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VERY COLD

THREE CENTS

THE AUTHORITY OF DOWNING STREET IN DOMINIONS NOW REDUCED TO A SHADOW

Manchester Guardian Reviews Changes Wrought by War Which Have Rung Death Knell of Concerted Aggressive Imperialism.

IMPERIALISM ON DIVERGENT LINES
Guardian Finds An Undermining of Central Authority by Dominions' Separate Representation on League of Nations.

London, Dec. 17.—(By Canadian Associated Press Cable.)—The Manchester Guardian, discussing the future of the Empire, with special reference to the assertion of General Smuts that the British Empire ceased to exist in August, 1914, says the statement, in such a condensed form, is startling. Full reports will, no doubt, considerably qualify it, but his statement is perfectly true as a direct means of driving home the fact that changes, brought about by the war in the status and relations of the Dominions, have rung the death knell of such concerted aggressive imperialism as the South African Nationalists fear. The Guardian proceeds to argue that Downing Street's authority in the Dominions is now reduced to a shadow.

"In law, the ultimate appeal from the highest courts in the Dominions is still the Privy Council, but the delay and expense which the system involves have aroused in Canada and elsewhere an active, logical agitation for ending it which before long must gain its way. A minor but not insignificant symptom of the same tendency in the decision by Canada that she wishes the creation by the Crown of hereditary titles to cease."

Divergent Lines.
The stress of war has forced the pace of imperial development on two divergent lines, the Guardian continues, which thinks the innovation of Dominion ministers sitting as executive members of the British Cabinet, although a necessary and valuable step, has given rise to much confused thinking, for it has led statesmen and writers of a certain school to dream of a permanent Imperial Executive Council to assume the liabilities and obligations for the Empire as a whole.

Independence of Dominions.
To realize how little such a plan would meet the trend of thought overseas we have but to add to General Smuts' speech in the Imperial Conference at Sir Robert Borden's assertion of the Canadian Parliament's right to debate the Peace Treaty, or Hughes' declaration that he was irrevocably opposed to what is called Imperial Federation.

The Guardian finds in the Dominions having signed the Peace Treaty as separate States, and having separate representation in the League of Nations, an undermining of the central authorities in its last remaining citadel, that of foreign affairs.

"In the new relationship, on which the British people is embarking, the need for common counsel and advice will be even greater than before, but it will be a conference between nations of equal status in a sisterhood."

THE DISTRIBUTION OF \$40,000,000 IS CAUSE OF DEBATE

Federal Gov't's Appropriation for Relief of Unemployed Soldiers Gives Rise to Dispute Over Administration of Fund.

Montreal, Que., Dec. 17.—Describing the method by which the Federal Government's appropriation of forty million dollars for the relief and assistance of unemployed returned soldiers will be administered, Brigadier-General Ross, today, told officials of the local branch of the Canadian Patriotic Fund and the Department of Soldiers' Re-establishment that they would be utilized to handle the money. He said a statement would be issued from Ottawa officially denying that the service of the officials would be further required, as the Government was going to take over their work.

Judgment Rendered Against Can. Express Co. For Illegal Shipment

Ottawa, Ont., Dec. 17.—Judgment was rendered by the Police Court this morning by Magistrate Askwith, in the case of the Canadian Express Company, which was charged with transporting a quantity of liquor from Montreal to Ottawa, in contravention of the Order-in-Council passed February 24, 1919. The company was fined \$202, but leave was granted, at the request of Messrs. Fringie and Gauthier, counsel for the defendants, for a stated case to be taken to the Appeal Court. In the meantime the liquor shipment,

Esthonians Suspicious of Real Sentiment of Soviets Towards Peace

Dorpat, Tuesday, Dec. 16.—(By the A. P.)—M. Poskat, the Estonian Foreign Minister, in a statement directed today to the conference of the Baltic States, declared the Estonian delegation doubted the possibility of peace, and was "suspicious" of the real sentiment towards Peace of the Soviet Russian Government. He promised adjournment of the conference until January 1st, but M. Joffe, the Bolshevik representative, demurred. It was finally decided to await the arrival tomorrow of General Kopyayev of the Soviet delegation, who accompanied M. Kresson to Moscow to consult their government before deciding on postponement.

