

BUSINESS MEN CALL TRAITOR VICE; PLAN VIGILANTES BODY

Revelations of Conditions Here, Reported by Commerce Chamber Committee After Washington Visit, Decide City Leaders to Call Mass Meeting Tuesday Night to Rid Community of Prostitutes and Bootleggers.

STARTLING revelations that threaten to shake El Paso political, social and business circles to their very foundations, were made at a meeting of chamber of commerce directors with city and county officials late Saturday evening, called to hear the report of the El Paso committee which returned from Washington Friday.

Red hot disclosures of alleged immoral conditions in El Paso, brought to light through written reports made to the war department and the Foodick commission in Washington, resulted in the calling of a mass meeting to be held at the chamber of commerce Tuesday night, at which plans will be laid for a vigilante committee to join the officers in rooting out the vicious elements of the city through concerted public action.

Determined to rid the city of prostitutes and bootleggers at any cost, several of those who attended the meeting advocated strenuously the establishment of vigilante committees to purge the city of those who gain their livelihood from vice.

Prediet Popular Upheaval. That the mass meeting of the citizens of El Paso Tuesday night at the chamber of commerce will result in a popular upheaval ending in ridding the city of dens of vice for all time, was the positive opinion of many of the leading citizens of the city who attended the meeting Saturday.

Accusing officials of the city and county of failure to take proper steps to eliminate vice from El Paso, Maj. Bascom Johnson, of the United States army sanitary corps, attached to the office of the Foodick commission on training camp activities, in letters directed to state senator Claude B. Hudspeth and to Otis C. Coles, president of the El Paso chamber of commerce, dropped the bombshell in the meeting.

Coles Gets It in Writing. The letters were written by Maj. Johnson in response to a request on the part of A. P. Coles, chairman of the El Paso committee which recently visited Washington, that he place statements in writing which he had made orally. They are said to contain, in substance, what has been included in weekly reports made to him regarding moral conditions in El Paso.

No less startling were the disclosures made by sheriff Seth Orndorff, county attorney W. H. Fryer, A. P. Coles and others, following the reading of the letters written by Maj. Johnson and the report of the committee which visited Washington.

Admit Truth, Coles Leaves Looking. That conditions as outlined in the letters were largely true, and are true today, and that in some cases the actual conditions, was the admission made by the county officials. They stated emphatically, however, that such conditions are not the result of inefficiency or lack of effort upon their part or upon the part of the police department, but are due wholly to lack of proper state legislation, to lack of funds to prosecute existing laws in a manner which will bring the desired results and to lack

SAY CLUBS GIVE OFFICERS BOOZE

Sanitary Corps Demands Alcohol and Immoral Women Be Shut Out.

The warrants through in reasonable time. The commissioners are trying to have the taxpayers' money and have asked me to keep my force as small as possible.

Only Two Vice Deputies. "At the present time, we have but two deputies engaged in vice work. We need at least half a dozen. There are more women in the county jail today than there ever have been in the history of El Paso. We cleaned up a notorious dive across from the county hospital. But it is hard to find deputies who will not protect prostitutes. I learned of one of my special deputies who recently accepted a bribe from a woman for protection. We have to get men who know where vice is located, if we wish to reach it and many times they are not dependable.

What are we to do? We have but two men for this work now, and the sheriff is continually wanting to cut expenses.

Difficult to Secure Conviction. "We put the Franks tavern out of business, but it has opened up again. As soon as the prostitutes are fined they pay or appeal, and the sheriff is forced to pay their legal expenses. Robert Holliday, who has the taverns ejected immediately at any cost. Shall we let blackmailers and prostitutes run this town? I don't think so.

We should not criticize Maj. Johnson. He gave the facts as he got them. I don't know how the sheriff of the prostitutes in El Paso until the sheriff's office and police departments are reorganized, and men are sent in office who will enforce the law.

