GAS EXPLOSION IN A SMALL TEXAS TOWN KILLS 25 PERSONS

THE WEATHER REPORT

FORECAST—Oklahoma: Thursday fair, colder in west portion; Friday fair, colder in east portion.
TULSA, Feb. 16.—The temperature: Maximum 71, minimum 29.

MORNING TULSA DAILY WORLD EDITION

PROSPERITY TALK

The best possible evidence of the prosperity of Oklahoma in general is the fact that the extraordinary session of the legislature continues in session, despite the will of the people. And they all get paid, too.

VOL. XI, NO. 131 — TULSA, OKLAHOMA, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1916 — TEN PAGES — PRICE FIVE CENTS

25 KNOWN DEAD IN MEXIA, TEX., FIRE MANY HURT

A Natural Gas Explosion Starts Fire and More Than Score Perish.

DEATH LIST MAY REACH TO HUNDRED

Many Children Reported to Be Buried in Ruins of Building.

MEXIA, Texas, Feb. 16.—Twenty-five people were killed here at 8 o'clock tonight when natural gas explosion occurred in the old opera house building. Many others are believed to be dead. The known dead are:

A. B. WEISNER, superintendent of the Mexia schools, and his wife.
OSCAR JOHANSEN and CLAUDE JOHANSEN, brothers.
RAY COX.
PAUL YELDELL.
A. C. BRUTON, principal Mexia schools.
TOLLY WOMACK, colored.

The known injured are:

Mrs. John Davis, Weisner girl (aged 10), Mrs. J. W. Kincheloe, Earl Hitt, Walter Bevill, Mrs. G. A. Lyell, Mrs. Roy Bass.

The fire seemed to start immediately which hindered thousands of citizens who formed themselves into parties helping rescue. It will be hours before the death and injured list is completed. The fire is about under control with $100,000 property loss. The entire citizenship of Mexia is in mourning. All drug stores and other establishments were turned into places to take care of the dead and injured. The Mother's club was giving an art exhibit in the building and had it been half hour later no doubt hundreds would have perished. There is a rumor that a number of school children are in the ruins, but this could not be confirmed until after a search of the ruins.

MAY BE MADE AMBASSADOR

Former Governor of Missouri May Represent Us In Russia

WASHINGTON, Feb. 16.—David R. Francis of St. Louis, former secretary of the interior and former governor of Missouri, is understood tonight to be under serious consideration for appointment as ambassador to Russia to succeed George T. Marye. It is not known whether he will accept the post if it is offered to him.

Mr. Marye's resignation has not yet been accepted but it was said today that it undoubtedly would be. Ill health is said to be the reason for his decision to give up his post.

Editor Guilty of Murder.

PURVIS, Miss., Feb. 16.—Dr. Samuel E. Rees, editor of a weekly newspaper here, today was found guilty of the murder of Wiley A. Blackburn, editor of a competing paper, last October. Doctor Rees was sentenced to imprisonment for life.

The shooting occurred in the courthouse here after a dispute between the men over bids for printing.

Dynamite Attorney's Home.

FLORENCE, Ala., Feb. 16.—The home of George P. Jones, a prominent attorney here, was dynamited today and partly demolished. The family escaped injury. Windows were shattered in nearby residences by the shock of the explosion, which was so severe as to shake houses in all sections of the city. There is no clue to the culprits.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS DELAY SETTLEMENT

Germany's Latest Declaration Adds New Danger to Negotiations.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 16.—The submarine controversy with Germany cannot be closed until the United States has fully considered the possible effect of the declared intention of the Germanic powers to sink all armed merchant ships of their enemies without warning after February 29.

This announcement was made by Secretary Lansing today instead of the long expected announcement of a satisfactory settlement of the Lusitania negotiations.

Perfected by months of patient and at times perilous negotiations the Lusitania agreement was presented today by Count von Bernstorff, the German ambassador, in a form which would have been acceptable to the United States had not the Germanic powers announced their determination to regard armed merchant ships of their enemies as warships.

The Lusitania agreement now will not be accepted as finally satisfactory to the United States until President Wilson and Secretary Lansing have decided whether any of its terms would be nullified by the principles of the new submarine campaign.

If Republicans Are Not Going to Run a City Ticket, Then Let's Have a Business Man's Ticket.

