SODEN OFFERS TO SELL BOSTON

ALSO HIS NEW YORK CLUB STOCK TO A. G. SPALDING.

Publication of the Much-Talked-of Letter a Bombshell in the Ranks of the National League—W. H. Conant Virtually Read Out of the Baseball Political Party

The much-talked-of "Boston letter" was made public last night by A. G. Spalding, President of the National League, together with the entire correspondence that has passed between him and A. H. Soden since Dec. 14. In the communication which Spalding has withheld since receiving it last Monday, Soden offers to sell the Boston club and also his stock in the New York club, a proposition that does not savor of sincere loyalty to Freedman, Brush and Robison. In order to have this letter suppressed, Soden substituted another in which he said merely that he was willing to await the result of the court proceedings and asked Spalding to give this "dummy" out to the press.

It was concerning the contents of the "dummy" letter that Soden conversed with Freedman over the long distance 'phone on Thursday. Incidentally Spalding virtually reads W. H. Conant, Soden's partner, out of the baseball political party, along with Brush, Freedman and Robison. The significance of this proceeding means that the Spalding clubs of the National League are now going ahead with the reorganization plan which, when effected, will completely freeze out the Freedman combine. In a letter to Soden written yesterday Spalding shows that there was such a public demand for the letter and that there were so many misleading statements as to its contents that in justice to himself he feels that the entire series of letters should be made public without further delay. The following correspondence, therefore, speaks for itself:

BOSTON BASEBALL ASSOCIATION.
Directors: A. H. Soden,
W. H. Conant, J. B. Billings.
BOSTON, Jan. 4, 1902.

Mr. A. G. Spalding:

MY DEAR SIR: Yours of the 2d addressed to Messrs. Dreyfuss and others, at hand, and, in reply, will state, that in my opinion, it is very desirable that the court should render a decision, at the earliest possible moment, regarding the action of the National League at its session on Dec. 13 and 14. The Boston association is ready to accept the decision of the court, and will abide by it, and loyally support the persons elected, if they are declared legally elected. If not, we desire a legal election, and a meeting of the National League should be called as soon as a decision is reached. I am not opposed to the persons claiming to have been elected, but am opposed to the methods, and have honest doubts as to the legality of the action of the meeting and when this point is decided, I am ready to act upon my best judgment, as I am not pledged to any person or to any scheme. I should be glad to dispose of my interest, not only in the New York club, but in the Boston club, and retire from any further connection with baseball. Please consider this communication confidential, as I have no desire to be quoted in the public prints. With kind regards, truly yours, A. H. SODEN.

ALBEMARLE HOTEL,
NEW YORK, Jan. 7, 1902.

Mr. A. H. Soden, 410 Atlantic avenue, Boston, Mass.

DEAR MR. SODEN: In deference to your expressed wish that your letter be considered as confidential and that it not appear in the public press, I have refrained from sending out a copy of yours of 4th inst., for the present anyway. Please bear in mind, friend Soden, that I have publicly announced that there would be no confidential communications with me; that I would feel bound to respect in this baseball controversy and in view of this fact and the further fact that I am simply besieged with newspaper men every hour in the day and night for baseball news, that it is with considerable difficulty that I have been able to hold back your letter and even now I do not know but that I have called more attention to it by not publishing it than would if it had been published, which I should have done had it not been for your request. Considering the subject and the situation and my position, I wish you would give your permission to publish it, if circumstances seem to make it necessary, for certainly there is nothing in the letter but what reflects credit upon the writer.

Yours very truly, A. G. SPALDING.

BOSTON BASEBALL ASSOCIATION.
Directors: A. H. Soden,
W. H. Conant, J. B. Billings.
BOSTON, Jan. 8, 1902.

Mr. A. G. Spalding:

MY DEAR SIR: I do not think it would be wise to publish my letter of Jan. 4, which was a personal letter to you and written in confidence, especially that portion of it in which I expressed a desire to dispose of my holdings in both the New York and Boston clubs, as such a statement might be construed as showing a lack of confidence in the National League and give encouragement to the American League, who might infer that I was desirous of withdrawing from a losing enterprise, thereby acknowledging defeat and failure, which is contrary to my firm belief. To relieve you from any embarrassment by reason of my request that my former communication be considered confidential, I will write another reply to your letter, which you can make public if you deem it expedient, but preferring that my letter does not appear in the public prints, I have carefully avoided all interviews with sporters and have had agreements to make that redected upon any person or club, and when asked for my opinion have stated that I was awaiting the decision of the courts regarding the injunction proceedings and had no opinion to express. I will state in confidence to you that the Boston club never endorsed the trust scheme and discouraged the movement in public and sure to be a failure.

Mr. Freedman invited me to Red Bank to spend Sunday and I accepted the invitation, not aware that any trust plan was to be discussed or suggested, and when it was outlined to me I opposed it strenuously, giving many reasons why it was not desirable. I finally stated that if the plan was indorsed by the other seven clubs and an equitable basis could be agreed upon the Boston club would consent, and this is the only position the Boston club has taken. I have been plain from the beginning that no trust plan could be adopted, and as I before stated, was opposed to it and would have been the last one to consent, except to make the action unanimous. I make these statements to you in confidence, but in all sincerity, that you may know the exact position of the Boston club since last August, when the plan was first explained to me at Red Bank. I think you have misunderstood the position of the Boston club, and that it is only fair that I should explain the action of the Boston club. I favored delay in proceeding to the election of officers, believing that harmony might result, and I now firmly believe that had the action been deferred until Saturday afternoon, you would have had at least seven votes, and possibly a unanimous vote, and I make this statement advisedly from personal knowledge. I think our board of directors should be given by our constitution greater powers of establishing action. The board is, as now constituted, a judiciary board or board of review, with little power to enforce our laws or impose penalties. Please consider this a personal letter in confidence, as I agree with the best of motives and for the good of the National League. Truly yours, A. H. SODEN.

Mr. Soden's letter of Jan. 8 would seem to indicate that this is the letter he desires to have given to the public, instead of his original letter of the same date.

BOSTON BASEBALL ASSOCIATION.
Directors: A. H. Soden,
W. H. Conant, J. B. Billings.
BOSTON, Jan. 4, 1902.

Mr. A. G. Spalding:

DEAR SIR: In reply to your letter of the 2d addressed to Messrs. Dreyfuss and others, I will state that I had grave doubts regarding the legality of the action of four clubs in electing officers and transacting other business originating in the National League on Saturday, Dec. 14, and consequently joined with others in referring the matter to the courts for decision, which decision when rendered will be accepted as final and binding upon me. I trust that prompt action will be taken by the court, in order that the controversy may be settled and the National League be placed in a position to reinvigorate and proceed to complete its organization. Sincerely yours,

A. H. SODEN.

BOSTON, Jan. 18, 1902.

Mr. Nelson H. Conant, Boston Herald Club, Boston, Mass.

DEAR SIR: In the Boston Sunday Globe of Jan. 12 appeared a long and very misleading interview or talking talk of Mr. Spalding, and I would like to have the Boston club know that I do not agree with the views of Mr. Spalding, and I would like to have the Boston club know that I do not agree with the views of Mr. Soden, and I would like to have the people know that I do not agree with the views of Mr. Soden, and I would like to have the people know that I do not agree with the views of Mr. Soden, and I would like to have the people