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THE SITUATION IN VENEZUELA

PREMIER REPLIES TO THE LIBERAL LEADER

Denies That the Government Has Been Uddly Hasty—Outrages on Sailors and Shipowners.

London, Dec. 15.—The House of Commons was crowded this evening when the Venezuelan matter came up for debate. Mr. Schwann, after having expressed surprise that the government was anxious for another war, after South Africa, complained of the paucity of the information concerning the Venezuelan situation which had been given in parliament. He said he hoped arbitration would be accepted, because although President Roosevelt is anxious to act quickly, the situation is full of danger, and the President's hands might be forced by politicians.

Lord Cranborne spoke after Mr. Schwann. He reproached this member with a desire to discredit the government, and explained that papers in the Venezuelan matter were very voluminous, and those issued to-day were only a summary. He said that Great Britain had to prevent Venezuela from breaking the law of nations. The United States took the sensible view that Great Britain's insistence that Venezuela should meet her obligations was no infringement of the Monroe doctrine. "No country had been more anxious than Great Britain to assist the United States in maintaining that doctrine. This remark was greeted with cheers. Continuing, the under foreign secretary said the British government had displayed great forbearance, and it was only after Venezuela had been twice summoned to do right that the government had been driven to strong measures to secure the safety, liberty and property of British subjects in Venezuela, and in the absence of these measures the government desired to pursue the same course of moderation.

Mr. Henry Campbell-Bannerman complained of the lack of information about the German and British claims which, he said, seemed to be on a different footing. The speaker said he was an advocate of the best feeling between the two countries, but in this matter Great Britain seemed to be bound hand and foot to Germany. We could do nothing with regard to our claims, continued the Liberal leader, unless the Germans are perfectly satisfied with the settlement of their claims. Such an agreement is contrary to the country's best interests.

Premier Balfour declared there was justification for the assumption that the government was prepared to go to war for the Venezuelan bondholders. The crux of the matter was a series of outrages by Venezuelans on the fortifications and shipowners, for which not only had compensation been refused, but Great Britain's remonstrances had been entirely disregarded. It was an intolerable situation, and the Premier denied that the government had been unduly hasty. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman appeared to desire to operate with Germany on his own peculiar terms, but few allies were prepared to act on such a basis. Continuing, Mr. Balfour said that in so far as the financial claims were concerned, the government was prepared to agree to a tribunal to assess them equitably. He said also that the United States government had not suggested arbitration. Anglo-German interests in Venezuela had been entrusted to the United States minister at Caracas, Mr. Bowen, who with admirable energy had protected the lives of German subjects. The Premier said he understood that it was from Venezuela through the United States that the suggestion for arbitration had come. On that point he would only say it was unfortunate that arbitration suddenly commended itself to the minds of the Venezuelans. The Premier said he would say nothing for or against this, but repeated that it had not come from the government of the United States.

Mr. William Vernon Harcourt and other members of the House then criticized the government for its action, and pressed for additional information.

The Correspondence.

London, Dec. 15.—A parliamentary paper giving the correspondence relating to Venezuelan affairs was issued this afternoon. It begins with a memorandum which, after referring to the existing causes of complaint against Venezuela, including the seizures of British ships and the protestation against the Venezuelan consul at Trinidad collecting customs duties of which "no notice was taken by Venezuela," says: "Besides these specific outrages and grounds for complaint, there are causes in which British subjects and companies have large claims against Venezuela. The Venezuelan government declined to accept the explanations and assurances of His Majesty's government in regard to the Banriaga in any way modifying the situation. As a result, the position of His Majesty's legation at Caracas is rendered quite impracticable for diplomatic purposes, as all representations, protests and remonstrances now remain disregarded and unacknowledged."

Correspondence which dates to December 2nd shows that so early as July 23rd Germany tentatively mentioned the Venezuelan difficulties, and Foreign Secretary Lansdowne replied that he would be ready to confer with the view of joint action. On August 8th Lord Lansdowne expressed the admiralty's preparation for putting pressure on Venezuela, adding: "The German ambassador, Count Wolf-Metternich, had suggested that the two powers concerned should partake in a joint naval demonstration."

