

## AMERICAN MERCHANT SHIPS TO BE ARMED WITHIN 48 HOURS; PRESIDENT ONLY AWAITS VOTE AT CAPITOL BEFORE ACTING; SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON GERMAN PLOTS HELD SECRET BECAUSE OF DANGER TO LIVES OF INNOCENT PERSONS INVOLVED

### DRY BILL WILL GET SANCTION OF PRESIDENT

Opponents Will Be Given Hearing as Courteous Formality.

### WILSON'S MIND MADE UP

Believes Matter Purely Local and Executive Interference Improper.

President Wilson will sign the Sheppard bill making the District of Columbia "dry" territory. This announcement was unreservedly made by officials closest to the President today.

It was authoritatively stated, however, that the President will not sign the bill today, but will first give an opportunity to President William F. Gude and other officers of the District of Columbia Referendum Association to present their views.

There is the highest authority for the statement, however, that no arguments that may be presented by opponents of the "dry" bill will change the President's mind. He will give a hearing to these opponents, it was explained, only as a matter of courtesy and because they have requested a hearing.

Signatures Date Undecided.

Inasmuch as Congress is vested with authority to legislate for the District, the President is said to feel that it would be obviously improper for him to exercise the veto in a matter of purely local legislation.

Whether the President signs the bill tomorrow or waits until he goes to the Capitol on Sunday to sign bills at the close of Congress is undecided.

The District Commissioners today transmitted to the President a report on the bill which is believed to be signed or vetoed in view of the fact that Commissioner Newman was at the White House yesterday to urge the President to sign the bill. It is believed the Commissioners fully endorsed it.

It is customary to send every bill passed to the executive branch of the Government concerned with its enforcement for an indorsement, and the Sheppard bill was sent to the Commissioners immediately after it reached the White House yesterday, and has now been returned to the President for signature.

To Call On President.

A delegation, headed by Robert E. Mattingly, will call upon the President this afternoon to protest against his signing the bill. If the President does not agree to delay action on the bill, the delegation will be called for the National Rifles' Army at 8 o'clock, under the auspices of the Central Labor Union.

Congressman James A. Gallivan, of Boston, will speak against the action taken by Congress yesterday in the passing of the Sheppard bill without referendum. Robert E. Mattingly will speak, asking the people to go in a

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### EXONERATES DR. RITTER

Secretary Lansing Regrets Attack on Swiss Minister.

Secretary Lansing, after a talk with Dr. Paul Ritter, Swiss minister here, has absolved the minister of all blame for certain charges of undue German propaganda in his position in charge of German interests. The Secretary said:

"I consider Dr. Ritter's conduct perfectly proper, and regret very much the attacks made on him in the papers. It is a wrong impression of the feeling here. We ought not to have any feeling against a man doing his duty faithfully, even if he is carrying on the interests of a government with which we have severed relations."

Dr. Ritter had been charged in certain newspapers with having exceeded his authority as minister intrusted with carrying on any negotiations between this country and Germany and of having made use of his position to further the German cause.

### KAISER ILL, CONFINED TO HIS ROOM

AMSTERDAM, March 2.—Emperor William is confined to his room with a severe chill, Berlin dispatches reported today. His physicians are not apprehensive over his condition, but are insisting on all precautions.

### WETS IN HOUSE STAGE REVOLT

Revenge for Gag Rule on Dry Bill by Defeating "Pet" Measure.

On the basis that the District prohibition bill was jammed through the House under a gag rule, the "wets" of that body turned in today and defeated an Administration bill providing for the involuntary retirement of Federal judges.

This bill, which had passed the Senate, was displaced in the House two days ago by the prohibition bill, the "drys" voting to put the prohibition bill ahead of it. At that time there was no great amount of opposition to the judgeship bill, and it probably would have passed by a substantial majority.

Get Their Revenge.

