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NO. 3757.

WEATHER—FAIR AND WARMER.

WASHINGTON, D. C., SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1917.

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U. S. READY FOR WAR WITH GERMANY; CLASH EXPECTED WITHIN 48 HOURS; AMERICAN VESSEL SUNK BY U-BOAT

SUBMARINE SINKS U. S. FREIGHTER; WAR IS AWAITED

Germany Flings New Defiance Into Teeth of America by Sinking Vessel Off Scilly Islands.

LOSS OF LIFE IS UNKNOWN

Steamer Which Sailed From Galveston, Tex., On January 6, Was Only Twenty-Four Hours From Port.

Special Cable to The Washington Herald.

Amsterdam, Feb. 3.—Germany flung the red rag of defiance in the face of the United States today when one of her submarines sank the steamer Housatonic, a ship of 3,143 tons, bound from Galveston to London.

Details of the sinking are meager. It is said, however, that the steamship was sunk without warning.

NO LIVES REPORTED LOST.

No lives are reported to have been lost.

The Housatonic was sunk just off the Scilly Islands. She was within twenty-four hours of her port and had barely entered the barred zone. The crew evidently was able to get out the life-boats before the vessel foundered.

The Housatonic was the property of the Housatonic Steamship Company of New York. She formerly was the Hamburg-American liner Georgia. She was purchased from the Hamburg-American Company on March 29 of last year for \$85,000. Previous to that time, since the beginning of the war, she had been laid up at New Orleans. She was 238 feet long, forty feet wide and had a depth of 20 feet. She sailed from Galveston for London on January 6. She made the trip via Newport News, where she took on cargo January 16.

CREW NUMBERED THIRTY-NINE.

Meager reports which have drifted in state that the crew of the submarine numbered thirty-nine. Of these fifteen are said to have been Americans and the rest of other nationalities. Whether they were picked up by the U-boat or whether they are now adrift on the high seas is unknown.

Fishing smacks and a number of small steamships which went to the scene shortly after news of the sinking became known have reported that they found nothing but small bits of wreckage. The torpedo evidently converted the steamer into driftwood.

Mailed Fist of Government Ready To Descend on All Interned Ships

New York, Feb. 3.—Everything is in readiness for the seizure of thirty-one interned German and Austrian vessels here.

"We simply await the word," said Collector of the Port Malone. Officials of the Hamburg-American Line, owners of many of the interned ships here, held a conference immediately upon learning of the breaking of diplomatic relations with Germany, but refused to make any statement.

"The severance of relations makes the situation here just a little more tense," said Collector Malone. "We have had time to make our preparations and stand ready to close the port and seize all enemy ships in the event such action is warranted. We will require no definite instructions from Washington. The seizure of ships would take place automatically."

Feverish activity is apparent at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Doubled guards have been thrown about all entrances. Rear Admiral Usher has recalled all passes to the yards, including those issued to newspaper men. No one is permitted to enter without first proving his business. Two ships, a mine and a cable layer, and the Grapeshot, an ammunition ship, were hurried into the drydock and a large force of men at once set at work overhauling them. On every ship in the yard, the seamen were busy at work preparing the ships for immediate departure, if so ordered. Rear Admiral Usher refused to make any statement as to who had issued orders for the activity.

Philadelphia, Pa., Feb. 2.—For the first time since the Spanish-American war, the Philadelphia Navy Yard was put on a war basis today following the announcement of severance of diplomatic relations with Germany. Commandant Russell closed the gates of League Island to all visitors.

The interned German auxiliary cruisers, Kroppprinz Wilhelm and Prinz Eitel Friedrich, which lie in the back channel,

were guarded by the battalions Kansas and North Dakota, while the German crews of 700 men will be transferred from their village beside the moored raiders to the old "Tipperary" Barracks, near the isolation hospital.

When the sun rose early today the German ships found themselves "covered" by the batteries of the battleship North Dakota. This, officials said, was a "precautionary measure."

Norfolk, Va., Feb. 3.—The former British steamer Appam, which was brought into port a year ago by a German prize crew after having been captured by the U.S. Navy, was taken over today by the United States government. The status of the vessel is now being established in the courts.

2 STATES MARSHAL NAVAL MILITIAMEN

Sea Reserves Called Out by Massachusetts and New York.

(By the International News Service.) Boston, Feb. 3.—The Massachusetts naval militia, under orders from Washington, mobilized tonight at their various armories. The naval unit will report to Commandant Rush at the Navy Yard, it was understood, to receive orders.

According to the opinion expressed in State militia circles, the naval reserves have been pressed into actual service. The report that the compliment of the navy is not up to a war-time standard, indicated, it was said, that the militiamen might see actual battleship service directly in case of real trouble.

New York, Feb. 3.—Gov. Whitman tonight, after a conference with Mayor Mitchell and National Guard officers, issued an order calling out all members of the State militia and the State naval reserves.

Their first duty will be the protection of the water sheds supplying the city of New York and the bridges in an about the city. About 20,000 men will be called out.