The bedraggled remnants of the Democratic party in the city of Tulsa, after having proven their utter unworthiness of the confidence and support of an intelligent electorate by their own double dealing, are trying to patch up the wreckage and go before the people again asking that they be given another chance to prove their crookedness. In our mind's eye we see "the old hag with a tattered shawl about her shoulders, out at the elbows, brass jewelry in her ears, with a drunken leer of silly invitation upon her countenance inviting the youth of the land to do business with her again upon the purity of her principles and platform pledges." Pure rot and drivel. The same identical pledges by the same identical backers have been made by the Democratic party ever since the first tie was laid by the Frisco railroad within the city limits of Tulsa. They stand convicted upon every count in the bill of particulars and their effrontery is not exceeded by the cheek of a government mule. Any man who would accept a nomination at the hands of such a band of political double-crossers and double dealers is convicted of duplicity or imbecility beyond the peradventure of a doubt. What's the use of arguing a fact so patent that all who run may read and understand. "We've reformed, we've turned out and kicked out those men who deceived us and misrepresented us in the past," cries the yellow dog Democrat as he goes yelping down the street looking for an alley in which to escape from an accusing conscience and a well informed public.

The reformers have quit the field and are going to be extended the right hand of fellowship by the wrecking crew who have taken charge of the decrepit old machine. The time for candidates to file is less than a month away and yet the old Democratic shrews are the only outfit offering to put up a ticket. Republicans, knowing the situation and understanding the conditions, are refusing to put forward party candidates against the opposition. They hesitate to go up against the combination.

(Continued on Page Two.)

SUBCOMMITTEE IS TO PROBE OSAGE

Resolution Provides for Renewal to Most of the Oil Sublessees.

A NEW RESOLUTION

Barnsdall People Get Year to Year Renewal Pending Investigation.

(By JOHN W. FLENNER.)

WASHINGTON, Feb. 16.—Another chapter was today added to the Osage oil and gas releasing controversy when the senate Indian committee reconsidered LaFollette's resolution ordered reported to the senate last week, preventing the secretary of the interior from executing oil lease renewals in the Osage nation pending further action by congress but permitting the extension of present oil leases from year to year for a period not exceeding five years on a one-sixth royalty basis for all wells producing less than twenty-five barrels of oil daily and one-fifth on wells producing in excess of that amount.

That the senate Indian committee is at sea over the Osage situation is evidenced by the fact that during the past week two resolutions dealing with the Osage leasing question have been

(Continued on Page Five.)

THE SISAL COMBINE DECISION RESERVED

Attorney-General Withholds Decision on Legality of Selling Agency for Sisal Trust.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 16. — Attorney-General Gregory, after listening today to an explanation of the plans of the American selling agency, handling the sisal producing in Yucatan, Mexico, reserved decision on the question whether the agency is in violation of the Sherman anti-trust act.

According to the story told department officials todays the sisal producers of Yucatan have combined with the approval of the state government to secure fair prices for their product and to prevent the International Harvester company, the principal purchaser, from controlling the price.

AMERICANS TELL OF DELAYS IN MEXICO

WASHINGTON, Feb. 16.—A dispatch today to the state department from the Mexican border told of the difficulties encountered by eight Americans and a number of other foreigners in getting from Chihuahua to El Paso. The train on which they traveled was held at Chihuahua four days because of a strike of railroad men and reports that Villa's men were operating along the line between Chihuahua and the border.

The strike was reported due to a demand of the men that they be paid in silver instead of depreciated paper money. It ended with an agreement with the men to accept one-half of their wages in silver and one half in paper.

The train was escorted by three hundred and fifty soldiers. From this number seventy-five were dropped at various stations.

Assurances were given by the Carranza foreign office at Guadalajara that the acting governor of Vera Cruz had reported that he had given "appropriate orders" for the protection of the oil properties in the Chappapote and Potrero districts near Tuxpan. Rebels recently have been active in that region.

TWO STATES SWEPT BY FLOOD WATERS

Seventy-five Thousand Acres of Mississippi Lands Inundated.

MANY ARE IN DANGER

Another Levee Break Imperils Lives of a Thousand Persons.

NATCHEZ, Miss., Feb. 16. — Approximately 75,000 acres of farm land are inundated, three persons are known to have been drowned and several thousand refugees are marooned in the overflowed area tonight as a result of breaks yesterday in the Mississippi river levee near Newellton, La.

All of the dead are negroes.

A telephone message from Newellton tonight stated that the gap in the embankment had widened to more than a thousand feet. Newellton is flooded to a depth of from six inches to six feet and the water is hourly mounting to higher levels and spreading over a wider area.

