

\$1,250,000,000 IS ASKED TO LOWER LIVING COST; PLAN MEETS WITH FAVOR

Government Would Buy and Then Sell Wheat at Market Rates. FUND TO COVER LOSS. Department of Agriculture Prepares Bill for Early Submission. RETURN TO COMPETITION. Resolution Presented in House to Investigate Fixing of Prices.

Special Dispatch to The Sun. WASHINGTON, Jan. 18.—The Administration's proposal for the first step in the abandoning of war time price fixing and a return to a competitive basis will be contained in a bill now being drafted by the Department of Agriculture and which will be sent to the House Agricultural Committee early next week.

This measure will propose the appropriation of \$1,250,000,000 to be used by the Food Administration in purchasing 1919 stocks of wheat at the Government's guaranteed price of \$2.26 a bushel, such stocks to be disposed of at world market prices, the Government to bear the loss involved as part of its war time obligations.

The proposal will be supported by the majority members of the Agricultural Committee and with some limitations as to the administration of the fund by several Republican members as well. But the Republican members will not permit this or any other amount of money to be appropriated in lump sum and under a blanket authorization without knowing definitely how, when and where the money is to be expended, by whom and for what purpose.

Campaign Cause Comment. The announcement in The Sun this morning of a nationwide campaign to terminate price fixing gave rise to much comment among national lawmakers to their districts about the high cost of living as affected by measures for artificial stimulation and are prepared to give serious study to the subject.

Representative Gould (N. Y.) to-day introduced a resolution as follows:

WAR ON HERE TO RESTORE TRADE

Produce Exchange Members Eagerly Sign Petition to End Present System.

FIGURES ARE STAGGERING

Excess of 389,221,075 Pounds of Meat in Storage on Jan. 1 Is Pointed Out.

Members of the New York Produce Exchange joined hands yesterday with members of the Chicago Board of Trade in what promises to be a determined effort on the part of men interested in handling products of agriculture to induce the Government to remove restrictions now hampering trade and to permit the natural operation of the law of supply and demand.

A petition was placed in circulation on the floor of the exchange asking Thomas W. Gregory, Attorney-General of the United States, to take such action as will prevent any further arbitrary price fixing of hogs and consequently of hog products by a so-called hog price fixing committee, which as far as we can learn is acting without any legal status.

The petition was similar to that which the Chicago men sent on Friday to Mr. Gregory, and the English was just as vigorous. Not every member on the floor signed the document, but the great majority of the men who were doing business or waiting for business to turn up did not hesitate long in affixing their signatures.

Business of the day had not far advanced before a member of the Stock Exchange telephoned to a member of the Produce Exchange that if a copy of the petition might be sent to the members to get Stock Exchange members to sign it. A copy of the document was forwarded and it is believed that it will be circulated among the stock brokers to-morrow.

While the first move in the campaign to stop price fixing is being made in the Produce Exchange, the movement is rapidly crystallizing into a nationwide movement on the part of grain dealers and men engaged in trading in other foodstuffs to prevail upon the Government to take its restraining hand from the business of the country and permit free trade to return to its original principles.

Text of Petition to Gregory. This is the petition which the Produce Exchange men are sending to Washington.

BOOMS FESS AS HOUSE SPEAKER

Representative Cooper Starts Candidacy of Fellow Member From Ohio.

REFORM ALSO DEMANDED

Abolition of Seniority in Appointment of Committee Chairman Advocated.

Special Dispatch to The Sun. WASHINGTON, Jan. 18.—The Speaker's fight of Representative Simeon D. Fess (Ohio), also chairman of the Republican Congressional Committee, will be made in the open from now on and will involve an attack on the seniority rule in the selection of committee chairmen for the next Congress.

Mr. Fess has for some weeks been discussed as a possible opponent of James R. Mann (Ill.), present minority leader. Mr. Fess's friends have discussed his qualifications freely; the Ohio member has not announced himself as a candidate and Mr. Cooper's statement to-day was made during Representative Fess's absence from the city.

Since the meeting of the Republican National Committee in Chicago opposition to Mr. Fess's candidacy has taken on increasingly aggressive form and supporters of Representative Gillett (Mass.) have been growing cause for optimism, particularly since recent disclosures showing that Mr. Mann received a roast of beef and a horse from one of the Chicago packers.

Longworth Stock Looking Up. Recently, however, the name of Representative Longworth (Ohio) has been mentioned with apparent vigor, although Mr. Fess's friends have insisted that the Ohio delegate is behind him.

