

DELAYED PARLEY SUITS PRESIDENT

Wilson, Studying Peace Views, Is in No Hurry for Conference

MAY PROLONG HIS STAY

Likely to Remain Abroad Till February—No Itinerary Formed Yet

By RICHARD V. OULAHAN Special Cable to Evening Public Ledger

Paris, Dec. 19. I have talked with a considerable number of prominent persons and through this and other means I have obtained an idea of the general situation involved in the making of peace.

President Wilson yesterday afternoon had his first conference with the other American plenipotentiaries since his arrival in Paris.

The President has taken his own time and ways of getting at what he desires to know, the better to prepare him for dealing with the representatives of the Allied governments.

Despite the undercurrent of criticism over the delay in inaugurating active changes—criticism that is aimed at various European statesmen—it is becoming evident that President Wilson is quite as willing as others to postpone the inter-allied gathering until he gets his bearings and builds a mental foundation on which the American position will rest.

It may now be said that the President intends to prolong his stay in Europe beyond the period which was tentatively in his mind when he left America. Then he contemplated arriving home about the middle of January. Now he thinks he will remain in Europe until early February.

The President has arranged to itinerate for his travels in Allied countries, and has not determined whether he will go to Italy. A decision in this connection may be reached after consultation with the King of Italy, who arrives in Paris today.

It is now clear that the American plenipotentiaries are disinclined to agree to an arrangement which curtails American freedom of action in constructing naval vessels and present sentiment appears to be that although willing to have the maximum naval building programs of the powers fixed, nothing should be construed to prevent the United States from constructing as many warships as any other government.

Already suggestions are being heard in Paris that while the Allied conference is in progress neutrals should be asked to confer on the freedom of the seas and the league of nations join any such agreements that may be embodied in the treaty with the central powers and repeated at separate conventions neutrals would sign.

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Wilson May Return Soon From France

Continued from Page One

neutrals will be invited to discuss the subject of a league of nations. The consensus of opinion of the best informed observers here seems to be that they ultimately will be so invited.

It seems evident that Americans may expect that the announcements on the progress of the conferences will be of a very limited nature until after the new year, the intervening time being taken up by exchanges, which are necessarily confidential.

After four days of gathering views of leaders in France, President Wilson's closest advisers say he has seen no reason to change his belief that the foundations of a league of nations is inseparable from the actual peace treaty itself.

Will Reassure British These advisers say that the President in explaining his definition of the "freedom of the seas" will reassure Premier Lloyd George that he has no intention of demanding a reduction of the British navy to a point involving the safety of the empire, but will emphasize his feeling that the plan of a league will strengthen the empire.

The hope is expressed by those surrounding the President that the exchanges of views will clear away any partial misunderstandings which may exist in regard to Mr. Wilson's attitude and prepare the way for the assembling of the conference with complete freedom, so that it will be ready to deal with principles and any outstanding differences of opinion that remain.

League Must Guarantee Peace Some undercurrents are interpreted as being of regret because the acceptance of President Wilson's points in a general way prevented some nations from achieving their own objects, which might have been gained if Germany's collapse had been made even more complete.

In reply, it has been made plain to those with whom the President conferred that the United States Government does not consider the war a victory of arms alone, and that victory would be incomplete without an organization of nations to guarantee world peace.

Favor Sinking Foe's Ships The American delegates to the Peace Conference have resolved to advocate the sinking of the surrendered enemy warships and resist any proposition to distribute them on the basis of naval losses.

This announcement is made by those in close touch with the American representatives, who, it is added, feel that such a position would result in avoiding contention and materially support President Wilson's declaration that the war was not based on aggression or the acquisition of property.

England through Sir Eric Geddes, First Lord of the Admiralty, had previously acquiesced in the American plan to destroy the captured or surrendered warships, and it is stated, will continue to support the United States, although it is expected that some of the lesser naval powers will demand that the prizes be distributed.

To Discuss Italy's Claim Much interest attaches to the conferences which President Wilson will have with King Victor Emmanuel, who arrived here today. It has been said by the President's associates that he will go further into the subject of Italy's position at the Peace Conference in his conversations with the King, having already had several informal talks during the voyage from America to France with Count Macchi di Celleri, Italian ambassador and high commissioner to the United States, as well as another discussion of these questions Tuesday.

It is known the President feels the warmest sympathy for the purposes which led Italy to enter the war. Nevertheless, the tentative lines laid out in consequence of an investigation by Colonel Edward M. House respecting the probable extent of territory which should go to Italy, on the principle of racial or linguistic determination, do not fully accord with the ideas of the Italian Government, which feels that it should go further than is indicated by this outline. This is one of the subjects which Mr. Wilson discussed with Count di Celleri, whom he is believed to have told the extent to which the American representatives were willing

to go in the forthcoming informal conferences with the Premier of the Entente Governments in support of Italy's claims arising out of the war. Unless the interview arranged between the President and the Italian King causes a change in the program, the President will visit Italy about the middle of January.

The Matin says that the Italian King is worthy of a welcome such as the heart of Paris gave to President Wilson. It adds:

Both Italy and the United States entered the war of their own free will, unconstrained by treaty or any interest. Neither was immediately threatened.

Farmers Greet Wilson President Wilson was yesterday handed an address of welcome by the Central Union of French Agricultural Associations, on behalf of its 2500 affiliated organizations.

After pointing out the share that the rural classes had in winning the victory for the Allies, the address set forth the conditions under which French agriculture is operating and calls the attention of the Peace Conference to the fact that protection is necessary for its normal development and for the production of agricultural effort in regions devastated by the war.

