

HOOVER MAY TESTIFY IN SUGAR PROBE TO-DAY

Senate Committee Hopes to Close Investigation and Prepare for Coal Inquiry. REED AND BABST WRANGLE

Senator and Witness Occupy Much Time Regarding Alleged Fixing on Louisiana Crop—Administration's Prices Blamed.

WASHINGTON, December 19.—The Senate sugar investigation continued to-day, with Earl D. Babst, president of the American Sugar Refining Company, testifying largely concerning the fixing of the price of the Louisiana crop and its relation to the beet sugar when the shortage in the East first became acute, and in answer to charges of Claus A. Spreckels, which he characterized as small talk.

Some members of the committee hope to be able to call Food Administrator Hoover and George M. Rolph, director of the sugar division of the administrative board, to-morrow and close the investigation into sugar so as to begin the coal investigation, but it is doubtful if the hearing can be completed by then.

Senator Reed to-night declared that two important facts had been verified in the maze of testimony. "It has been established by Mr. Babst's testimony, in corroboration of other testimony before the committee," Senator Reed said, "that there would have been no sugar shortage except for two things, for which the food administration is responsible.

"In the first place, it has been shown that refiners were kept out of the Cuban market until such time as the food administration deemed it wise to proceed. Meantime, refiners' supplies of raw sugar were depleted.

"In the second place, so much quibbling was entailed by the policy of naming one fixed price for Louisiana sugars that the planters finally, in disgust, have begun using their raw sugar in the production of cheap grades, which they attempt to get into the market at a low price. The result is that of 125,000 tons available some weeks ago, only about 50,000 tons have reached the refiners and, through them, the public markets.

BLAMES ADMINISTRATION FOR SUGAR SHORTAGE

"If competition and the old law of supply and demand had been permitted to prevail, Cuban and Louisiana sugars would have been bought by the refiners and put on the market. And there would have been no shortage such as we have experienced."

Most of the afternoon was consumed by wrangling between Senator Reed and Mr. Babst. Senator Reed repeatedly sought to bring out an admission that Mr. Babst had had something to do with the price to be paid by his company for 100,000 tons of raw Louisiana sugar. He failed in this. Then he endeavored to bring out the terms of the contract between the American Sugar Refining Company and the planters, but Babst objected to the use of the word "contract."

"It was not a contract," Babst said, "but merely an offer to accept sugars in case they made a tender of the sugars on the terms outlined.

The price of \$6.35 a hundred pounds, he asserted, was agreed on by Mr. Hoover, George N. Rolph, head of Mr. Hoover's sugar division, and John M. Parker, Federal food administrator for Louisiana. He would not admit he or his company had designated the figure or had said they would accept it if it were set. An arrangement by which half of the 100,000 tons was to be bought at \$6.35 and the other half at \$6.29 1/2, with the planters paying part of the freight, was described.

It was shown that planters later refused to sell at the latter figure and that, after several telegrams had passed between him and Mr. Parker on the one hand and Mr. Babst on the other, Babst finally "voluntarily" agreed to pay \$6.35 for all the sugar. Babst denied that efforts of Claus A. Spreckels and other refiners to buy in Louisiana sugar at \$6.35 had anything to do with his "voluntarily" going up to \$6.35. There was further quibbling over sugar sold to France through the British "royal" commission.

"If you many French contracts for sugar did you cancel in 1917?" asked Senator Reed.

"None," replied Babst. "In view of the great scarcity of sugar in this market, and in view of supplies held in our warehouses."

"Did you cancel your contract?" Senator Reed insisted.

"No, we did not. We merely postponed the date of delivery until we could get supplies from the new crop."

Babst went on to explain that the sugar contracted for by France was turned over to the army, navy, Belgian relief and commercial markets. Senator Reed forced him to admit, however, that his company usually did business with these agencies, and so should have supplied them without depriving the French.

BABST GIVEN SHARP THRUST BY REED Senator Reed wound up his share of the questioning with a sharp thrust at Babst.