On August 1st British Minister Haggard notified Lord Lansdowne that he had personally presented to the acting foreign minister a note recording its former protest against "the intolerable conduct of the Venezuelan government," stating that unless prompt compensation were paid the injured persons he should take the necessary steps to exact reparation. Mr. Haggard concludes: "The minister accepted the note quietly. His final remark was that they were used to these communications. I said that might be the case, but not from England."

Mr. Haggard on August 4th informed Lord Lansdowne that the Venezuelan foreign minister had definitely stated "that until the Banriaga matter is settled satisfactorily to the interests of both nations, the Venezuelan government cannot entertain any question on a different subject."

On September 27th Vice-Admiral Douglas suggested to the admiralty that it would be necessary in order to bring effective pressure on Venezuela to blockade the ports La Guayra, Porto Cabello and Maracaibo towards the end of November, and seize all Venezuelan vessels. "Until the demands are complied with."

Lord Lansdowne, under date of October 22nd, says the blockade is "open to some objection," but he endorsed the seizure of the vessels. In the next communication, dated November 11th, he notified Charge d'Affaires Buchanan, at Berlin, that Germany was prepared to join Great Britain in a final warning, and that it had been agreed that the first step should be the seizure of Venezuelan vessels.

"As to the joint execution of measures of coercion," says Lord Lansdowne, "the German government recognized that there was a sharp distinction in the character of the British and German claims, but that nevertheless the two claims ought to stand or fall together, and that we ought to exclude the possibility of a distinction between Venezuela and one of the two powers, without an equally satisfactory settlement with the others."

After settling with Germany the mode of procedure any instructions were sent to the naval commanders, Lord Lansdowne on November 27th informed Mr. Haggard thereof, and gave instructions as to his course regarding the present. He instructed him regarding the terms of ultimatum which already are known.

The Blockade.

Washington, Dec. 15.—Minister Bowen, in confirming the press reports to the effect that the guns of the allied fleet, which bombarded Porto Cabello, were directed entirely at the fortifications and not at the town, shows there was no violation of international law in not giving twenty-four hours notice. The requirement as to notice applies to an ultimatum or ultimatum where the fire must be directed upon the inhabitants, and this was not the case, so that the officials here, as yet, have no cause to protest. But it is probable the United States will break its attitude of inactivity in the event that an attempt is made to enforce "the peaceful blockade" toward an American ship. When the allies were considering the ways and means of bringing Venezuela to terms and a blockade of this character had been decided upon, the German government informed the United States that when the blockade was made to seize the ships, the United States gave no response to this statement at the time, pot feeling called upon to do so before the presentation of an actual case. But now that the blockade is sought to be established, Secretary Hay informed the German government that American ships could not be interfered with in their trading except the inhibition which applies to all shipping, and further, the note intimates a disapproval of stoppage at all.

Italy's Attitude.

Rome, Dec. 15.—In the Chamber of Deputies to-day, Foreign Minister Prinetti, replying to an interpellation, made a statement on the subject of Italy's attitude towards Venezuela. He reviewed the causes leading up to the Anglo-German action, and said: "Italy, on her side, claims damages for her citizens who sustained losses during the insurrection, which has disturbed the republic since April. The Italian minister at Caracas, having exhausted all means to bring about a friendly adjustment, presented a list of claims reduced to a minimum of 2,510,256 bolivars."

Continuing, the foreign minister said that further considerable damage to Italian interests has been caused during the last revolution, but the amount of these damages had not yet been ascertained. As soon as he was informed of the Anglo-German action, he addressed London and Berlin, proposing to participate in the measures these countries were about to undertake to collect similar claims, and his proposition was favorably received. In conclusion, Signor Prinetti said: "I think this statement will assure my countrymen they will have the same protection that British and German subjects enjoy."