Austrian Ship's Crew Breaks Engine Parts; Another Plot Found

(By International News Service.)

New York, Feb. 3.—Immediately following receipt of the news that the United States had broken off relations with Germany, the crew of the interned Austrian freighter Himalaya, in Newark Bay, put the engines out of commission.

The piston heads and other parts were smashed.

Crews of the sixteen Hamburg-American and North German Lloyd liners interned in Hoboken, began swarming down the gang planks this afternoon, leaving the vessels on "leave of absence."

All of them said they had been given leaves and were seeking other quarters, though none professed to know the reason for the sudden leave.

The general exodus followed the discovery of the wrecking of the Austrian-American liner Himalaya in Newark Bay. The sailors said they understood their officers were remaining behind to "hand over" the ships to port authorities in the event of a crisis.

When questioned regarding rumors that preparations were being made to scuttle the interned ships, the sailors leaving the vessels invariably replied:

"Well, we don't know anything about that. We were told to take our things and get off the ship while we could."

The taxicab company which formerly handled the business of the two lines removed all of its cars from the piers near the interned liners, where they were stored when the war broke out.

WASHINGTON ASSUMES WAR-TIME APPEARANCE

Extraordinary Precautions Taken to Guard Government Property.

The United States was last night placed on the military and naval basis of a nation which has taken a serious step "short of war," following the break between this country and Germany. Naval and military orders, prepared in advance, were placed in effect immediately, following a conference between President Wilson, Secretary of War Baker and Secretary of the Navy Daniels at the White House.

When the conference was over the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy at once clamped down the lid of secrecy on all military and naval orders, all of the government buildings in Washington were closed except to those bearing credentials, an extra guard was thrown around all public buildings and the Capital took on all of its war-time habiliments.

State and municipal authorities throughout the United States were called upon to co-operate in guarding all Federal property, mints, assay offices, subtreasuries, arsenals, armories, bonded warehouses, appraisers' stores and similar structures.

Orders for extraordinary precautions to protect public buildings brought forth the full force of the Washington police department. Around the White House twenty-eight policemen were placed on duty instead of the usual thirteen. In three shifts, under three police sergeants, they will guard the entrances to the White House twenty-four hours a day. No one will be admitted to the White House grounds except through a single entrance, where military pass will be necessary. The same precautions were ordered at the State, War and Navy Department Buildings.

The status of German merchant ships in American ports caused some anxiety, but it was finally determined that the break in diplomatic relations in no way affected them, and that the United States, under international law, must respect their ownership.

Charges Plot to Murder Lloyd George with Darts

Derby, Feb. 2.—That it was planned to shoot Premier Lloyd George with poison darts was the sensational charge made by Attorney Frederick H. Smith today in opening the conspiracy case against Mrs. Alice Thealdon, her two daughters and her son-in-law, Alfred Hason, all charged with conspiracy to murder the premier and War Councilor Arthur Henderson. The attorney general referred to the prisoners as desperate and unpatriotic people.

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PRESIDENT INFORMS CONGRESS THAT RELATIONS ARE SEVERED

Startling Developments of the Day in International Crisis

President Wilson, in address to Congress, announces he has ordered all diplomatic relations with Germany severed.

Ambassador Gerard ordered to withdraw from Berlin.

German Ambassador von Bernstorff handed his passports.

President Wilson, Secretary of War Baker and Secretary of the Navy Daniels, in conference, discuss disposition of military forces of United States.

Government buildings in Washington and government plants throughout country closed to public and placed under heavy guard.

Extraordinary precautions ordered in instructions to agents of Department of Justice and Federal neutrality officials.

Municipal and State authorities called on to aid in guarding Federal property throughout country.

Congress clears way for naval appropriation bill with authorization for President to take over all industrial plants needed if emergency arises.

Senate prepares to enact stringent neutrality code.

Secretary of Treasury McAdoo and Senator Simmons, chairman of Finance Committee, confer and determine that nation's finances are ready for any strain.

White House and State Department aroused over reported sinking of American steamer Housatonic off Scilly Islands, in view of President's statement that he would again address Congress if Germany "sacrifices American lives or ships."

Austria delivers note to State Department, which may be indorsement of German submarine declaration.

Official reception of new Austrian Ambassador, Count Tarnowski, delayed.

Wave of support for President's decision comes from all over land, as evidenced by comment in Congress.

Black Shadow of War Seen In Capital As Word Comes Of Sinking of Housatonic

Senators and Representatives saw the grim shadow of war hovering over the United States last night, following receipt of the news that the American steamer Housatonic had been sunk by a German submarine, in pursuit of the Teuton policy of unrestricted warfare on the seas.

While guarded in their comment, the members of Congress all appeared to feel that the second visit of the President to Congress to secure authorization to use the armed forces of the nation to enforce the demands of the United States would not be long delayed.

"It is an extremely grave situation. It means serious developments, if early reports are substantiated," was the general opinion of Senators and Representatives interviewed by The Washington Herald.