However, when the judgeship bill, supported largely by Southern Democrats, who voted dry, called up the judgeship today, wet members from New York, Boston, and other cities had their revenge. They voted with the Republicans in opposition to the Administration bill, and defeated it, 206 to 192.

The Administration bill is dead for the session. It would have permitted the appointment of about sixteen additional Federal judges to relieve superannuated judges who have declined to retire at the age of seventy years. The bill authorized the President, whenever a superannuated judge would not retire, to appoint another judge to do most of the work in that jurisdiction.

On Altar of Prohibition.

The bill was sacrificed on the altar of District prohibition. One of the wets, discussing the vote today, said: "All of us would have voted for the judgeship bill two days ago, but the drys displaced it and defeated a rule to bring it up ahead of the District prohibition bill. Then after passing their prohibition bill, the drys thought they would put one over by reconsidering the judgeship bill and passing it. We were on guard for just such a move and defeated it in revenge for the tactics employed by the drys in passing the House and forcing through the District bill. This is not the only bill that will be defeated as a result of the District prohibition bill."

"ON BRINK OF WAR"—LODGE

Massachusetts Senator Urges Need of Extra Session.

Senator Lodge of Massachusetts, in the debate on the navy bill this afternoon, declared the United States was in a situation where it might go to war at any time. He said there should be an extra session and the entire Government ought to be here.

He said, further, that it should not be left to the minority to force an extra session.

The statement of Senator Lodge is looked upon as practically insuring the blockade of a number of the appropriation measures, thus compelling the President sooner or later to call an extra session.

### HIT BY AUTOMOBILE, DIES

Harry Sturgis, Knocked From Bicycle, Succumbs to Injuries.

Harry Sturgis, who was knocked from his bicycle at Tenth and E streets northwest by an automobile yesterday, died today at Emergency Hospital.

The police say the automobile was operated by Raymond B. Dickey, a lawyer, of 1702 Kilbourne place northwest. Coroner Nevitt ordered an inquest at the morgue at 3 o'clock this afternoon.

Sturgis was about forty years old and lived with his wife and two children at 632 Ninth street northeast. He was an inspector for the Washington Fertilizer Company, by whom he had been employed for a number of years. He was born in Georgetown and spent all his life in Washington.

### FOOD PROBERS URGE FARMING IN BACK YARDS

Will Ask Citizens' Co-operation in Effort to Lower Prices.

### FIND SUPPLIES ABUNDANT

Committee Named by Commissioners Informed Storage Houses Well Filled.

Fighting the high prices of food in Washington by the organization of clubs for the cultivation of back yards and other vacant spaces under direction of an expert was decided today by the food investigation committee appointed by the Commissioners.

Information came to the board from the Department of Agriculture that there is an abundance of food supplies in the country, and from other sources not stated, "that there are considerable quantities of food products in storage throughout the country, which probably are being held for speculative purposes."

Every resident who has a back yard and every owner of a vacant lot will be asked to co-operate in the utilization of the land for gardening.

Scientific Gardener May Aid.

The appointment by the Department of Agriculture of a scientific gardener to give practical instruction in "back-yard farming" will be sought by the committee. The first meeting probably will be held in the board room of the District building.

The committee today stated that it has been informed there is great difference between wholesale and retail prices of the local market. Their informant said he had found radishes selling at three bunches for 5 cents wholesale and on a 1 cent a bunch, while the same products were selling at retail at 5 and 3 cents a bunch. A number of retail and wholesale dealers have been invited to appear before the committee to give information regarding the supply of food products in Washington.

Explains Potato Prices.

The committee today received from a company operating a chain of stores in the city a letter declaring that the present price of potatoes is due to a combination of four causes. The first mentioned is the trend of distant market prices, which has been upward as producers were getting ready for the spring seed business.

The South, which was devastated by a terrific cold wave in January, which set the new crop back 30 per cent and delayed the digging from twenty to thirty days. When the extreme cold weather reached here, it is stated, thousands of bushels of potatoes were lost in kilns and cellars.