Hostages to See Wilson Civilians seized by the Germans in occupied French territory and sent to a hostage camp at Helmingen, Germany, will appoint a delegation to call upon President Wilson to tell him something of what they suffered, morally and physically, while detained by the Germans. It is announced.

The plan was formed at the suggestion of Dr. Henry van Dyke, of Princeton University, who met some of the people in the association at a reunion held recently. He was so struck by their accounts of the treatment given hostages by the Germans that he advised that a delegation be sent to wait upon Mr. Wilson.

COURIER GOES TO PARIS FOR WILSON SIGNATURE Washington, Dec. 19.—(By A. P.)—The first resolution of Congress requiring the President's signature adopted since President Wilson sailed for the Peace Conference has reached him in Paris and word that it has been signed is expected momentarily at the White House.

Secretary Tumulty was notified by cable today of the arrival of a State Department courier who had in his pocket the joint congressional resolution authorizing the usual Christmas time advance payment of December salaries to Government employees.

Without the President's signature it would become law Saturday in time for the payments, but the signature probably already has been attached.

This procedure is to be followed in the case of all acts of Congress while the President is abroad. State Department messengers travel to and from Europe at frequent intervals, making the trip across in about a week. Before they start the President is given a comprehensive outline of the legislation by cable or wireless so that he is prepared to act as soon as the document reach

him. He has ten days in which to sign or veto, and unless he does the other the legislation becomes effective without his signature.

The President holding that he surrenders none of his functions or powers by being abroad, is said to have no doubts about the legality of the course mapped out. The engrossed copies of bills and resolutions are forwarded to him as they go to the White House from the Capitol.

BRITAIN PREPARES TO WELCOME WILSON London, Dec. 18.—(By A. P.)—King George, who will find England holiday-making as the day after Christmas is nigh, has ordered that the British Kingdom business will be at a standstill December 26.

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Lodge Asks Wilson's Stand on Sinking German Ships

Washington, Dec. 19.—(By A. P.)—A resolution asking the State Department to inform the Senate whether the American peace commissioners are advocating destruction of German warships or other enemy property, and, if so, by what authority, was introduced today by Minority Leader Lodge, and, without discussion, was left on the table.

Similar meetings he held in other centers throughout the island. Commenting on the action of the Lord Mayor, the Belfast Telegraph says that every one in Ulster will join in the invitation, "with the important reservation that there must not be the slightest suggestion of politics."

Dublin, Dec. 18.—(By A. P.)—A statement published in London that the Irish party was to send delegates to Paris to discuss home rule with President Wilson is declared in authoritative circles to be untrue.

It is impossible to learn whether the Sinn Feiners will send delegates, but this is not believed to be likely in view of the fact that the Lord Mayor of Dublin, who is a Sinn Feiner, is organizing meetings to invite President Wilson to Ireland.

Manchester, Eng., Dec. 19.—(By A. P.)—The striking cotton operatives here held a mass-meeting yesterday and decided to return to work at once. The operatives accepted the terms of an agreement by which they will receive an increase of about 30 per cent over their present wages.

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HOUSE OPENS PROBE OF SECURITY LEAGUE

Committee Starts Investigation of Charges Against Members of Congress

Washington, Dec. 19. Investigation of the National Security League of New York, with respect to its alleged reflections during the last campaign upon the loyalty of members of Congress, was begun today by a special House committee, headed by Representative Johnson, of Kentucky.

Officers of the league appeared for examination, bringing with them many of the league's papers and records. In the delegation were Colonel Charles E. Lydecker, president; Dr. Robert M. McElroy, educational director; Henry L. West, executive secretary; Lloyd Taylor, chairman of the universal military training committee; E. L. Harvey, publicity director, and P. D. Calhoun, cashier.

Colonel Lydecker was questioned by Chairman Johnson as to whether the league had taken a partisan or political stand or interfered in any way with the election of any officials.

"The aim of the league since its organization, and its only aim," Colonel Lydecker said, "has been to win the war. I can say with all sincerity that there has never been any digression from this aim. The league has made every effort to keep entirely out of politics. Its hands are clean."

Asked by the chairman if any members of the league had entered the political field, Colonel Lydecker said that as the membership extended over the entire country, it would be impossible to keep in close contact with all, but that as far as he knew, every member had followed the desire of the league in that respect.

Colonel Lydecker said he knew of no financial aid rendered to any large preparedness mass-meetings in New York city or elsewhere.

As to salaries, he said Dr. Robert M. McElroy, educational director, receives \$10,000 a year; Henry L. West, executive secretary, \$8400; E. L. Harvey, publicity director, \$4160; Miss Ella F. Layton, director of American naturalization bureau, \$2400, and P. D. Calhoun, \$2050.

Contributions of \$150,000 from the Carnegie corporation and \$25,000 from John D. Rockefeller, were received by the league, Colonel Lydecker testified.

PLANNED TO BURN PARIS Paris, Dec. 19.—Information of a scheme which it says the Germans had for a terrific air attack on Paris in printed by the Figaro. Their purpose, says the newspaper, was to use thirty-five airplanes which were to drop 5000 incendiary bombs containing chemicals which would cause fires of such a nature that pouring water on them would but serve to feed the flames.

A second squadron of thirty-five machines was to follow with ordinary bombs to be dropped upon the fire fighters and the crowds revealed by the light of the burning buildings.

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