NO LIABILITY FIXED FOR DEATH OF SEAY

Coroner's Inquest Results in Finding That Man Was Asphyxiated by Gas. Inquest conducted yesterday by Coroner Whitfield into the death of William O. Seay, who died last Friday afternoon at his home, 1622 Taylor Street, resulted in the finding that Seay came to his death as a result of being asphyxiated by illuminating gas while asleep in his room. No liability was fixed.

There was no cap on the end of the service pipe in the Seay home, it was testified. Joseph M. Shelton, City Inspector of Gas, stated that the pipes in the house were inspected on October 18, 1916, and the inspection approved November 1, following. Service connections were made November 23. He further stated that the inquest that the City ordinance did not require a cap on the end of the service pipe, and that the stop cock in the street was considered a sufficient safeguard.

Testimony further showed that on Friday afternoon, the owner of the home where Seay lived, W. Kelly, Jr., 800 West Cary Street, and T. O. Collins, a former employee of the City Engineer's office, went to the house to thaw frozen water pipes and find where the pipe had burst. He testified that he did not tamper with the gas fixture at all, but that when they again entered the house the odor of gas was detected, and he returned to the street and tightened the gas cock. He found it turned on slightly, but stated that he was positive that he had not touched it the first time. Collins had an attorney to represent him at the inquest.

No gas fixture, nor meter had ever been installed in the Seay home. The mother and sister of the dead man testified as to finding him in his bed overcome.

MINES AT GAYTON WILL SUPPLY CITY

(Continued from First Page.) especially in the use of anthracite, the supply of which is limited.

This commission will gather information affecting its immediate locality, reporting weekly to the State administrator for Richmond. The body will also practically handle all fuel matters in this city, including investigations into the status of the contracts between the jobbers and industrial plants, especially where such contracts call for deliveries at rates lower than those established by President Wilson.

Chairman Blair will confer with the Administrative Board to-day over the advisability of observing "lightless nights" in Richmond on Sundays and Thursdays, and a reduction in the street lighting system. Mr. Blair said last night that he would suggest to the board that Superintendent Trafford of the Electrical Department, be requested to report on conditions, since there was some doubt as to any material saving in fuel through a reduction in electric lighting.

The electric plant is operated in the main by water power, he said, and he had not been advised how great a saving could be effected by reducing the light. In event it was shown that no material saving would result, the commission will recommend to the administration that this city be allowed to continue its present lighting, although it is possible that the ornamental lights on Broad Street will be eliminated two nights each week. These lights are being extinguished at 11 o'clock each night, ninety minutes earlier than formerly.

Another feature of the fuel situation that will be looked into by the Richmond commission is the daily output of the Gas Plant. If the supply is sufficient to warrant its more extensive use for cooking purposes, the people of Richmond will be urged to use gas instead of coal, that the fuel supply may be correspondingly conserved.

Mr. Administrator Byrd has just dispatched O. A. Chandler to investigate the report that the Southern Railway Company was taking over the entire output of the mines owned by the United Collieries Company, of Lee County. The railroad was allowed 42 per cent of the mine's output, but it is said to be taking practically all of it, while the city of Bristol and the State Asylum for the Insane at Marion is suffering for lack of fuel.

Youths Try Wild-West Holdup. Two young fellows, apparently seventeen years old, were seen in the store of G. J. Porter, 401 East Leigh Street, yesterday afternoon, and, at the point of a pistol, demanded \$5 from the merchant. Mr. Porter said when a customer approached the youths became frightened and ran away.

Asks Use of Blues' Armory. Mrs. W. A. Cheatwood yesterday requested the Administrative Board to grant her permission to use the Blues' Armory the night of January 19 for the purpose of giving an entertainment for the Ninth Company, Virginia Coast Artillery. The request was referred to Major James Wyatt, commander of the battalion, for report and recommendation.

SENATE BEGINS INQUIRY INTO FREIGHT SITUATION

To Be Conducted During Holiday Recess, and Includes Rail and Water Lines. COMMITTEE TO MEET TO-DAY

Investigation to Be More Constructive Than Critical—Action Taken Despite President's Intimation He Would Present Plans After Recess.