M. Jacoby, a merchant at Newellton, in a telephone message late today, made an urgent appeal for boats to rescue persons cut off from escape in isolated sections in the vicinity of the crevasse.

"We are in a deplorable condition," Mr. Jacoby said. "Water ranges

(Continued on Page Two.)

RIVERS-HARBORS BILL PERFECTED

WASHINGTON, Feb. 16.—The annual river and harbor appropriation bill as finally perfected in committee today carries $39,608,410, of which all but $703,000 is for continuing work on existing improvement projects. The committee agreed to only two exceptions to the administration policy of adding no new projects, voting $700,000 for improvement of the East river at New York and $3,000 for work on the Colorado river at Yuma, Arizona, where floods recently caused great damage.

The East river authorization was put into the bill after President Wilson had written the committee that he considered it necessary to assure a proper approach at all times to the Brooklyn navy yard.

The largest single item in the bill is $6,000,000 for work along the Mississippi river south of Ohio. Through a typographical error this amount appeared in the printed document as $5,000,000, but was corrected today by the committee.

GIRL IS CAUSE OF A NEAR-KILLING

Special to The World.

MUSKOGEE, Feb. 16.—When Edward Wright, 26 years old, attacked William Osborn, 19, after an argument today, May Osborn, 17, sister of the youth, threw herself between the couple. Wright seized the girl and attempted to choke her. This respite gave Osborn time to find a knife with which he stabbed Wright in the back just above the heart, so deeply that physicians believe the man will die.

Osborn is held by the police without bond on charges of fighting and cutting but will be turned over to county authorities Thursday morning. He admits the act. "I cut him because he was choking my sister," the prisoner exclaimed. "I would have fought him with my fists if he had let her alone." Both combatants are young men without families.

ERZERUM FALLS TO RUSS AFTER SEVERE ATTACK

Turkey's Chief City in Armenia Occupied by the Czar's Troops.

POURED SHELLS ON CITY FOR 5 DAYS

Capture Opens Way for Russians to Aid Allied Armies.

ERZERUM, Turkey's chief city in Armenia, is in the hands of the Russians. Heavy assaults by the Russians against the long line of detached forts protecting the city, lasting over a period of five days and described by Grand Duke Nicholas, the Russian commander-in-chief, as "unprecedented," have resulted in the capture of the fortress.

Unofficial reports early in the present month said the German field marshal, von Der Goltz, with eighty thousand men were besieged in the city with provisions for only a fortnight.

The capture of Erzerum is considered of great strategic importance. From it radiate roads leading in all directions. Over those to the southeast and south it will be possible for the Russians to fight their way toward their compatriots operating against the Persians and Turks in northwest and west Persia or proceed south toward Pagdad to the relief of the British bottled up at Kut-El-Amara on the Tigris southeast of Bagdad.

Big Task Before Them

The immediate effect of the Russian victory on the situation in Persia and Mesopotamia is problematical, however, for despite the roads the country is mountainous and there still is much ground to be covered—something over two hundred miles—before the Lake Urumiah district of Persia is reached and over six hundred miles before a junction with the British at Kut-El-Amara could be formed.

With the advent of stormy weather on the western battle line the heavy fighting of the past few days seemingly has simmered down again to artillery bombardments and mining operations. Berlin reports, however, that the British and French have endeavored to recapture trench positions taken from them by the Germans respectively southeast of Ypres and in contrary that near Tahure the French attacks failed. Paris reports on the contrary that near Tahue the French have retaken portions of their former trenches.

The British and Germans are still at deadly grips for possession of the trenches captured from the British southeast of Ypres, artillery and hand grenades being employed in the fighting. London reports that in the attack in which he British lost six hundred yards of a front line trench the Germans attacked over a front of four thousand yeards but were everywhere repulsed with considerable losses except at the point the trench was captured.

On the Russian front a driving snowstorm along the entire line has almost stopped operations, the usual bombardment interspersed with infantry attacks continues on the Austro-Italian line.

In Albania the Austrians and Bulgarians are said to have formed a juncture and are battling for the capture of the important seaport of Durazzo, which is being defended by Essad Pasha's forces consisting of Albanians, Serbians and Montenegrins.

Strumitsa, Bulgaria, has been raided by thirteen French aeroplanes which dropped 156 bombs and returned to their base unscathed. Several fires were started by these bombs.

