

LEADERS CAUTIOUS ABOUT PRICE FIXING

Hesitate to Carry Out President's Suggestions for Broader System.

SMOOT SCENTS DANGER

Country's Man Power Has Broken Down and Products Wasting, Says Senator.

Special Despatch to THE SUN.
WASHINGTON, Dec. 8.—Administration leaders in both houses of Congress hesitate to take up President Wilson's suggestions in his annual message that a broader system of price fixing must be applied to the industries of the United States if efficient production is to continue. Republican leaders appear to be ready to discuss the subject, but always with the early reservation that the measure which they shall be asked to consider must emanate from Democratic counsel.

Senator Smoot of Utah takes the view that in price fixing the Government must proceed with the greatest caution. To a correspondent of THE SUN Senator Smoot to-night said:

"Price fixing is delicate and dangerous business. Great Britain has tried it and so has France, and both have been confronted with ill success in their attempts. It is a question which should be met with the highest scientific regard for the stimulation of production. It must be met with a willingness on the part of the Government to stand the mounting costs of war so long as production multiplies and the needed supplies are forthcoming through accelerated production.

Sees Remedy in Taxation.

"Price fixing must not be attempted with a view to holding prices down either for the consumer or for the Government. If profits pyramided under the high standard of prices necessary to meet the costs of production under the present process, the Government's recourse would be to bring that outlay back to the Federal Treasury under new taxation of excess of profits. But the need of the hour is for the speeding up of production, the filling of the warehouses with needed supplies, the elimination of the production of non-essentials, and in that the Government can go as far as it pleases.

"It was saddening in my own State to watch the results of the insufficient farm labor obtainable by the farmers of Utah. I rode by train past fifteen miles of superb apple orchards groaning with fruit frozen as hard as bricks and absolutely useless and destroyed as far as commercial value was concerned, just for the want of the labor to pick and pack. And yet men to pick and box the Utah apple crop could have earned \$16 a day.

Needed Products Go to Waste.

"This is only an instance of the situations existent all over the land where valuable and needed productions have gone to waste, not because the price was wrong, too low or too high, but because the man power had broken down.

"Price fixing must be regulated with complete scientific application of the interrelations of the various industries. The fixed minimum price on wheat and the absence of a fixed minimum on sugar has turned the farmers of the beet sugar raising areas from sugar to wheat. At the fixed market price of a fraction under 3 cents for sugar, the beet raising farmer finds that he would be able to obtain only \$8.50 a ton for his beets, if this price is to be met. Two dollar wheat is the equivalent of \$12 a ton for sugar and so it is a simple matter for the farmer to convert his beet fields into wheat fields and produce wheat at a profit in preference to producing sugar at a loss.

Senator Smoot's views are shared by many of his Republican colleagues. All wait the President's first indication of his desires along this line with serious interest.

DANIELS COMMENDS SEAMAN.

Member of Rochester's Guard Sought Captain's Safety First.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 8.—W. F. Eisenhardt of the armed naval guard of the American steamship Rochester, rescued by a submarine, has been commended by Secretary Daniels for gallantry displayed during the abandonment of the sinking vessel.

The seaman refused to enter a lifeboat, thinking his commander still was aboard the ship. He searched the coast until satisfied that his commander had got away in another boat, then climbed into his own boat, the last man to leave the Rochester. His boat was five days making the Irish coast. Eisenhardt is 21 years old and a son of John E. Eisenhardt, New Orleans.

AIR FIGHT OVER SWITZERLAND

Swiss Indignant Over Aerial Violation of Territory.

GENEVA, Dec. 8.—The first aerial battle between allied and German airmen over Swiss territory occurred around Basle yesterday. It appears that the Germans, hard pressed by their opponents, entered Switzerland on purpose. The fight took place at a great height and the number of the airplanes is not known. The encounter lasted twenty minutes. Seven bombs were dropped on Swiss territory but only material damage resulted.

Eventually the airmen sped toward Alsace, still fighting, while Swiss soldiers bombarded both parties with shells from anti-aircraft guns. The residents of Basle and the neighboring territory are indignant over the violation of Switzerland's neutrality.