Mr. Fess's friends have insisted that the Ohio delegate is behind him. Representative Cooper's announcement to-day is regarded in some quarters as recognition of the growing strength of Mr. Longworth. That the issues which will be involved in the Speaker's fight will come before the House is assured by the fact that a Republican conference for Tuesday night, the announced purpose is to discuss Republican policies, but to a large extent it is expected House politics will be considered.

Mr. Cooper's statement follows: "Never before in the history of our nation have we been confronted with so many important questions as we are to-day. Last November the people of our country, realizing this, turned to the Republican party for counsel and elected a Republican Congress. I hope and believe that the Republican party will prove worthy of the confidence of the American people."

People Demand Reform. "Last fall the Republican party through its press and its speakers attacked me vigorously for the old time seniority rule that has made the organization of Congress so defective and inefficient in the past. In the organization of the next Congress our party must not break faith and should select men for responsible positions of leadership on the basis of their qualifications and not by reason of seniority."

"I trust the Republicans will look this question squarely in the face. I represent one of the greatest manufacturing centers in the world. My people have no concern regarding the pension I will get but they do demand that I shall use my best efforts to see to it that the highest qualifications are placed at the head of important committees."

"In regard to the selection of a speaker I am fully convinced that no man could be selected who would be better fitted and qualified than S. D. Fess."

GERMANY WOTES FOR ASSEMBLY IN NATION TODAY

Powerful Parties March Separately, but Will Fight Together. SOCIALISTS IN THE LEAD

Conservative Groups Confident of Gaining Control of New National Body.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun from the London Times Service.

STOCKHOLM, Jan. 18.—The elections for a National Assembly are to be held in Germany to-morrow. One result of the revolution in Germany is that the attitude of parties is really inverted and those who once were called Schwarzscher pessimists by the Kaiser are now optimists, some are even utopian, while the loud voiced Pan-Germans have lost all hope of conquering and Germanizing the world and have resigned themselves to the fact that the Socialists will have to hide their opinions during the old regime, so now the upper class parties are afraid of expressing openly their opinion. The party of the Right are hiding under new names, all ending in "Volkspartei."

The Pan-Germans and Conservatives have become Deutsche-Nationale Volkspartei, with Count Westarp and Baron von Goop as their respective leaders. The former Centre is Christian Volkspartei and the leaders are Herr Ströhm and Erberber. The most of the National Liberals have joined the Deutsche Volkspartei, whose leader is Herr Stresemann.

Monarchists Cling to Hope. The real programmes of the different parties are all hidden behind vague promises of peace, freedom, order and bread, but the fact is they are little changed. As of overthrown aristocrats in all revolutions, one can say they have learned nothing, forgotten nothing. Only the first is openly monarchistic and militaristic, while the others declare themselves ready to collaborate with the Republic, but are certainly at the bottom of their hearts attached to the old times, though they understand that a monarchistic central revolution is impossible.

The three parties of the Right are certainly all monarchists, though they declare themselves for socialization in vague terms with many reservations. Their hatred against England is entirely unchangeable and they hardly hide their hopes for revenge. They are all nationalistic, and the Deutsche-Nationale are even openly against the league of nations.

Still Dread England. Of the actual situation they are very pessimistic, and I often heard them say: "England is the greatest danger to us. The Bolsheviks overtook Germany and made their country a battlefield only to keep the Bolsheviks back at the Rhine to save the Empire from the Bolshevists. They pretend to believe England intends to crush Germany forever by giving the Bolsheviks a free field and keeping up the blockade."

When fishing for votes in the election campaign they talk of the Bolshevik danger to private property. The Bolshevists count on the votes of all the Junkers and a great number of farmers, but are certainly the weakest party. The Christianische Volkspartei, which is the majority of the whole of the clergy, many South German peasants and a great number of middle class women. The Deutsche Volkspartei, which is the majority of the industrial and commercial. These parties have all adopted the motto to march separately, to fight together. The Deutsche-Nationale will not get any representation at all in many circles.

Theodor Wolff, whom I saw the other day, looks rather optimistically at the situation, though all through the war he had been a strong supporter of the Bolshevists and that Germany in a fairly short time will recover from the actual crisis. The programme of the National Socialist or Social Democratic Partei is well known, slow socialization, election of Judges and officials, highly increased taxation, and the separation of State and church.

They are far the strongest party, and count on the votes of the middle class of the country, where 60 per cent. of the population is industrial. In many places they will collaborate with the Independent Socialists in the election.

Independents Also Strong. The Independent Socialists are also strong in numbers. They stand on the basis of the Erfurt programme of 1891. They broke out of the Social Democratic party during the war only on the question of voting war credits. Their programme in this respect is very important, but one would think that the noise and confusion they are causing, but they make up for numbers by fanaticism.