The ministers of the entente powers have informed the Belgian government that hostilities against the Teutons and their allies will not be permitted to end without Belgium having re-established its political and economical independence. They added that the Belgian government also would be called upon to take part in the peace negotiations.

The question of submarine warfare still remains an open one by reason of Germany's announced intention to treat as warships all armed merchantmen after February 29. Secretary of State Lansing is making a careful study of Germany's latest reply with reference to the Lusitania question to ascertain if there is anything in the German memorandum concerning armed merchantmen which conflicts with the assurances given by Germany in the Lusitania negotiations regarding the sinking of liners and the safety of their passengers.

EVIDENCE!

OF THE PULLING POWER OF WORLD WANT ADS

This Man Didn't Have Enough Houses to Supply the Demand

He claims that he could have rented his house 25 times over and it all came about from the more than necessary results of inserting the above ad one time in The Tulsa Daily World:

FOR RENT—One 6-room house, modern. Phone 361.

Professional Diver Tries to Rescue $150 Girl Prize Winner Lost in Bay

NEW YORK, Feb. 16.—A silk handbag belonging to Miss Madge Magenniss, a pretty Bronx girl, will likely repose for some time at the bottom of New York bay, where she dropped it while coming from a "hop" on Governor's Island, despite the efforts of George G. Garmony, a professional diver, to recover it. In the handbag is $150 and a check for $50 more.

Miss Magenniss had attended the weekly military hop at the army post on the island, and dropped the handbag overboard as she stepped from the ferry at the battery slip. She had just won the first prize for the best costume at the dance.

COMMITTEE BILLS TO BE READY SOON

Plan Increase to Between 160,000 and 200,000 of Standing Army.

WILL PASS IN SENATE

Padget and Hay to Lead Military Fight in the Lower House.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 16.—Committee bills to increase the regular army to between one hundred and sixty thousand and two hundred thousand men and proposing a definite scheme for federalization of the national guard under a militia pay act, probably will be before both houses of congress within three weeks. A building program for the navy, however, will not be ready before May, although Chairman Padgett of the house committee urged the members today to speed up examination of witnesses.

The house military committee will begin work tomorrow on the militia federalization bill and if a strong measure is produced, influential members of the senate committee say it will be accepted by the senate. The senate committee continud work to-

(Continued on Page Ten.)

NEGRO MURDERER GETS LIFE TERM

Special to The World.

LAWTON, Okla., Feb. 16.—Tom Coley, self-confessed negro murderer of A. T. Hopkins, was today sentenced by Judge Cham Jones in the district court to life imprisonment in the state penitentiary. Coley had nothing to say to the court. Judge Jones informed Coley that he should realize that no hope could be held out to him. The court spoke at some length regarding the enormity of the crime committed and said he has been uncertain as to whether or not the punishment should not be death but in view of the fact that Coley had demonstrated a willingness to assist in unearthing the crime, he thought he was entitled to some leniency and he would spare his life.

WOUNDED STUDENT SUDDENLY WORSE

Special to The World.

WAGONER, Okla., Feb. 16.—The condition of Clark Moss, 18 year old son of Attorney W. B. Moss, the boy who was wounded in the affray in the basement of the Wagoner high school in which Edgar Watts was killed and for whose murder Prof. J. E. McDarmett, a teacher, is now held in jail at Muskogee, took a sudden turn for the worse today and the preliminary has been postponed until a week from next Saturday.

It is declared that physicians have not yet succeeded in removing a bullet from the boy's head but it also is said that the boy's condition is not yet critical. Should Moss die the only eyewitness to the shooting other than the teacher will have been silenced.

N. Y. REPUBLICANS GO UNINSTRUCTED

If Convention Is Upheld Delegates Will Go Without Directions.

ROOT BOOM DEFEATED

Preparedness and Tariff Reform Will Be the Principal Issues.

NEW YORK, Feb. 16.—Republican national campaign will be fought on demands for adequate military preparedness and tariff reform, opposition to granting early independence to the Philippines, and insistent on a vigorous stand for American rights both in Mexico and in relation to the European war, according to the "keynote" platform adopted today by the Republican state convention.

The outlines of the platform which was approved unanimously were presented last night in the speech of former Elihu Root. There was no difference of opinion apparent among the 832 delegates to the convention in regard to the platform, but a bitter fight was precipitated by the attempt of the supporters of Governor Whitman to secure an unqualified en-

(Continued on Page Ten.)

AMERICAN KILLED WANTED IN U. S.