"Then from February 1 to 10," the letter continues, "the weather here was so extreme it was dangerous to haul potatoes to town so those who did haul them were able to realize extreme prices. The town was practically bare of supply and news items in the daily papers kept farmers informed of this scarcity, so they were loath to do future business, even at extreme prices, as they were looking for higher levels."

Probers Meet Daily.

The investigating committee, which is composed of George F. Roberts, superintendent of weights, measures and markets; Charles F. Nesbit, superintendent of insurance, and Dr. William C. Woodward, health officer, met today in the office of Mr. Roberts, chairman. Daily sessions and later public hearings will be held to which the public will be invited.

The committee repeated today that it wished to impress upon the public that its co-operation is desired and that all communications regarding food conditions will be welcomed and held in confidence.

### "SPUDS" DROP IN CHICAGO

Eggs and Hog Prices Remain at a Standstill.

CHICAGO, March 2.—The Chicago potato market today reflected the decreased use of that vegetable in a decrease in the wholesale price ranging from 15 to 20 cents a bushel.

### TWO AMERICANS ARE REPORTED U-BOAT VICTIMS

Official Dispatch Tends to Confirm Reports of Calgorn Castle Case.

### ANOTHER LINER SENT DOWN

Tratonian, Halifax for Liverpool, Torpedoed Without Warning at Night.

An official dispatch tending to confirm reports that two Americans were lost in the torpedoing of the British barge Calgorn Castle, Buenos Aires for Queenstown, reached the State Department today.

Another message told of the unwarmed torpedoing of the Donaldson liner Tratonian, Halifax for Liverpool, in a night attack, but reported that the one American aboard was saved.

The two Americans on the Calgorn Castle were William Jackson, of New York, and David Walker, of Baltimore, seamen.

The ship is reported to have been sunk without warning by a German U-boat Tuesday. Ten of the vessel's crew in addition to the Americans, are reported missing.

One life boat, with twelve survivors, reached an Irish port. The other, with a similar number, has not been heard of since.

The survivors had been afloat thirteen hours, suffering terribly from exposure and lack of food and water. There were two Americans saved, Harry Merritt, of Beaver Falls, Pa., and Harry Richardson, of Boston.

### AGREES TO FREE CREW

Yarrowdale Prisoners to Be Given Liberty by Germany.

Germany has officially agreed to release the American Yarrowdale prisoners, and they will be out of Germany soon, the State Department was advised today.

NEW YORK, March 2.—Release of four Americans heretofore held on the Yarrowdale was announced officially from Berlin in the following wireless dispatch today:

"Berlin (via Sayville), Feb. 28.—Two American surgeons, John Davis and Dr. Henry Snyder, and two American veterinarians, Evans Orville McKim and Zabriskie, from the Yarrowdale, today passed through Berlin en route for Denmark."

### SEES BREAK AS INEVITABLE

Petrograd Applauds Wilson's Declaration to Defend Merchant Ships.

PETROGRAD, March 2.—President Wilson's request of Congress for power to arm ships is held in diplomatic and official circles here to constitute the second step toward war with Germany and to be the logical sequence of the breaking off of diplomatic relations with that country.

The only possibility of avoiding war, it is believed here, is for Germany to surrender her position concerning submarine warfare. The speech of the President to Congress is applauded as an indication of Mr. Wilson's firm decision to defend the American merchant fleet by force of arms. The newspapers in their editorials follow a similar trend.

### NAVY HAS GUNS READY FOR USE ON U. S. LINERS

Trained Gunners Will Hold Deck to Drive Off U-Boats.

### WILL ASSERT ALL RIGHTS

Action Will Serve as Answer to German Problem.

Germany's virtual acts of hostilities in sinking the steamship Laconia, with the loss of American lives, and plotting an invasion of the United States by Mexico will be answered within forty-eight hours by orders to arm American ships and send them through the submarine zone in defiance of the German government.

President Wilson, it was stated by high Administration authority today, is only awaiting passage of the Senate armed neutrality bill before giving orders to the navy to arm American merchant ships at the principal American ports with guns in store in navy yards.