MISS VARNEY DINED WITH KEYES JUNE 19

Excited and Flushed at Noon of Day of Murder.

FREDHAM, Mass., Dec. 8.—Cross-examination of George H. Keyes of Brookline, a witness for the prosecution in the trial of Miss Harriet A. Varney, charged with the murder of Keyes's wife, was finished today. He had been on the stand seven hours.

The witness testified to-day that on June 19, the day his wife was shot, the front door of his home was unlocked. He left it so, he said, when he took one of his dogs for a walk, and when he started for his office used the rear door.

Keyes reiterated that he had made no particular attempt to establish an alibi. He said he gave a letter Miss Varney wrote him some days after Mrs. Keyes was found dead to the District Attorney, as he wanted to see that justice was done.

Miss Ellen Fitzgerald, a waitress, identified Miss Varney and Mr. Keyes as the couple she served at a Boston restaurant just after noon June 19. She said Miss Varney appeared "excited" and "flushed" and ate very little.

Court adjourned at noon.

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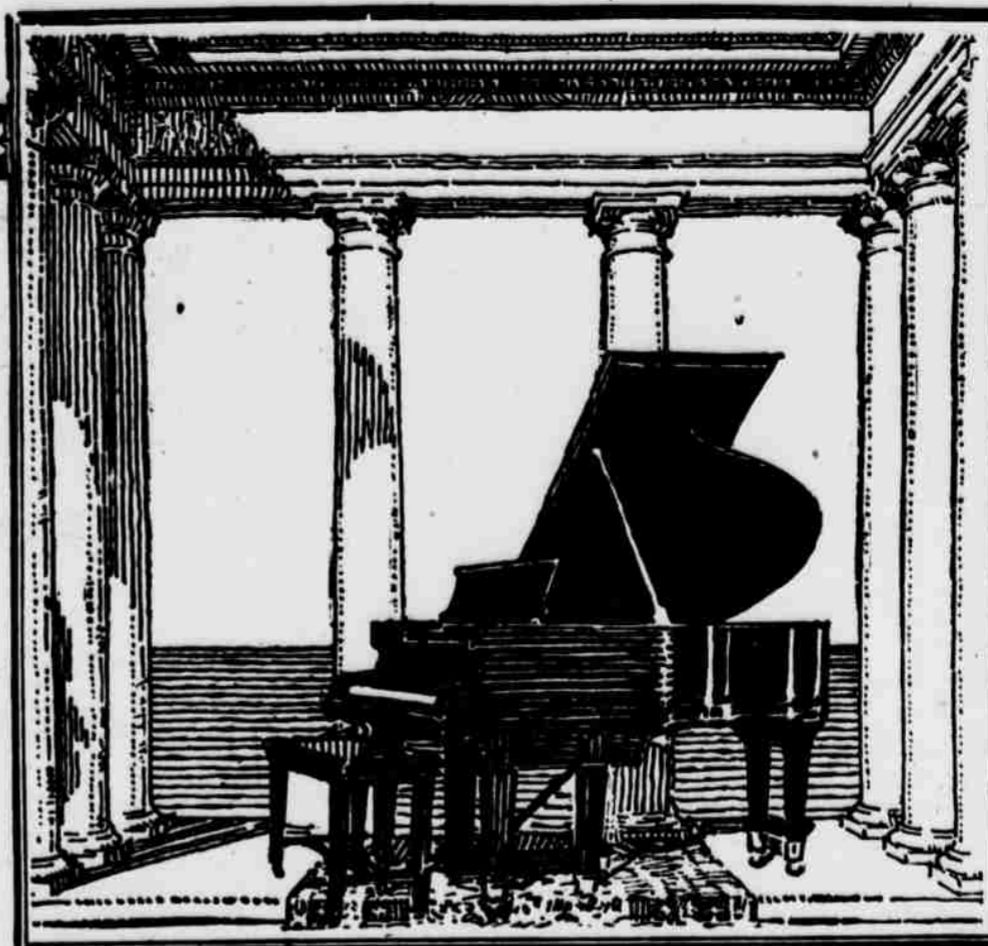
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