Observers offered the opinion that if the conference was postponed it would mean the definite breaking up of the pourparlers. This belief is inspired by conjectures which report France as planning a campaign against Soviet Russia.

DOZEN FAMILIES RENDERED HOMELESS BY ONE OF THE MOST SPECTACULAR FIRES IN YEARS

A Series of Four Alarms, Great Volumes of Smoke and Masses of Dashing Flames Lighting the Sky Aroused the Whole City—Fire Departments Working Under Adverse Conditions Do Valiant Work—Little Children, Invalids and Aged People Turned Out With Mercury 16 Below Zero—Loss at Least \$50,000.

Shortly before one o'clock this morning a fire developed at the corner of Mill street and Paradise Row, which, in a very few minutes, became one of the most spectacular conflagrations in years. A series of four alarms, great volumes of smoke, and masses of dashing flames lighting the sky, aroused the whole city with the result that, during a temperature of sixteen degrees below zero, hundreds of people turned out. Despite adverse conditions the fire department, in the course of an hour or so, succeeded in securing control of the blaze but several hours longer were required to extinguish what, at one time, threatened to become a most disastrous outbreak. Indeed, even in the realization that a disaster was actually averted, the loss is heavy enough. A dozen families are homeless, little children, invalids, aged women and others being turned out into the night and compelled to depend for temporary shelter on the generosity of neighbors, while, at the same time, watching their household goods and personal belongings wiped out. In view of the fact that no lives were lost, the fire is fortunate, surprising in fact—that no lives were lost. Three large wooden buildings have been practically destroyed, and several others more or less seriously damaged. The loss can scarcely even be estimated, but will run in the vicinity of fifty thousand dollars with very little insurance on the personal property of the families affected.

The fire was discovered at 12:45 A. M. by an employee of one of the express companies leaving Union Depot, and the alarm was immediately pulled in by Policeman Lindsay. When first noticed, flames were breaking through the upper floors of the Chamberlain building, near the corner of Paradise Row and Mill street, and spread with such rapidity that, in a very few moments, the adjoining buildings were in the grip of the flames. Realizing the seriousness of the situation, Chief Blake put into operation several additional alarms bringing all available apparatus. From Bond's Alley, in the rear of the burning buildings, from Mill street, and from the fire, from the street, were being handicapped by the intense cold which made the handling of hose a difficult matter to be reached, and by the suffocating billows of smoke pouring through and over half a dozen buildings in the threatened area.

Those who were on duty on the scene lent their efforts to saving the main tenants of the houses, and later to removing such of the personal effects as could be reached. Unfortunately, so rapid was the onslaught of the fire, that in several cases at least nothing whatever was saved. This was particularly true of the upper floors, where the tenants themselves escaped only with difficulty. From the stores on the street floors goods were removed but not before considerable damage had been done by smoke and water.

By two o'clock it was felt that the fire was actually under control, and at an early hour this morning it had been completely extinguished. To the fortunate termination of what at one time looked like a serious conflagration, the fact that only a light breeze was blowing contributed in no small degree. It was a hard fight—at one time it looked like a losing fight—and while the loss is severe it might have been infinitely worse.

(Continued on page two.)

STATEMENT FROM SIR ROBERT BORDEN EXPECTED TODAY

Was Not At His Office Yesterday and Took No Part in Cabinet Meeting—Hon. Meighen Returns.

Ottawa, Dec. 17.—The statement from Sir Robert Borden as to his plans of the future, which it was intimated yesterday would probably be issued today, was not forthcoming this evening, but it is now expected that there will be some announcement made tomorrow. Sir Robert was not at his office during the afternoon and did not attend the meeting of the council. The council, it is understood, took

comprising thirty-five cases of champagne, which was billed to the Country Club, must remain in possession of the police.