The prime minister was followed by Deputy Santano, who also expressed and urged accord with Germany and Great Britain. The deputy warned the Italian government to watch the United States, whose imperialism is a political and commercial menace to Europe and Italy. The weakest powers, continued Deputy Santano, declared that the energetic attitude of Germany and Great Britain had "sent the Monroe doctrine successfully high, as the United States understood it was not dealing with poor Spain." The speaker recommended further reinforcements be sent to Venezuelan waters.

London, Dec. 16.—At the foreign office this morning it was said that no decision had yet been arrived at in regard to Venezuelan arbitration. Many difficulties have arisen in the way of arriving at a basis of what can be arbitrated and what can be otherwise settled. The outlook for a pacific settlement of the dispute is not particularly bright.

The foreign office points out that the Venezuela offer to arbitrate is extremely vague. President Castro, in the communication, in which he expressed his willingness to resort to arbitration, provides no guarantee that the rights of British subjects in Venezuela will be respected pending the award. The foreign office claims that some matters are impossible to arbitrate, instancing the disrespectful treatment of Mr. Haggard, the British minister to Venezuela. To arbitrate the financial claims, however, will meet with no opposition in official circles in London. Nor is there any desire to stir up the position here by continuing unnecessarily the present armed compact with Germany, but quoting from the foreign office: "At the same time there is not the slightest inclination to let Venezuela go unpunished for her repeated insults and injuries. The offer to arbitrate comes very late. We are not seeking a quarrel, but we must insist ourselves against a recurrence of acts which led to the present situation."

The foreign office appears to be without official cognizance of the attitude of the Washington government, although it is convinced unofficially that Washington is anxious that further hostilities be avoided. It is known that the foreign office has made inquiry as to whether the United States would be willing to guarantee the fulfilling of Venezuela's demands which were made in the form of an ultimatum, and in which he did not specify any limit of time for an answer. From the United States, with the guarantee of the United States, the foreign office says arbitration in the Venezuelan matters would be an immediate probability, but with only the word of a government, there would be a very difficult of accomplishing even upon the any claims arising from the revolutions.

The Associated Press correspondent is informed that the Italian minister has cabled to Rome for further instructions. There is no excitement among the Italians here against Italians, because as yet no Italian naval demonstration has taken place.

Cranborne's Reply.

London, Dec. 16.—Replying to a question in the House of Lords to-day, Lord Lansdowne, the foreign secretary, said that if the seizure of Venezuelan gunboats did not produce the desired effect further coercive measures would be employed. The matter had been considered in consultation with Germany, and it had been decided to resort to a blockade of the ports. It was not intended to land a British force, and still less to occupy Venezuelan territory.

LOST IN IRISH CHANNEL.

Steamer Believed to Have Foundered With Sixteen Men.

London, Dec. 16.—A dispatch to the Central News says 15 men, officers and crew, of the British steamer Marley, are believed to have been drowned as a result of the foundering of their vessel. The Marley left Liverpool for Dublin loaded with coal yesterday evening. She experienced heavy weather in mid-channel. A lifeboat was lowered, but it was washed away with one man in it. This sailor was rescued. He declared that he saw the Marley founder. The British steamer Marley was of 780 gross tons. She was owned by Ledacite, McCormick & Co., of Dublin.

ELECTION OF MAYORS.

Winnipeg, Man., Dec. 16.—Municipal elections for all points outside of Winnipeg were held to-day. In many cases the elections were by acclamation, and the great interest was attached to the contest except at Brandon, where J. W. Fleming defeated P. Nation for mayor. Other mayors and reeve elect are: Portage la Prairie, municipality, C. E. Brown; Argyle, Jas. Dale; Carman, T. J. Noble; Greta, M. Long; Dauphin municipality, C. Seare; Morden, J. Schmitz; Alton, Bergmann; Minnedosa, J. Fairbairn; West Selkirk, J. I. MacKenzie.

ATTACKED BY INDIANS.

Ottawa, Dec. 17.—It now turns out that the Mounted Police department received a telegram on December 15th from Assistant Commissioner Wood stating that Salmon River Indians at Tantallon, about two weeks previous, stated that 200 Indians on the upper Pelly robbed a trader and killed two white men. Selkirk Indians from the McMillan district report that they knew nothing of it.