Germany Must Understand.

Armed with guns of three to six-inch caliber, depending on the size of the ships, furnished with Government ammunition, and manned by naval or ex-naval gunners, these ships will be sent out under the American flag, and a hostile attack upon any of them will be considered by the United States Government as an act of war and will be dealt with accordingly.

This is the Administration's answer to the question, "What is the United States to do since Germany virtually has declared war on this country by submarine attacks and plots to ally Japan and Mexico in a war alliance against the United States?"

What further steps will be taken have not been divulged by the Administration. The most pressing need, it is felt, is to show Germany that she cannot drive American commerce from the seas by a submarine blockade.

It was stated on the highest naval authority today that when the American ships are sent out armed they will be "effectively armed." This, officials said, means putting guns fore and aft.

### AMERICAN PASSENGER LINERS FIRST

Also it was stated authoritatively today that the Navy Department has guns at the Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Boston, and Norfolk navy yards, with stores of big gun ammunition ready to be utilized at once for arming American merchant ships.

It is planned first to arm ships of the American line, since President Franklin, of this line, has been most insistent in urging the Government to arm his ships.

Action by the Navy Department will be taken immediately after passage of the Senate armed neutrality bill, officials said today. President Wilson, under terms of the Senate bill, is given authority to issue the orders for arming ships. These orders, it is known, are ready to be promulgated as soon as the bill is passed.

The overwhelming vote in the House last night on the House armed neutrality bill, 493 to 45, has given the White House all the assurance needed that the Senate bill will be accepted when it goes through the Senate and reaches the House.

High-Power Guns.

The Senate bill is insisted on by the President because it gives the President the right to arm ships "fore and aft" and use "other instrumentalities" of the Government for protection of American life and property.

### PLOT UNKNOWN TO BRITISH EMBASSY

It was stated at the British embassy today that no officials connected there knew anything of the Zimmermann Mexico-Japan plot letter, until it was made public yesterday.

### CAPITAL YACHT TO CHASE 'SUBS'

Ensign Walcott Takes Pleasure Craft to Naval Base at Norfolk.

Ensign Neil B. Walcott, first Washington man to offer his private yacht to the Government in event of war, leaves today with his submarine chaser, the Santana, for Norfolk, to join the mosquito fleet.

Thoroughly equipped and overhauled, the "Santana" is ready for sea service. Manned by a crew of five, in addition to the commander of the vessel, the boatswain and the engineer, the Santana steamed over to the Washington Navy Yard at noon to take on supplies and fuel.

When rations for a week have been taken aboard and the engine and equipment carefully inspected, the "Santana" will turn her prow down the Potomac this afternoon and the journey to Norfolk of the first private yacht in this city to be fitted out as a naval auxiliary will start. The boat is expected to reach Norfolk by 4 o'clock tomorrow evening. Only brief stops will be made on the way.

Selects His Crew.

Ensign Walcott, granted a commission from Secretary of the Navy Daniels a week ago, has selected James H. Herbert, a veteran river captain, and Henry Oehlhausen, of a river steamer, to act as boatswain and engineer, respectively, of the "Santana" on her trip to Norfolk, where she will be placed with the mosquito fleet organized by the Navy Department to chase Teutonic U-boats if war with Germany ensues.

Mr. Walcott has resigned his position with a piano and music firm in the city and intends to stay in the naval service, he said today. He finished high on the list of eligibles who took the examination at Norfolk two months ago for the naval officers' reserve.

"Everything is O. K.," he cheerfully announced this afternoon. "We expect to reach Norfolk by tomorrow evening. The Santana is fit as a fiddle and ready to give any submarine the race of its life."

Assigned to Practice.

Mr. Walcott will report to Lieutenant Walker, commander of the mosquito fleet, at Norfolk, and be assigned to practice with the pigmy U-boat chasers the Government has built. Many of the auxiliary vessels have been contributed by sportsmen among them being the motor yacht belonging to Vincent Astor.