(By Associated Press.) WASHINGTON, December 19.—Senate inquiries into the transportation situation, both rail and ship, have been added to the series of war activity investigations to be conducted by Congressmen during the Christmas recess. When Congress adjourned yesterday until January 2, the Senate left behind it five investigations; army preparations and sugar in full swing, one on Senator La Follette's St. Paul speech pending, and those on railroad and shipping affairs to be begun. A House committee is hearing testimony on the navy's activities.

The Senate's decision to investigate the railroad situation was taken despite the fact that administration spokesmen indicated President Wilson will present his plans for solution of the problem after the holiday recess. The Senate interstate commerce committee was authorized to start the inquiry before Congress reassembles, January 3.

Senator Cummins, in proposing the investigation, asserted that he expected it would be constructive instead of critical and the most report of the Interstate Commerce Commission suggesting either government operation or repeal of the anti-pooling laws, and a Federal loan as a way out of present difficulties probably would be considered.

Equally quick was the action on Senator Harding's resolution to investigate the shipping situation. The resolution, prompted, it was announced by its sponsor, by the continual reorganization of the Shipping Board and the Emergency Fleet Corporation, was approved and the commerce committee instructed to proceed with an investigation. Chairman Fletcher called the committee to meet Thursday to arrange its procedure.

In its last business day the Senate took final action toward submission to the States of the Federal prohibition amendment and arranged for the disposal of Wash coal and oil leasing bill January 7.

The House passed a resolution to remove doubt as to the application of the excess profit taxes to Federal officers except the President and Supreme Court justices, and arranged to take up the surtax amendment January 10.

COMMISSION APPOINTED

Body Authorized by Carolina Legislature Created Yesterday by Governor Bickett. (Special to The Times-Dispatch.) RALEIGH, N. C., December 19.—The State Educational Commission, provided for by the last Legislature, for a general investigation and recommendation as to the educational system and laws of the State, was appointed to-day by Governor Bickett. R. H. Wright, president of the East Carolina Teacher Training School; E. C. Brooks, of the chair of education in Trinity College; Dr. Charles E. Brewer, president of Meredith College; C. C. Wright, superintendent Wilkes County schools, and L. J. Bell, superintendent of the Richmond County schools and Rockingham city school, are the appointees.

Old Folks Saved From Suffering

Mrs. Mary A. Dean, Taunton, Mass., in her 87th year, says: "I thought I was beyond the reach of medicine, but Foley's Kidney Pills have proven most beneficial in my case."

Mr. Sam A. Hoover, High Point, N. C., writes: "My kidney trouble was worse at night and I had to get up from five to seven times. Now I do not have to get up at night, and consider myself in a truly normal condition, which I attribute to Foley's Kidney Pills, as I have taken nothing else."

Mrs. M. A. Bridges, Robinson, Mass., says: "I suffered from kidney ailments for two years. I commenced taking Foley's Kidney Pills ten months ago, and though I am 61 years of age, I feel like a 15-year-old girl."

Foley's Kidney Pills are a tonic, strengthening and up-building, and restore normal action to the kidneys and to a disordered and painful bladder. They act quickly and contain no dangerous or harmful drugs. Sold everywhere.—Adv.

NATIONAL GUARD HEALTH CONDITIONS IMPROVING

Death Rate Lower Than Preceding Week, but Pneumonia and Meningitis Increase. (By Associated Press.) WASHINGTON, December 19.—General improvement in health conditions in the National Guard divisions for the week ending December 14 was reported to-day by the division of field sanitation. In the National Army, however, there was an increase in the total cases of pneumonia, measles and meningitis, due to renewed outbreaks in a few of the divisions. "With the exception of the Thirty-fourth, Thirty-fifth and Fortieth Divisions," said the report, "but few new cases of measles are reported from the National Guard camps. Pneumonia following measles is also rapidly decreasing in all except three of the divisions, in which measles has been epidemic."

Those three divisions are the Thirtieth, Thirty-fourth and Thirty-ninth. Meningitis has increased in only the Thirtieth and Thirty-fifth Divisions. Marked increases in measles is reported in the Eighty-seventh and Ninetieth National Artillery Divisions. With a slight increase in the Eighty-ninth, pneumonia conditions in all divisions except the Ninetieth improved during the week, but seventy-seven new cases were reported in that division, an increase of thirty-six over last week. There has been a marked increase in meningitis in the Eighty-first Division, but the epidemic in the Eighty-ninth Division continues to decline.

