

TAFT ADVOCATES ZONES FOR TROLLEY

Street Railways Declared to Be in Precarious State Without Increase in Fares

New York, June 20.—William Howard Taft, as the first witness here yesterday at the Federal Electric Railway Commission's hearing into the problems of public utility finance and service, said his experience as a member of the war labor board had shown that the war lines were in a precarious condition because of lack of funds and that higher fares or the introduction of the "zone system" were imperative to avert chaos and possible loss of the \$5,000,000,000 invested in traction securities.

MANY PHASES DISCUSSED

Raising of fares to six or seven cents, or even higher, might be necessary, Mr. Taft said. Although the long and short haul, or "zone" plan should be given a fair trial. The witness said he was opposed to government ownership on account of its extravagance. He saw particular merit in a private-ownership plan, such as is now in operation in Cleveland.

Other speakers before the commission, which adjourned to hold its next session in Washington and in other cities, were John H. Pardee, president of the American Electric Railway Association, who declared "the American public is threatened with the loss of an essential and important service unless measures be taken to check the present tendency," and Gaylord C. Cummin, formerly city manager of Jackson, Mich., Grand Rapids, Mich., who put street-car lines into two classes. The first, he said, were those able to stand on their feet with a proper rate of fare, and the others which "could not stand on their own feet if they were permitted to charge any rate of fare they desired."

Service at Cost Advocated

Mr. Cummin, called by the commission as a traction expert, declared that the rate of fare would have to be higher, as the earning capacity otherwise was too limited. He advocated the service-at-cost plan as the best system under which street railways could be operated.

"To fix the net rate of earnings of a utility and not allow it to exceed that rate," he said, "would remove the incentive for efficient operation. The management would not then exert itself to cut costs, realizing that its revenue was limited anyway to a fixed sum."

Without an economic incentive, Mr. Cummin contended, private management of the roads would be no improvement over public operation. The power class of utilities should be subsidized and the loss absorbed by the public through taxation.

In regard to municipal ownership, the witness said that while possibly it might be as efficient as private ownership, this was highly improbable. He added, however, that it was "an unproved problem."

Charles E. Elmquist, of St. Paul, president of the National Public Service Commission, presiding as chairman of these hearings, said that at the Washington meetings it was expected to receive the testimony of managers of public utilities, members of public utility commissions, representatives of municipalities and technical experts.

Mr. Taft said the investigation made by his board into the matter of the increase granted in many cases had, he thought, more or less established an upward tendency. He did not see any near prospect of a decline in amount paid for labor. He had found employers obstinate against any increase, on the ground that their companies could not have paid them and maintain the service required.

Higher Price Level Favored

He had consulted many business men, who refused to build because of the high cost of material, and now they were beginning building, having come to regard the higher costs as a level more or less fixed.

The advisability of having a uniform law for all the states, the witness thought, was questionable. There was no jurisdiction to enforce such a law, and it would be difficult to get the states all in line. If one state, however, adopted a law and it worked successfully, other states would do so, and a certain degree of uniformity result. But this would exhaust much time.

Reverting to the subject of street railway regulation, Mr. Taft said in conclusion:

"I believe it would be best for all concerned to have complete state control, especially for speed and efficiency, but there is a strong feeling among the people for local regulation. The whole problem should be under the state with local aid but the local board should not control everything."

FLYING FIELD FOR HATBORO

Aviators to Have Landing Ground at Pine Valley Golf Club

Announcement of the opening of a new commercial flying field at Hatboro, on the old Philadelphia Motor Speedway property, and of a new aerodrome's landing ground at the Pine Valley Golf Club, in New Jersey, will be made tonight at the last summer meeting of the Aero Club of Pennsylvania at the Engineers' Club Houses.

At this meeting reports will be made on visits made to the Atlantic City aero congress during May, and official congratulations will be prepared for extension to the overseas aviators who have spanned the ocean in flight.

The Hatboro project, as announced by C. L. Hoyer, of the Motor Speedway Association, is to include a complete flying school and will afford parking space for hundreds of planes. One biplane is on the ground now and flights have been under way for two days. Another machine is expected to arrive shortly. Lieutenant Paul Hoeser, United States air service, formerly an instructor at Mineola, is to be chief instructor. A hangar has been erected and more will be constructed.

WOUNDS ON BANKER'S HEAD

But Medical Examiner Withholds Finding in Massachusetts Mystery

Dover, Mass., June 20.—(By A. P.)—Medical Examiner A. K. Hododou said last night that he would not announce until tomorrow his finding on the death of Francis T. Sargent, a Boston banker, whose body was discovered in the underbrush beside a country road yesterday. He declined to give any description of the condition of the body. Residents of the town who found the body said that there were wounds on the top of the head and on the throat.