EL PASO, Texas, Feb. 16.—Guy Johnson, an American, who was reported to have killed five bandits before he himself was slain December 26, 1915, near Tejolocachi, Chihuahua, was in reality Guy Hartman, a wealthy distiller, sought by the American government in connection with revenue frauds discovered at Fort Smith, Ark., according to information disclosed here today. Government officials, however, refused confirmation, referring questioners to internal revenue officers at Washington.

Hartman or Johnson fled to Mexico last year, it was said, and became a ranch hand just prior to the disclosure of the fraud which involved distillers and United States revenue officers in several states and which is said to have cost the government several hundred thousand dollars. Agents of the revenue service went to Chihuahua last October to induce Hartman to return but failed to see him. The man is said to have been trying to make his way from Chihuahua to Sonora when he was set upon by the bandits, five of whom were killed before they succeeded in slaying him.

Daniels Funeral in Kansas.

Special to The World.

OKLAHOMA CITY, Feb. 16.—The body of Percy Daniels, once lieutenant-governor of Kansas, who died at Bethany, a suburb of this city last night, was sent to Girard, Kan., today for burial. Mr. Daniels was 75 years old and a veteran of the war between the states. He had a large acquaintance both in Kansas and Oklahoma, and also personally knew many of the public men of other states.

SENATE PASSES THE USURY BILL; KILL MINE ACT

Exorbitant Money Rate Bill Now Goes to House for Approval.

PLAN ADJOURNMENT ON NEXT SATURDAY

Senator Thomas Takes Hot Shot at "Record" of Special Session.

(By Staff Correspondent.)

OKLAHOMA CITY, Feb. 16.—With the usury bill passing in the senate, the house killing the penitentiary coal mine bill and also the poll tax bill, the legislature today paved the way for possible adjournment on Saturday of this week. If there is any fight made on the usury bill and the two election laws in the house, however, there is no chance for adjournment before the first of next week. The passage of the usury bill in the senate is considered an accomplishment, as the subject had been considered for the past two weeks and numerous bills and substitutes and amendments had been offered before they finally agreed on a bill that will not contain more than eight hundred words.

The subject matter of the bill is cumulative to the usury laws now in force. One section is new matter. It provides that when a note is due, the borrower may tender the principal with interest at the contract rate of 10 per cent and if the lender refuses to accept this then the obligation is automatically cancelled. It also is provided that when a state bank charges usurious interest with the knowledge and acquiescence of the bank officials and directors, that the governor may direct the banking commissioner to cancel the bank's charter and liquidate it.

Mine Bill Killed.

The killing of the bill to establish a convict coal mine at the penitentiary came in an unfavorable recommendation of the committee of the whole in the house. The establishment of a coal mine at the penitentiary was one of the pet subjects of the governor and the board of affairs. They claimed that such a scheme would save the state much money on the coal bill. The proposition was strenuously opposed by the laboring interests of the state. An attempt to establish a twine factory at the prison was killed some days ago.

Representative Sams, Republican, made an unsuccessful attempt to bring from the committee on privileges and elections some report concerning the numerous petitions that have been received during the session from all parts of the state urging that no election laws be passed that would further disfranchise voters, as the petitions were received they were referred, many of them without being read, to the committee on privileges and elections. They were never acted on nor reported back in any way. Sam's resolution offered this afternoon asked the committee for information as to how many petitions had been received and the number of names they contained. This information, he thought, should be before the house as they would within the next day, perhaps, be called on to pass the election laws that had been introduced and passed and in the senate.

Different of the majority members

(Continued on Page Six.)

CAUSE OF NEW YORK FIRE IS NOT KNOWN

Four Million Dollar Conflagration Destroys Steamships.

NEW YORK, Fb. 16.—No evidence of incendiarism has been found, it was announced tonight, in connection with the fire on the Brooklyn water front early today which caused the destruction of three British steamships, 37 lighters and barges, a new 900-foot pier belonging to the New York Dock company and $1,000,000 worth of merchandise consigned to the entente allies. The total loss is estimated at between three million and four million dollars.

Although nearly three hundred persons were imperilled by the flames, which raged fiercely for several hours, only one man, a member of the crew of one of the steamers, was unaccounted for tonight. Several persons were injured, however, and there were many sensational rescues.

There were reports throughout the day that the fire was started by an incendiary but they probably were based on the fact that the immense quantity of merchandise on board the vessels and on the pier was destined for European governments now engaged in war. A rigid investigation conducted by officials of the fire department has convinced them that defective electire wiring was responsible for the flames.