Deaths for the week in the guard division totaled 153, as against 199 the week previous, and those in the National Army ninety-seven, against seventy-four the week before. Of the guardsmen dying, 143 succumbed to pneumonia and twelve to meningitis. In the National Army there were sixty-nine deaths from pneumonia and eighteen from meningitis.

There was a decrease of 128 cases of pneumonia in the guard camps, the total for the week being 294, as against 422 the week previous. Cases of measles decreased from 2,533 the previous week to 1,055, and meningitis from forty-two to thirty.

In the National Army there was an increase of 124 cases of pneumonia, with 224 this week, against 170 the week before. There were 2,351 cases of measles this week, against 1,339 the previous week, while meningitis cases were sixty-one, against thirty-five last week.

Consistory Kieiss Officers. The annual election of officers will take place in Dalcho Consistory to-night, at the close of the meeting of the Lodge of Perfection, which has been called for 8 o'clock for a business session. The usual date of the Scottish Rite meetings is on the fourth Monday, but on account of its falling this year on Christmas eve the meeting will be held to-night.

The Scottish Rite bodies have been particularly active this year and will show the largest gain in membership in the history of the Rite here.

DEATH OF DENTIST'S WIFE SHROUDED IN MYSTERY

Dr. Johnson Calls Upon Police to Find Where She Obtained Poison. Dr. L. J. Johnson, whose young wife died Saturday night after taking a capsule containing cyanide of potassium, yesterday requested Detective Captain Wright to make every possible effort to ascertain whence his wife obtained the poison by which she died. Pursuant to this request the captain has assigned Sergeant-Detective John Wiley to investigate the case.

A box marked "poison" was yesterday found at the home of the young woman, and capsules found in it were analyzed by Coroner Whitfield. It developed that they contained cyanide. Mrs. Johnson told Mrs. E. R. Stump, at whose home she was taking dinner Saturday night, that she wished to take a quinine capsule, and this fact linked with the finding of the capsules of quinine in the box with a poison label has led to the theory that a cyanide capsule became mixed with the quinine in some way, or was perhaps left in the box and the harmless remedy placed in the same box by mistake.

Just what the true source of the deadly poison was, Coroner Whitfield has been unable to determine. Dr. Johnson returned yesterday to his home in Middlesex, N. C., where he is engaged in the practice of dentistry. Dr. Johnson's mother is ill at that place, and just as soon as he can return, he intends to do so in order to clear up the mystery which surrounds the death of his young wife.

Mrs. Johnson was formerly Miss Alice Knight, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Knight, of the East End. She was nineteen years old.

WIRING GREAT TREE

Single Mast Being Set on Ford Lot for Community Celebration Christmas Eve. Wiring of the giant cedar on the Ford Hotel lot—the Community Christmas Tree—began yesterday, and electricians of the City Electric Plant, with the assistance of linemen of the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company and the Virginia Railway and Power Company, expect to complete their work to-day. The electric star over the tree will probably be placed to-day, the wires having been installed yesterday.

The work of decorating the tree will be started as soon as the electric lights are in place, weather permitting. Mrs. W. A. Burruss, chairman of the committee, said yesterday that she expected to have the tree decorated before the end of the week. Everything will be in readiness Saturday night for the celebration Christmas Eve. Members of the Fire Department will assist Mrs. Burruss in placing the decorations on the cedar.

GENERAL RICHARDSON DETAILED TO CAMP LEE

Will Command Depot Brigade—Has Been Engaged in Road Work in Alaska. (Special to The Times-Dispatch.) WASHINGTON, December 19.—Orders have been issued by the War Department detailing Brigadier-General Wilds H. Richardson to command the depot brigade at Camp Lee. General Richardson expects to assume his new duties at once.

He has been engaged for more than a week completing his report to the War Department as chairman of the Alaska Roads Commission. As head of that body he has built hundreds of miles of highways, through almost impassable stretches of the frozen North, devoting nearly ten years to this work. Before being ordered to Alaska, General Richardson was a famous infantry officer, having fought gallantly in the Indian and Spanish wars.