Mr. Sargent, who was a member of the firm of Parkinson & Burr, went horseback riding Wednesday. When the horse returned to the stable without the rider a search was begun, which resulted in the finding of the body.

PERSHING GOING TO LONDON

Unofficial Visit Contingent on Signing of Peace Terms

London, June 20.—(By A. P.)—General Pershing, the American commander in chief, will come to London next Tuesday for an unofficial visit, contingent upon the Germans signing the peace terms.

While he is in England he will go to Oxford to receive the degree of Doctor of Civil Law.

SALE OF LIQUOR TAX STAMPS TO CONTINUE

Commissioner Roper Explains This Will Not Authorize Traffic

OHIO WETS WIN POINT

By the Associated Press

Washington, June 20.—Although foreseeing "no reason to doubt that wartime prohibition will become effective July 1," the Internal Revenue Bureau, in accordance with an opinion of the attorney general, will continue the sale of tax stamps for intoxicating beverages after that date.

Commissioner Roper said, however, the sale would be with the distinct understanding that the manufacture or sale of prohibited beverages was in no way authorized.

Commissioner Roper explained that the bureau necessarily would continue to enforce the tax laws as related to alcoholic beverages until they were repealed by Congress. No provision for repeal is contained in the legislation now before Congress for enforcing wartime and constitutional prohibition.

Columbus, Ohio, June 20.—Wets have won a court victory in their fight to prevent the prohibition constitutional amendment from going into effect. Judge J. E. Dillon, of the Franklin County Common Pleas Court, upheld their contention that the ratification of the amendment was subject to review by the voters, as they are part of the Legislature under the referendum system.

This decision, if upheld by the higher courts, will give an opportunity to hold up the constitutional amendment for some time. The wet forces have started proceedings for referendums in twelve states, and they contend that ratification of the amendment will not be complete until the people of two of those states have voted in favor of it.

They say the referendums in sufficient states will vitiate the recent proclamation of the State Department giving notice that the amendment goes into effect next January and another proclamation, giving a year's grace, will have to be issued after the ratification by referendum is completed. Since no referendum can be taken until fall, it is possible the amendment will be held up at least until the autumn of 1920.

Cleveland, Ohio, June 20.—(By A. P.)—The two wet constitutional amendments that have been proposed by Ohio wets to legalize sales of beverages containing 2 1/2 per cent alcohol are in direct conflict with the federal constitution and the Volstead prohibition enforcement bill about to be enacted by Congress, according to Wayne B. Wheeler, of Washington, general counsel for the National Anti-Saloon League.

Mr. Wheeler arrived here last night and conferred with trustees of the Dry Maintenance League, who are to meet today to consider plans for combatting the two amendments. "There is but one legal method to repeal the prohibition amendment to the federal constitution," Mr. Wheeler declared, "and that is to have Congress re-submit the question to the state legislatures."

BANDSMEN COMPETE WITH SONGBIRDS

Dix Tooters Give Aerial Concert. Play "Always Chasing Rainbows"

Camp Dix, N. J., June 20.—An aerial military band concert, the first

ever attempted in this country, according to camp officials, was given here as a feature of the campaign to enlist aviation recruits.

No plane being big enough to accommodate the garrison band the musicians went aloft in relays. The bass drummer was carried up by himself and drummed lustily while his pilot looped the loop. The cornetist, Chester Baldwin, of Des Moines, Ia., who is a recruit, played "I Am Always Chasing Rainbows" when it came to his turn on the program.

WOMAN'S SLAYER DIES

Murder Revived When Negro is Found Dead in Camden Cell

The slayer of Mary B. Potts in her home, at 2207 North Broad street, on December 30, 1903, died in a cell in the Camden county jail. The man, Aron Kirby, thirty-eight years old, was found lying on the floor of his cell, face downward. Death was attributed to acute indigestion.

Kirby, a negro, was said to have been mentally unbalanced, having escaped from the Pennsylvania State

Hospital for the Criminal Insane in Wayne county a month ago. After the murder of the Philadelphia woman, he was judged insane on January 20, 1904, and committed to the institution at Norristown. Later he became violent, and in 1913 was transferred to the state hospital.

N. Y.—Chicago Air Service Must Wait

New York, June 20.—The regular New York-Chicago air mail service, which was to have been inaugurated today, has been postponed indefinitely. It was explained that the postal officials were awaiting the arrival of larger machines.

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