The Santana is armed with a one-pounder on her bow and another gun of similar dimensions will be mounted on her stern, according to plans of the Navy Department. She has a speed of fifteen knots an hour and naval officers who have inspected the boat declare it to be one of the fastest and most formidable that will constitute the mosquito fleet of the Atlantic coast.

### CONFISCATES U. S. SHIPS

British Court Refuses Further Delay in Prize Case.

LONDON, March 2.—The British prize court today refused to postpone the confiscation in the case of the steamers Kankakee, Hoeking, and Genesee, all flying the American flag, and alleged to be German owned.

Further postponement of the confiscation decree was sought on the ground that documents essential to the defendants were lost on the Laconia and also that the president of the Trans-Atlantic Company was unwilling to travel through the danger zone to testify.

### WOMAN IS GAS VICTIM

Found in Bath Room Partly Overcome by Fumes.

### MORE SCHEMES AGAINST U. S. UNDER INQUIRY

Officials Confirm Times Article Telling of Further Foreign Plots.

### LID ON ALL DEPARTMENTS

Details of U. S. Agents' Work to Block Plotters Held in Strict Secrecy.

Innocent lives would be placed in the greatest jeopardy, and the Government expects at any time to receive further information from sources already productive of most important disclosures. These are the reasons given by the highest officials for withholding from Congress and all other inquirers the source of information regarding the Zimmermann note and other evidences of wholesale plotting against this Government by Germany.

State Department officials today said this was the meaning of the phrase "incompatible with the public interest" used by Secretary Lansing in the letter sent to the Senate refusing the request for further information in the possession of the Government relative to German plots against the United States.

State Department officials today confirmed the statements of other officials, published exclusively in The Times yesterday, that "the half has not been told" as to the ramifications of German intrigues in the United States.

Silence Urged on All.

But for the reasons stated the State Department has given out warning to other executive departments that the greatest secrecy must be maintained as to the extent of the ramifications of these plots, and as to the source of information now in the hands of the Government, a sample of which was given by publication of the Zimmermann plot note.

Asked specifically today to give the source by which the Government obtained possession of the Zimmermann letter, plotting an alliance of Germany, Mexico, and Japan against the United States, Secretary Lansing said: "If the State Department would not give this information to Congress, it will not give it to the press."

Holds Situation Adequate.

The position Secretary Lansing took today was the same he took in his letter of refusal to the Senate, that the State Department fully vouches for the authenticity of the Zimmermann letter is sufficient for Congress or the public to know.

Secretary Lansing only would say what he said to Congress, that the evidence was obtained among the papers of Count von Bernstorff when his ship was searched by authorities at Halifax, and that this message, in code, was transmitted by use of the code key found among the papers seized by the Government from Wolf von Igel, the Weiland canal plotter.

Evidence Conclusive.

What the other German plot ramifications have been is shrouded in the deepest mystery, but it may be said on authority that the evidence thus far obtained shows conclusively that the following German intrigues have proved abortive through the vigilance of United States Secret Service agents:

Financing of Mexican revolutions by "loans" of millions to Carranza and other Mexican factional leaders.

Plots by Germany to launch revolutions in Cuba and Costa Rica, which failed because the United States backed the existing governments of those countries in suppressing the revolutions.

Plots to sink German ships, blockading American harbors, which fell through after one German vessel was sunk in Charleston harbor.

Wrecking of machinery of German ships held in American ports was carried through under orders from the German embassy in Washington after the break in relations.

The plot to blow up the Weiland canal, which brought about the arrest of the men involved among the Countess's activity brought about his recall.

The efforts of Hoy-Ed and Von Papen, the recalled German attaches, to restore Huerta in power in Mexico.

Caused Tragedies in India.

Plots engineered from the German embassy in Washington to launch a revolution in India against the British government, as a result of which the British have executed revolutionary leaders.

These are only a part of the—