Mr. McConnell, of the geological survey, who recently returned from McMillan river, stated that there was a trader named Smith who keeps a trading post near the mouth of the river and a considerable business with Indians. It is feared that he may have been the victim, and the police are enquiring into the matter, but as it is distant 100 miles from Selkirk, this will take some time.

PLAGUE AT HONOLULU.

Two White Men Reported Killed and a Trader Robbed on the Upper Valley.

Chicago, Dec. 17.—A special to the Tribune from Des Moines, Iowa, says: "The strike of the telephone operators at Des Moines, which has been in progress about six months, was settled last night by representatives of the company and of the Trades and Labor Assembly. The telephone girls are to be paid 15 per cent. in excess of the scale, and all of the girls who struck are to be taken back to work. The company further agrees not to in any way discriminate against the strikers. The injunction suit to restrain the representatives of union labor from boycotting the company is to be dismissed."

DESTROYED BY EARTHQUAKE.

Town Reported to Have Been Wiped Out—Survivors Threatened With Starvation.

Ashtabula, Russian Turkistan, Dec. 17.—The town of Andijan, with a population of about 30,000, Ferghana government, was totally destroyed by an earthquake to-day. The number of fatalities is not yet ascertained. The population is threatened with starvation. Shocks were felt in new Marghilan, and surrounding villages, and a railway at Andijan was destroyed for a considerable distance. Food and clothing is being sent to Andijan.

WITHOUT TRIAL.

Two Men Executed at Port au Prince—Several Persons Injured in Riots.

Port au Prince, Hayti, Dec. 17.—Order has been re-established here. During the fighting yesterday a number of persons were wounded, including two Irishmen, who were seriously injured. Two men accused of committing crimes were executed during the day without trial. The United States legation is protected by troops.

MRS. GRANT DEAD.

Widow of Former United States President Passes Away.

Washington, Dec. 14.—Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant died at her residence in this city at 11:17 o'clock tonight. Mrs. Grant was one of the noblest spirits of the age. She was the widow of the late General Grant, who served as President and accompanied him on his journey around the world. As mistress of the White House she gave graciously to all the charitable institutions of the city. Mrs. Grant has spent most of her life in the United States, and was married to the General, then Capt. Grant, in 1848. During the civil war Mrs. Grant was with the General in the field, and she was as near as possible to him when he was in the field. She was a devoted wife and mother, and she was a devoted friend to the poor. She was seventy-six years of age at the time of her death.

SEATTLE STORY.

Of Indians in Yukon Being on the Warpath is Not Credited at Ottawa.

Ottawa, Dec. 16.—The Indian or Mount-Ed police departments have had an information about a dispatch from Seattle stating that the Indians in the Yukon district are on the warpath. The officials consider this is an unlikely time of the year for the Indians going on the warpath, but inquiries are being made at the Mounted Police department.

The National Rifle Association of Great Britain writes the militia department that the National Rifle trophy match will be held on July 11th next, and the regulations being the same as in former matches. The estate of the late Dr. McCabe, valued at \$8,100, left to his widow, except \$500 to local Catholic societies.

LILLOOET HATCHERY.

Officials of Fisheries Department Claim Local Government is Exceeding Its Jurisdiction.

Ottawa, Dec. 17.—There is some likelihood of a clash between the government of British Columbia and the Dominion government over the action of the local government in building a hatchery at Lillooet. Officials of the fisheries department say that the province is going beyond its jurisdiction in this matter, and as soon as Hon. R. Prefontaine returns here, the matter will be taken up with British Columbia.

E. H. Small has been appointed sub-director of customs at Cranbrook, vice McCormick. John H. Ker has been appointed acting chief clerk in the long room of the customs house at Vancouver.

TRIAL AJOURNED.

Lawyer Raises Objection in Case of Japs Arrested Near the Boundary.

Vancouver, Dec. 17.—Thirteen Japs were arrested yesterday near the boundary and their trial took place today in New Westminster. They were charged with illegal entrance to Canada. Lawyer Bell took objection to conviction on the ground that the act covering the matter was recently amended, and the court was accordingly adjourned until instructions can be received from the Attorney-General.