The Government seems now determined at any price to prevent them from grasping the dictatorship even in Berlin, but it is not impossible that they will succeed in this. They are not only in Berlin but in places in the country, where they have many adherents among the younger peasants lately returned home to their villages from the army.

The elections take place undisturbed. There is no doubt the two Socialist parties will get a strong majority, especially as a great number of voters will vote for them. The opposition not only between the Spartacus and Ma-

PEACE CONGRESS WILL TRY KAISER; LEAGUE OF NATIONS TO COME FIRST; POINCARE OPENS HISTORIC SESSION

ENGLAND EAGER TO MELT ARMY

Demobilization One of the Chief Objects of Interest Now.

HEAVY BILL IS URGED

League of Nations of Secondary Interest as Peace Council Gathers.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.

PARIS, Jan. 18.—Drawing up and the limitation of the armaments are likely to be among the cardinal points of the programme which the British will advocate at the beginning of the peace conference. These points are considered by a large section of the public in Great Britain as more important than the immediate formation in all its details of the league of nations. Of course the British desire sincerely to see the league created, with every possible means of preventing the recurrence of war, but the foremost idea expressed, not only by thoughtful Englishmen but by the millions of soldiers still in the army or now being discharged, is "It never must happen again."

The British are earnest in their desire to prevent future wars. Premier Lloyd George has said he believes peace with Germany should be created before the peace at the earliest moment, so that the sword can be beaten into the ploughshare. It is not necessary that the league of nations, with all its appendages, should be created before the practical question of peace are settled. It will be enough for common sense men if the Allies immediately upon convoking the conference agree upon and declare to the world the broad principles of the league of nations, and then proceed to carry out the work of peace, entrusting in the meantime to some sort of committee the work of embodying the principles enunciated in definite form for consideration immediately after peace is signed.

In Accord With Wilson. It seems safe to say that President Wilson will find or has found already hearty cooperation in almost any "pacifist" ideas he may have. In fact there are those who go so far as to assert that the British delegation will not agree to abolish universal military service and limit armies to small forces, something like the American army before the war. Great Britain of course is essentially a naval power and has had little use for a large army herself prior to the present war.

Now that the war practically is over the fact that the British are not naturally a military people is asserting itself in the desire of nine-tenths of the British army to return home again. This feeling is comprehended readily by the American army. The great and growing force in Great Britain today is the laboring class, which every statesman must reckon increasingly.

This laboring class is essentially pacifist, not in the craven sense, but just as anti-war as the American pacifists; that is, they think that wars are wrong and they do not want to fight and did so only in self-defense. The laboring man in his own mind is eager to get out of khaki and into overalls again; they look to their representatives in the peace conference to effect this transfer with the minimum of delay.

It is taken for granted that no general demobilization is possible until the peace treaty either is signed or practically signed. So, although our military men laugh at the idea that the German army may fight again, they realize that so long as peace hangs in internal conditions in Germany are likely to remain uncertain.

Bolshevists a Factor. The Bolshevists may regain the upper hand and necessitate the sending of armies to police the world of Germany. It must be realized that Great Britain is not so far from Bolshevism herself. She has an element of local Bolshevism that would be strengthened by any undue delay in demobilization. Therefore the British would like to see the conference take up immediately the question of what is to be done with Germany, how much she is to be made to pay for the cities and towns ruined or

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GAG PLAN STIRS BRITISH PRESS

Clemenceau Is Assailed for Change as Premier From Attitude as Editor.

"WILL NOT WEAR MUZZLE"

London "Star" Says Americans Will Back English in Their Protests.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.

LONDON, Jan. 18.—A German Government wireless message says that Philipp Scheidemann, the Foreign Secretary, announced to-day, that the Government had decided to convoke the National Assembly February 16.

"Premier Clemenceau appears to have carried his anti-publicity proposal because France, Italy and Japan supported it against the United States and Great Britain. He is a masterful old gentleman, but his methods are not always democratic. He does not practice as Premier what he preached as editor. "He has made a serious mistake in trying to clap a muzzle on the British and American press. We will not wear it; we are not mad dogs, and we decline to be treated as if we were. "President Wilson has got hold of the American wire at both ends. We hope that Premier Lloyd George will get hold of the British wire at each end. "The argument for publicity is unanswerable. Fresh air is safer than foul; open windows are healthier than closed; freedom milder than fumes and fog. For our part we do not see why the peace conference should shudder and shiver at the light of day; it is not a Congress of Vienna, or a masked convocation of men of the Holy Alliance, or an international thieves' kitchen; it is a public body entrusted with the task of carrying out of the great principles and ideals formulated by President Wilson. "Why not do the work boldly and openly? There need be no morbidly neurotic regard for the inevitable differences of opinion. If unity can be maintained through a free press it is not worth a week's purchase."