I asked him what we could do, and he said that he would refer the case to the corporation court, who is giving light fines, to give these women the limit.

Law Allows Taking Fines. This brought Ben F. Jenkins, judge of the corporation court, to his feet with the assertion that any man who reported that to Maj. Johnson was a liar. "I've fine these women, when I know they are guilty, more than the limit," said the judge. "I sometimes stretch my conscience to fine a woman when I know they are not."

Public Should Know, Says McNary. "These are facts which should be published, and which should become known by the general public," asserted Mr. McNary.

The sheriff stated that at present there is a 15 year old girl in the county jail, a prostitute who is afflicted with two loathsome diseases. "The jail is full of dope fiends," he said. "Last week nine women were arrested were deported by federal agents to Mexico. Seven of them were incurably diseased."

Witnesses in Case Reopen. "A few days ago two women who were arrested by my deputies offered to give me the dope on others if I would turn them loose. They were witnesses in the case recently brought against Frank Spence, of this city. As soon as they were released, they started in 'business' again, because they knew I had to protect them to use them as witnesses. Women of this kind can be fed by federal agents for a place like this is nothing."

Recommendation of a vigilance committee, to work in conjunction with the citizens of this town, as the best means to stamp out these evils.

Tell of Johnson's Visit. A. P. Coles stated that Maj. Johnson visited El Paso in civilian clothes some time ago. "At that time we

U. S. SAYS VICE GROUNDS HERE

County Officials Admit the Truth of Washington Reports; Blame Lax Laws.

had a meeting at the First National bank, regarding conditions in El Paso, he stated.

Orders Rejection of Tenants. "I never rented a place for the operation of a saloon, and I never knowingly rented a place which was used for immoral purposes. However, houses are constantly leased by those apparently respectable people who are in the place subtle to prostitutes. I recently learned of one of my houses being used for immoral purposes, and I immediately notified Robert Holliday, who has the taverns ejected immediately at any cost. Shall we let blackmailers and prostitutes run this town? I don't think so.

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URGES BUSINESS PRESIDENT COLES ASKS THEM TO COOPERATE WITH OFFICIALS IN CLEANUP

President Coles Asks Them to Cooperate With Officials in Cleanup.

Coles requested that I should send you some copies of the report of the committee. I am enclosing herewith copy of my letter to Mr. Hudspeth of November 20, which I think covers the ground adequately with some minor changes. Mr. Hudspeth will call on Mr. Foodick and a conference with us at that time. You will note in my letter of that date a summary of what the committee wants El Paso to do, namely, to make prostitutes and other carriers of venereal diseases and alcohol hard for soldiers to find.

Illegal Liquor Sales Continue. "On the basis of information now in my possession, little has been accomplished in this direction. The present marshal of El Paso reports that about as many arrests of salaried for drunkenness are being made as before the cleanup. This corroborates the statement of our representative that the volume of illegal sale of liquor to soldiers has apparently not diminished since the cleanup. The last course of months, although a good many bootleggers have been convicted, bootlegging is still being done. The most common method is not only in El Paso, but in outlying towns. A great many illegal salaried salaried in outlying towns, 15 to 20 miles from El Paso, and Secord, 15 miles from El Paso.

Another source of the illegal liquor is another source of the illegal liquor. My information is that there are some week ago and responded early in February. These places have supplied with liquor. They appear to have responded because they realized that the illegal liquor is not only a source of revenue, but also a source of revenue for the prostitutes who formerly lived in them have been forced to move to places which are not so exposed.

Very disquieting reports reach me that a number of the houses in the downtown district are still being used for the purpose of continuing operations because of their close relation with the federal court. On the whole, prostitutes have merely transferred their base of operations from downtown to the edge of the city. The houses seem to have remained and some are regular nests of prostitution. One of the most flagrant is on the corner of the street between the city and the edge of the city. One of these girls is supposed to have relations with one of the city detectives.