The following comment was made:

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Senator Hitchcock, of Nebraska, ranking Democratic member of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate, said:

"I hope this report is not true. It means that the situation is much more serious, if this news is authentic. I would hardly care to comment on what constitutes an overt act. There are many things that enter into this situation before the United States actually declares war. In the absence of more details, I would hardly care to comment further."

Senator Sheppard, of Texas, said:

"This is certainly a momentous crisis, and it will be complicated if these reports of the sinking are true. I think the President's speech today was ideal, and it pleases me exceedingly that men of all parties—in fact the entire American nation—appears to enthusiastically indorse his course."

Representative John Jacob Rogers, of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said:

"As I interpret the early reports on the sinking of the Housatonic, it constitutes an overt act that will precipitate war, if verified. I do not believe that the time of the receipt of the news that diplomatic relations had been severed and the time of the sinking of this American vessel enters into the situation since the United States has never repudiated the terms of the Sussex note. However, it would be hardly wise to talk further in the absence of official information. I am satisfied, like the rest of the American people to rely upon the Americanism of the President to handle this situation."

Representative Matthews, of Pennsylvania, said:

"This is indeed sad. I can hardly credit Germany sinking an American ship and sacrificing American lives in the pursuit of her submarine policy. Certainly I trust that the later accounts will show that there is a mistake. If they do not then the American nation is confronted by one thing—that which was mentioned by the President at the close of his admirable address."

Senator Porter J. McCumber, of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate, said:

"The question of time may enter into the sinking of this American steamer, as I have no doubt that we will live up to our past record in taking care of our rights and ourselves. We don't take any

CONFERENCE HELD TO PLAN MOVING MILITARY FORCES

Late Into Night Chief Executive Discusses with Aids Steps to Be Taken in Emergency.

SITUATION NEVER SO GRAVE

General Belief in Official Circles is that War Cannot Be Averted Many Days Longer.

The United States, facing the probability of war with Germany within forty-eight hours, today is mobilizing into action all its available military resources.

No graver crisis has faced the nation since the civil war. Close on the heels of the President's announcement to the Senate that diplomatic relations with Berlin had been severed, the German admiralty flung a fresh challenge into the teeth of the President by sinking an American ship.

AMERICAN FREIGHTER SUNK.

The American freighter Housatonic, outward from Galveston was sunk, it is believed, by a German U-boat, off the Scilly Islands.

With this act of ruthless submarine warfare, Germany stripped from the issue, officials declare, the last shred of excuse for further delay of an armed clash between the two countries.

PRESIDENT LOCKS SELF IN.

President Wilson late last night locked himself in his study to thresh out the latter-day destiny of the republic. Haggard and bowed with anxiety, his aids and advisers have laid upon the shoulders of subordinates the routine tasks of state, that they may be free to grapple with the most fearsome crisis that has yet arisen from the European war.

Early in the afternoon the President went before the Congress and informed a grave, hushed assembly that all diplomatic intercourse between Germany and the United States had been severed. At almost the same moment an emissary of the State Department was handing his passports to the German Ambassador, Count Johann von Bernstorff.

GERARD ORDERED HOME.

American Ambassador Gerard, his diplomatic staff and all consular officials of this country have been ordered out of Germany.

The issue today is up to the President. Little hope is entertained that the freighter Housatonic was sunk under the rules of international law. On the contrary, it is fully believed in Washington that she invaded Germany's "barred" sea zone, and incurring the ghastly penalty of German "frivolousness," was sent to the bottom.

ALL DETAILS ARE LACKING.

Details concerning the sinking were unavailable at an early hour this morning. It was accurately reported, however, that most of her crew were Americans, and it was difficult to believe that they had been saved.

Late last night President Wilson called Secretary of War Baker into conference on the disposition of the military forces. The Secretary went to the White House and was closeted with the President for half an hour. He then returned to the War Department on his way to his home.

Secretary Baker said he could not discuss his conference. No announcement was forthcoming from the White House.

Congress Grets Wilson's Speech With Wild Outburst of Acclaim

In grave silence the legislative representatives of the people of the United States yesterday listened as President Wilson, in clear and ringing tones, told the world that this country had no alternative but to break with Germany.

With the greatest demonstration the halls of Congress has seen for years, they made it clear that the President's course was their course, and that he could depend upon a united country behind him. The President, plainly worn and worried, told Congress that despite the German announcement of relentless submarine warfare, he "could not believe that it is the intention of the German authorities to do what they have warned us they will do at liberty to do."

Just at the very moment that the President began his address to Congress, the State Department handed his passports to Ambassador von Bernstorff. And with the announcement by the President that this action had been taken, made in his

Greeted with Cheers. If any additional evidence was needed to emphasize the great seriousness of the crisis confronting the people of the United States it was shown in the presence on the floor of the House of Chief Justice Edward Douglas White, and the justices of the Supreme Court of the Nation and officials declared that never in the memory of any of them had the Supreme Court been present at a joint session other than in the regular way on the occasion of inaugurations.

Every one on the floor and the galleries listened with the most intense interest

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