WAITERS' PLEA REJECTED. War Labor Board Says It Has No Jurisdiction. WASHINGTON, Jan. 18.—Demands for higher wages and better working conditions filed with the War Labor Board by employees of a number of Chicago hotels, restaurants and clubs were dismissed today by the board. The decision said: "The case involves the activities in fields of production necessary for the effective conduct of the war."

WILSON TO SEE DEVASTATION. Will Visit Northern France Between Peace Sessions. PARIS, Jan. 18.—President Wilson will avail himself of the first opportunity between the meetings of the peace delegates at the French Foreign Office to visit the devastated regions of France.

NORTHERN PACIFIC FLOATED AT LAST Army Transport Expected to Come Into Dry Dock. A fleet of plying navy and wrecking tug pulled the stranded wreck of the Northern Pacific into deep water off Fire Island last night. Word that the big transport had been freed was flashed by wireless just after a collision with the headquarters of the Third Naval district, 280 Broadway, and there it was assumed that after a preliminary examination of the 2,450 soldiers she carried had been taken off three days after she piled up on the sand bar New York's day. So tightly was she gripped in the sand, however, that the straining tugs made little progress day by day despite several favorable winds and equally favorable tides.

Aboard the Northern Pacific when she slipped off the bar was her commander, Capt. Conroy, and a skeleton crew composed of the ship's non-coms. Apparently she had not been seriously damaged and it was taken for granted she would be able to come into New York on a trip of about fifty miles under her own steam. It was thought some of her hull plates may have been loosened or displaced and for that reason it was said the vessel would be placed in dry dock immediately, probably at the navy yard, for a more thorough inspection and overhauling.

STATE TO KEEP WAR FLAGS. 301st Artillery Will Deliver Them to Boston State House. BOSTON, Jan. 18.—Flags carried by the 301st Artillery during its service in France will be delivered into the custody of the State for safekeeping next Monday. Gov. Coolidge and his military staff will receive the colors in the Hall of Flags at the State House with appropriate exercises. The 301st formerly was a part of the Seventy-sixth Division, commanded by Major Gen. Harry E. Hodges. Most of its members were from this State.

Dr. Elliot Heads Relief Drive. BOSTON, Jan. 18.—The appointment of Dr. Charles W. Elliot, president emeritus of Harvard University, as honorary chairman of the Massachusetts committee of the American Committee for Relief in the Near East, was announced to-day. To the Massachusetts committee has been assigned the task of raising \$1,500,000.

German Assembly Will Convoke on Feb. 16

LONDON, Jan. 18.—A German Government wireless message says that Philipp Scheidemann, the Foreign Secretary, announced to-day, that the Government had decided to convoke the National Assembly February 16.

BOCHES LOSE TO REDS AT MITAU

Defeated Troops Abandon Supplies to Bolsheviki—Courland Capital Affire.

MORE PETROGRAD RIOTS

Soldiers From China and Korea Suppress Parades of Starving Workmen.

By the Associated Press. LONDON, Jan. 18.—Mitau, the capital of Courland, has been occupied by the Bolsheviki, according to a German wireless dispatch received here to-day. The Germans were obliged to leave behind numerous guns and supplies of ammunition.

After the Germans evacuated Mitau a big fire started, destroying a great number of houses in the centre of the town. A German Government wireless message received to-night says: "Starving workmen are parading the streets of Petrograd and many riots have occurred. These were suppressed by troops from China and Korea, who were welcomed by the Bolsheviki as pioneers of the Oriental Revolution. "The extension of the armistice treaty was signed at Treves Saturday afternoon by State Secretary Erberber. "Foreign Minister Litvinoff of the Russian Bolsheviki Government has made several proposals on behalf of the Soviet regime, through the medium of a friendly emissary for the opening of negotiations with the Entente according to the Evening Standard to-day. None of these propositions, however, has been substantial enough to receive serious consideration either in Paris or London.