Has Laid Out in Words. "Among the things which the city place left in probably 1917, a settlement adjoining the camp of the 4th infantry. We are informed that it is inhabited mainly by old time prostitutes, and that a number of shacks have sprung up at the edge of the city. The houses seem to have remained and some are regular nests of prostitution. One of the most flagrant is on the corner of the street between the city and the edge of the city. One of these girls is supposed to have relations with one of the city detectives.

Expect Citizens to Cooperate. "I note the attached letter from the county attorney to county judge, suggesting that the federal government assume the burden of prosecuting the prostitutes who are in the city. It is my opinion that the federal government will not convict and because of the lack of cooperation with the government on the part of the citizens of El Paso, it is unwilling to cooperate with the government's program against prostitution. Many of them in a highly infectious stage of the disease, and it is my opinion that El Paso will have to abide by the consequences.

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FISK GOES TO GETTING OF WAR CAMP WELFARE WORKERS. A. A. Fisk, executive secretary for the border war camp community work, left El Paso Sunday to attend a district meeting of war camp community workers of the Foodick commission at Fort Worth. Raymond E. Foodick, head of the national commission, probably will attend the Ft. Worth meeting in person. Mr. Fisk has been in El Paso several days after visiting several cities in his district where war camp community work is in progress.

TEN WOMEN ARRESTED. Ten women were arrested by the police Saturday night in the cleanup campaign. Inspector of police Walter Reese and the detectives are making extra efforts to apprehend every one in the city who is guilty of the offenses regarding immoral conduct.

CALL RULE FOR GRAIN IS UPHELD BY COURT. Washington, D. C., March 4.—The "call rule" for grain to arrive established in 1906 by the Chicago board of trade, was held by the Supreme court today not to be in restraint of trade under the anti-trust law. Injunctions issued by federal district judge Landis restraining the rule's operation were set aside. Board officials contended the rule increased instead of decreased competition and prevented monopoly but it was abrogated after the government's suit was filed in 1912.

CONFEREES AGREE UPON RAILWAYS' COMPENSATION. Washington, D. C., March 4.—Agreement on compensation of railroads while under government control, based upon the average of their net income for the three years ending June 30, last and substantially in the form approved by the senate, was reached today by the conferees on the administration railroad bill.

REV. SWIFT SAYS MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES NOT TO BLAME. "If the business men of El Paso, and enough of them, get behind the cleanup movement, and make the municipal authorities know that it is the will of the people that this town

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Coles Tells of His Visit. In making his report of his trip to Washington, Coles received a cordial reception he received in some instances and the rather cool reception at other times, but said, "I was encouraged to believe that we would get more troops. He felt, however, that El Paso must do more 'cleaning.' If I stated more troops and said that was the one objection he heard against El Paso. A high official in the war department, he said, had said that the women had been dancing at the El Paso country club with only one slip upon her body. 'They have heard so many reports about El Paso that they are ready to credit almost anything,' he said. 'Agents of Mr. Foodick are making pronouncements from every city where there are troops. Maj. Johnson promised me to send me copies of future reports received from El Paso. I believe we can clean up and that we will.'

Then were read copies of letters from Maj. Johnson to A. P. Coles and to Senator Hudspeth. The Hudspeth letter was written before Christmas when the senator and mayor Davis were in Washington, but the first lacking the chamber of commerce or the public received it when a copy of the letter was enclosed by the chairman to Mr. Coles. The two letters follow:

Johnson Makes Specific Suggestions. Washington, D. C., Feb. 28, 1918. "A. P. Coles, president Chamber of Commerce, El Paso.

"Dear Mr. Coles: "Your letter of February 11 to secretary of the war, Mr. Keogh, and the letter of the same date to me, in which you asked me to call on you in Washington, but the first lacking the chamber of commerce or the public received it when a copy of the letter was enclosed by the chairman to Mr. Coles. The two letters follow:

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