to meet Giacomo Puccini, the Italian composer, who is planning to make a grand opera of 'The Son Daughter,' the play in which Miss Leonora Ulric has made such a success at the Belasco Theater here."

"I had a most enjoyable visit to London and Paris. I think it does every one good to get away from routine and observe the customs and habits of peoples in other lands. This is especially true of the theater. I was much impressed with the strong feeling of cordiality that exists between actors and managers on the other side of the Atlantic. They meet on a social basis and become friends. They all seem to realize that the welfare of the theater

and the stage is identified with their mutual interest.

"Four American girls are doing splendidly in London. They are Miss Mary Nash, Miss Edith Day, Miss Peggy O'Neil and Miss Laurette Taylor. Each well deserves her success."

"The warmth of the welcome extended to me in London and in Paris touched me deeply. The London managers gave me several receptions and in Paris I had the honor of being entertained informally at the Society of Authors. I had planned to go to Rome to confer with Puccini, but the uncertainty of travel on the continent caused me to abandon the trip."

"Puccini, however, sent a representative to Paris to meet me. We talked over the project carefully and the work of converting the 'Son Daughter' into an opera is well under way."

Mr. Belasco said he was in the theater the night the performance of Laurette Taylor was disturbed by a gallery demonstration and he was confident the affair was not prearranged. The curtain, he said, did not go up all the way and those in the top gallery were unable to see.

From the pier, Mr. Belasco went to the Belasco Theater, arriving there at noon. He was led to the studio entrance, where he was met by Miss Ina Claire, Miss Ulrich, Mrs. Morris Gest, Miss Lorna Volare and Miss Frances Starr.

The theater was decorated with bunting and an orchestra played "Home, Sweet Home."

### House Rejects Bill to Continue War Passports

#### State Department Plan to Bar Aliens Excites Strong Opposition

WASHINGTON, May 17.—By a vote of 192 to 96 the House to-day refused to adopt the conference report on the diplomatic appropriation bill because of a legislative rider making permanent the war-time passport control regulations.

The legislation as a means of preventing the influx of radical aliens.

The vote came after long debate, during which members protested against

the war-time restrictions on travelers, which are now authorized until March 4, 1921. These restrictions require that all Americans leaving this country must have passports and that aliens cannot be admitted unless their passports have been visited by American diplomatic representatives abroad.

Passport fees, under the proposal, would have been increased from \$2 to \$10.

The bill now goes back to conference. Representative Mondell, R-publisher leader, supported the legislation. "In the present condition of the world it is well for us to guard our ports," he said.

### Poles and Germans Clash

BERLIN, May 17.—The newspapers report Polish demonstrations yesterday at Marienwerder, culminating in a collision with the German populace, in which many were injured. Italian occupation troops finally intervened and restored order.

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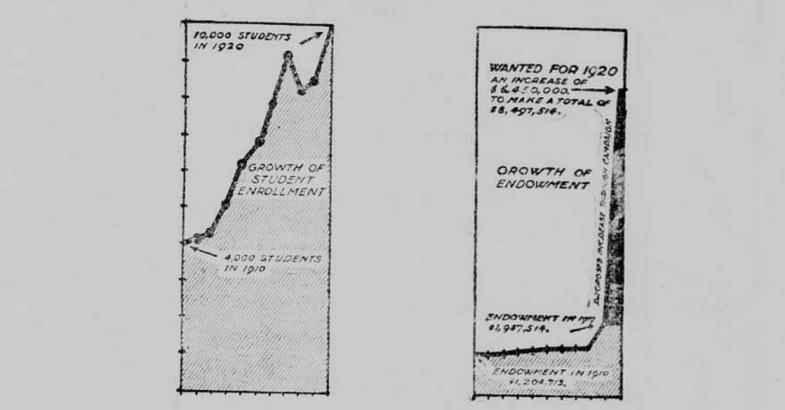
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