The main conditions of the Bolsheviki are that their system is maintained intact, with amnesty for all crimes committed in their name, and that their confiscation of property and money be recognized as lawfully enacted measures. GERMAN DELEGATES ARE FIRMLY BOUND Will Not Go Beyond Wilson's Programme. BASEL, Jan. 18.—The German Government, according to a dispatch from Berlin, will decline through its delegates its readiness to discuss with other States to disarm on land and sea and in the air. Germany, it is declared, already has realized the greater part of the armistice and it is claimed that this fact renders unjustifiable the retention of her men as prisoners by the Allies. "The German Government further declares that Germany will demand the return of her colonies. Germany, it adds, will recognize the principle of the right of self-determination, which should be applied to Germany as it was before the war, especially as regards Alsace-Lorraine. The German delegates will support the creation of a league of nations in accordance with the proposals of President Wilson.

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MINISTERS PUT FATE IN ORLANDO'S HANDS Reconstruction of Italian Cabinet Left to Premier. ROME, Jan. 18.—An official note issued to-day says: "Since the conclusion of the armistice and following a discussion in the chamber and the vote on credits, the Ministers have thought it well to place their portfolios at the disposal of the Premier for a reconstruction of the Cabinet. The events which followed and the absence of Premier Orlando delayed the plan, which was taken up at a Cabinet meeting held last Wednesday."

Train Hits Automobile; One Dead. Special Dispatch to The Sun. ATLANTIC CITY, Jan. 18.—An electric express train smashed into an automobile at Linwood, N. J., and seriously killing Harry Ireland, 17, and seriously injuring Mrs. Hattie Long and her daughter Fannie on their way here in the automobile. Harvey Ireland, brother of Dr. Ireland, was driving. He escaped injury.

27 Nations at Table. It was an assemblage of the statesmen of the world, impressive in the picture presented as the spokesman of twenty-seven nations arranged themselves around the long tables. America and Great Britain were at the head of the horseshoe, where the two longitudinal tables were joined. On the outside of the left hand table sat Britain's children, whose recognition was one of the greatest acts of the conference. Austria first, China next and India next. The Japanese came after the British colonies. Inside of both tables sat the smaller nations. Cuba and America's ward

Responsibility for Starting of War Gets Early Place on Calendar.

CLEMENCEAU IN CHAIR French Premier Chosen Unanimously on Nomination by Wilson.

MOST OF WORK IN SECRET Method Devised by Which Republicans in Senate Will Be Informed Privately.

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PARIS, Jan. 18.—The curtain has risen at last upon the final act of the great war. Standing between his brother President of the United States and Foreign Minister Balfour of Great Britain and facing the delegates of the twenty-seven nations convened to lay the foundation of the new world peace President Poincare this afternoon at the Quai d'Orsay formally opened the Congress of Paris, as it will be known in history. In the name of France, its host, he solemnly expressed the hope that its labors would end in removing the menace of aggression by armed force forever from the world.

The fateful character of the conference was emphasized in these first proceedings when it was determined not only to write a new world charter but to bring to the bar of justice the authors of the crimes which led to the convocation of this momentous gathering. Premier Clemenceau presented an indictment virtually of the Kaiser in proposing that one of the first acts of the congress should be to fix the responsibility of the authors of the war, to which the congress gave its unanimous consent. Thus the conference that formally opened to-day will become the trial court of the Kaiser.

League of Nations Next. Overshadowing this subject, Premier Clemenceau asserted, was the question of a league of nations, which, he said, would have first consideration at the next full session of the peace congress. Practically all the seventy-two delegates to the peace conference were assembled around the great horseshoe table in the famous clock room of the Foreign Office for the opening scene. The public galleries, however, were not admitted, but in a great adjoining room sat the press representatives of three continents.

All eyes were fixed upon the President of the United States when in felicitous phrases he proposed as the first business of the conference that Premier Clemenceau should be permanent chairman, marking the first parliamentary act of America, which was of epochal character.

The peace congress was emphasized not only by this participation of America but as Premier Clemenceau said in the course of his speech of acceptance, in breaking all historical precedents by throwing open the door upon its proceedings, in taking up first the responsibility for breaking the peace of the world and in the participation of the nations to present their respective national claims.

Hundred Correspondents Present. All other matters were suspended to-day for the first meeting of the great congress. All the press representatives were admitted to this opening, temporarily solving the troublesome question of seating the hundred correspondents taking places in an adjoining room looking on the proceedings through four airlocks. The crowd outside assembled early along the quay to watch the arrival of the delegates. A company of French infantry was posted in the courtyard with a band for the arrival of the French President. The hall began filling early with secretaries, the diplomats of the smaller nations were the first of the members to appear, about 2 o'clock. There was a gold chair at the head of the horseshoe for President Poincare; slowly the other chairs around the table were filled, the Indian princes with their turbans wearing the only distinctive costumes. Gen. Bliss was among the few uniformed delegates, the others wearing frock coats. The index to their nationalities.

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