

THE TRADE IN CONTRABAND.

Washington, Jan. 24.

The United States Government to-day issued a lengthy defence of its interpretation of the rights and duties of a neutral in the European war.

A document, five thousand words long, prepared by President Wilson, Secretary Bryan and Counsellor Robert Lansing of the State Department, after several days of consultation, was made public in the form of a letter from the Secretary of State to Senator Stone of Missouri, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

While the letter is a reply to an inquiry from Senator Stone for information as a result of complaints made in the press and in letters from various parts of the country charging the Washington Government with unfairness to Germany and Austria, it also is intended as a pronouncement of policy on some questions of neutrality previously unexplained.

After answering separate and specific charges and calling attention to the fact that the United States has promptly taken to task Great Britain as well as Germany, and every Government which in any way has infringed upon the rights of this country, the letter concludes with the following declaration on the much discussed question of exportation of war munitions:

"If any American citizens, partisans of Germany and Austria-Hungary, feel that this Administration is acting in a way injurious to the cause of these countries, this feeling results from the fact that on the high seas the German and Austro-Hungarian naval power is thus far inferior to the British. It is the business of a belligerent operating on the high seas, not the duty of a neutral, to prevent contraband from reaching an enemy. Those in this country who sympathize with Germany and Austria appear to assume that some obligation rests upon this Government, in the performance of its neutral duty, to prevent all trade in contraband, and thus to equalize the difference due to the relative naval strength of the belligerents. No such obligation exists; it would be an unneutral act, an act of partiality, on the part of this Government to adopt such a policy, if the Executive had the power to do so.

"If Germany and Austria-Hungary cannot import contraband from this country it is not, because of this fact, the duty of the United States to close its markets to the allies. The markets of this country are open upon equal terms to all the world, to every nation, belligerent or neutral."

In a general way the letter sets forth that rules of neutrality have been promulgated by the American Government without discrimination, and have been applied with equal fairness to all concerned.

Some of the complaints, as summarized by Senator Stone, are answered in the letter point by point, substantially as follows:

"Acquiescence without protest to the inclusion of copper and other articles in the British lists of absolute contraband"—It is here stated that every seizure of American copper has been followed by a prompt protest, and that the inclusion of "unwrought copper" in the list of absolute contraband is under consideration, though the Government "necessarily finds some embarrassment in dealing with the subject," because of a declaration by the United States in the past placing "all articles from which ammunition is manufactured" on its contraband list, including copper among such materials.

"Submission without protest to interference with American trade to neutral countries in conditional and absolute contraband."—History shows, says the letter, that in every war the superior naval power has interrupted neutral commerce more or less, but those who complain are referred to the American note of protest of December 26th despatched to Great Britain.

"Submission without protest to interruption of trade in conditional contraband consigned to private persons in Germany and Austria, thereby supporting the policy of Great Britain to cut off all supplies from Germany and Austria."—Again the letter calls attention to the note of December 26 to the British Government contending for "the principle of freedom of trade in articles of conditional contraband not destined to belligerent forces."

"Submission to British interference with trade in petroleum, rubber, leather, wool, etc."—As petroleum can be used in propelling submarines and rubber is essential for big motors used by armies, the United States Government "has not yet reached the conclusion that they are improperly included in a list of contraband."

"The United States has not interfered with the sale to Great Britain and her allies of arms, ammunition, horses, uniforms and other munitions of war, although such sales prolong the conflict."—No obligation, it is contended, exists either in international law or in the domestic law of the United States to prohibit private trade in these articles."

POWER SHORTAGE AT COBALT.

Cobalt, Jan. 23.

Until the spring thaw sets in in the middle of April there will be serious curtailment of production in the camp owing to the shortage of power. The Northern Ontario Light and Power Company, which has the power monopoly in Cobalt, gave notice to the mine managers a few days ago that owing to the very short rainfall last fall they would be obliged to make some arrangement whereby the load on their three electric plants on the Montreal and Matabitchouan rivers would be relieved.

Commencing to-morrow the Coniagas and two other mills in the camp will close down for a week, and until spring the thirteen mills in the camp will in turn close down one week out of every month.

The precipitation in New Ontario last year was the lowest ever known in Northern Ontario. During the year 1914 the Fountain Falls plant was added to the other plants of the company. The plant at Fountain Falls has a capacity of 2,580 horse power. Besides the latter acquisition arrangements were made by the company to store water in case of necessity; but even with the increased capacity and better facilities the unusual conditions prevailing could not be overcome. The power company under normal conditions has a capacity of 17,000 electrical horse power, including 10,000 h.p. at the Matibichouan plant and 3,500 at Hound Chutes. With the present low water the greatest available volume of power is 10,200 h.p. The mills of the camp alone take 5,000 h.p. and with the curtailment of this amount by 25 per cent. the situation will be relieved.

LA ROSE.

The financial statement of La Rose Consolidated Mines as of January 1, 1915, shows cash, ore in transit and at smelters and on hand amounting to \$1,214,400, of which \$985,891 was in cash. Dividend payable January 20 called for \$187,500.