Mr. Evans, of Evans, Coleman & Evans, is in "fistic" with S. M. Robins, of the New Vancouver Coal Co. It is stated they are arranging a new coal combination to take account of the new mines. It is a foregone conclusion that R. G. Macpherson will receive the nomination at the R. Young grocer, dropped dead to-day of heart failure.

Ninety thousand men in the British army have got good conduct badges.

THE JAPANESE CANNOT VOTE

Privy Council Uphold Appeal of Province in Famous Tomey Homma Case--History of the Now Celebrated Action.

Japanese, whether naturalized or not, cannot exercise the franchise in this province.

Such is the decision of the highest court in the realm, the Privy Council, which has handed down a ruling that the appeal of this province in the famous Tomey Homma case, which has been a cause celebre in the history of British Columbia for the last two years, is allowed.

The announcement, which was received Wednesday by Charles Wilson, of Vancouver, who represented the province in the argument on the original appeal, sets at rest once and for all the knotty problem of whether or not the province can pass legislation specifically excluding these people from the right to vote. It settles finally the danger to which the province would have been exposed had the decision been of a contrary character, and relieves it of the peril which would have been entailed by the presence on the voters' lists of a constantly increasing number of Mongolians who, without sympathy with the genius of British government, would constitute a constant source of corruption in politics, and open fresh avenues of abuse in the legislation of the country.

The appeal was argued before the judicial committee of the Privy Council late in June or early in July, the province being fortunate in their counsel, Christopher Robinson, K. C., of Toronto, one of the cleverest jurists of the whole Dominion.

It will be remembered that when the House rose late in June, the attorney-general posted off hurriedly to London, on the plea of assisting Mr. Robinson in the case, but did not arrive in time to be of any assistance, the whole matter having been argued before his arrival.

Hon. Mr. Eberts found some compensation for the disappointment, this occasioned him by remaining for the celebration festivities.

The principles underlying the whole case was the right of naturalized Japanese to be registered as voters.

The action arose in this way. Tomey Homma, a naturalized Jap, applied to the collector of votes for the electoral district of Vancouver city to have his name entered on the register of voters. The collector refused to make the entry as he considered he was prohibited from doing so by section 8 of the Provincial Elections Act or Franchise Act, which is as follows:

"No Chinaman, Japanese or Indian shall have his name placed on the register of voters for any electoral district or be entitled to vote at any election. Any collector of votes who shall insert the name of any Chinaman, Japanese or Indian on any such register shall, upon summary conviction thereof, before any justice of the peace, be liable to a penalty not exceeding \$50."

According to section 3 R. S. B. C., 1897, chapter 67: "The expression 'ATTACKED BY INDIANS.'"

PLAGUE AT HONOLULU. Flood Shipped From Japan and China Via San Francisco Responsible For Several Deaths.

Chicago, Dec. 17.—Advices just received from Honolulu show that investigation proves that foodstuffs shipped to Honolulu from Japan and China, via San Francisco, are responsible for the cases of plague recently appearing there, says a special to the Chronicle from San Francisco.

A number of Japanese on nearby plantations were taken with the plague and died in a hospital at Honolulu. An examination of their effects was made, but no trace of the germ was discovered. Thorough tests were made of the Japanese food found in the houses. These foodstuffs under the microscope showed a trace of the plague germs, and further examinations made of Oriental stuffs showed that the diagnosis was correct. It was learned also that the foodstuffs had been imported at San Francisco and reshipped to Honolulu.

Mr. McConnell, of the geological survey, who recently returned from McMillan river, stated that there was a trader named Smith who keeps a trading post near the mouth of the river and a considerable business with Indians. It is feared that he may have been the victim, and the police are enquiring into the matter, but as it is distant 100 miles from Selkirk, this will take some time.

St. Petersburg, Dec. 17.—It is announced in a special dispatch from Seoul that the United States minister to Korea has demanded the payment of \$1,500,000, due to the builders of the electric railroad.