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Thalhimer Brothers Handkerchiefs for Men. Inexpensive and Appropriate as Gifts. Men's Fine Imported Hand-Hemstitched Linen Handkerchiefs. Suitable for embroidering initials, 20c. Men's 50c Hand-Embroidered Initial Handkerchiefs at 40c (COLORED INITIAL). These lovely Imported Handkerchiefs are all pure linen; only 25 dozen to close. Men's Plain Linen Hemstitched Handkerchiefs at 25c. Men's Fine Mellow French Colored Initial Handkerchiefs Beautifully Boxed. 6 to a Box for 75c. Men's Fine Imported Fancy Jap Silk Handkerchiefs Wonderful Values Offered at 25c and 50c. Men's Finest Linen Irish Hand-Embroidered Initial Handkerchiefs 3 TO A BOX FOR \$2.25 and \$3.00. These exquisite examples of the Irish peasants' needlework must be seen to be appreciated.

Select Your Stove or Heater At Pettit's. You'll be satisfied in quality and price. For here you will find every wanted style and size—for coal, wood, oil or gas—at lower-than-usual-prices. Let us demonstrate how you can save coal with Pettit's Hot Blast and Pettit's Oak Heaters. Come in to-day—pick out the one you want and let us install it before cold weather sets in for good.

Use Sugar Sparingly—Do Not Waste It. Everyone—manufacturers and householders—should use sugar sparingly for the present. The supply is limited and will be until the new crop of cane can be harvested and shipped from Cuba and the Tropics. The supply will then be ample. In the meantime, the people of the New England and Atlantic Coast States should use sugar sparingly. Grocers should limit their sales to any one family. No one should hoard or waste sugar. Do not pay an increased retail price. The Franklin Sugar Refining Company "A Franklin Sugar for every use" Granulated, Dainty Lumps, Powdered, Confectioners, Brown

THE LARGEST CREDIT JEWELERS IN THE WORLD 19 E. BROAD CASTELBERG'S NEXT TO THE COHEN COMPANY. Dinner Rings Princess Rings Levallieres Rings, all kinds Bracelets Watches Sterling Yachites Silverware. Cigarette Cases Match Cases Toilet Sets Military Sets Sharing Sets Picture Frames Silver Services. Tie Clasps Belts Signet Rings Bracelets Pocket Knives Bar Pins Scarf Pins Emblem Charms Emblem Rings Emblem Rings Chime Clocks. Special Christmas Bargains in Watches. We fully guarantee every watch we sell and agree to keep them in perfect repair for one year without charge. Men's Watches \$4.50 Up. Bracelet Watches \$15.00 Up. Our Terms to All Pay 50 Cents a Week. On \$25 or less we ask only 50c weekly. On \$25 to \$50 we ask only \$1.00 weekly. On \$50 to \$75 we ask only \$1.50 weekly. On \$75 to \$100 we ask only \$2.00 weekly. Larger amounts in the same proportion, and payments may be made monthly or semi-monthly.

On the Curb Market. 10.00 Aetna Explosives 7.00 8.00 9.00 10.00 11.00 12.00 13.00 14.00 15.00 16.00 17.00 18.00 19.00 20.00 21.00 22.00 23.00 24.00 25.00 26.00 27.00 28.00 29.00 30.00 31.00 32.00 33.00 34.00 35.00 36.00 37.00 38.00 39.00 40.00 41.00 42.00 43.00 44.00 45.00 46.00 47.00 48.00 49.00 50.00 51.00 52.00 53.00 54.00 55.00 56.00 57.00 58.00 59.00 60.00 61.00 62.00 63.00 64.00 65.00 66.00 67.00 68.00 69.00 70.00 71.00 72.00 73.00 74.00 75.00 76.00 77.00 78.00 79.00 80.00 81.00 82.00 83.00 84.00 85.00 86.00 87.00 88.00 89.00 90.00 91.00 92.00 93.00 94.00 95.00 96.00 97.00 98.00 99.00 100.00