The appeal case will be taken on the grounds that the liquor was in transit to Hull, in the Province of Quebec, and, therefore, no offence was committed in Ottawa. The validity of the Order-in-Council upon which the charge was based is also attacked, together with the legal existence of the War Measures Act, pursuant to which the Order-in-Council was passed.

REAL CHRISTMAS SANTA CLAUS FOR THE SOLDIERS

Ottawa, Dec. 17.—A real Christmas Santa Claus for soldiers has arrived in Ottawa. He is Lieutenant Colonel Cherry of the Pay and Audit Branch of the Department of Militia and Defence, and he has brought back with him from England the sum of \$35,000.—Canada's share of the profits of the canteen system of the British Expeditionary Forces.

CAME FROM SOLDIERS, GOES TO SOLDIERS

Share of the Profits of the Canteen System of the British Expeditionary Forces.

Special to the Standard
Ottawa, Dec. 17.—A real Christmas Santa Claus for soldiers has arrived in Ottawa. He is Lieutenant Colonel Cherry of the Pay and Audit Branch of the Department of Militia and Defence, and he has brought back with him from England the sum of \$35,000.—Canada's share of the profits of the canteen system of the British Expeditionary Forces.

Belongs to Soldiers
A suggestion that the money should be turned over to and administered by the Patriotic Fund, does not find favor among the few soldiers in Ottawa who have knowledge of it. They point out that this money, which belongs to the soldiers, should be distributed among soldiers by the soldiers. They claim that the Department of Militia and Defence is merely a trustee and that in England the same fund is being administered by a purely soldier's committee under the chairmanship of Sir Julian Byng.

A decision in regard to the matter will be made within a day or two.

Commission Gov't Not Pleading To Many Montrealers

Representative Gov't vs. Commission Gov't Will Again be Threshed Out Before Legislature.

Special to the Standard
Montreal, Que., Dec. 17.—Opposition on the part of a group of aldermen to the continuation of the Administrative Commission has now taken tangible form in a term of office lasting four years, to the effect that an amendment will be submitted to the Private Bills Committee of the Legislature asking for the abolition of the Commission.

A big debate at Quebec is now looming up, when the question of Representative Government versus Commission Government will be again threshed out. It seems to have been understood at the time of their appointment, not quite two years ago, that the Administrative Commission was to have a term of office lasting four years, but already Ald. Bedard wants an account of their stewardship. The text of the amendment has not yet been drawn up, but Ald. Bedard stated that such an amendment would be proposed at Quebec, asking for the abolition of the Commission form of government, which would, in that event, be replaced by a single government body of twenty or twenty-five aldermen elected in as many wards. The official notice of the amendment to the city's bill will be given this week, as is required by law. It seems now quite safe to predict that the Private Bills Committee, which had a respite last year for the first time in a decade or longer from hearing the unending story of the municipal troubles of Montreal, will listen to another chapter in January.

When Chairman Decarie, of the Administrative Commission, was asked to give an opinion as to what action was contemplated by the Commission, he said: "I am perfectly willing and glad to go whenever I am asked to go."

CONGRESS REJECTS PROPOSAL FOR LARGE ARMY

Senate Committee Would Fix Strength of the Force at About 280,000 Men.

Washington, D. C., Dec. 17.—Rejection by House and Senate Military Committees of War Department proposals for a regular army of 576,000 officers and men appeared practically certain tonight when Chairman Wadeworth predicted that the Senate Committee would fix the strength of the force at about 280,000. The House Committee has already agreed tentatively on an approximate similar programme.

Joseph Caillaux, Former Premier of France, To Face Trial January 14th

Paris, Dec. 17.—The French Senate, as constituted by the election of January 11, will try Joseph Caillaux, former premier, on a charge of intriguing to bring about a premature and dishonorable peace with Germany. The trial will begin January 14.

There are only seventy-three members of the old Senate whose terms have not expired, and it has been decided that this number is not sufficient to sit as a high court. A decree will be promulgated convoking the Senate on January 13. The Senate then will constitute itself as a high court of the complete Senate with 311 members qualified to sit on it.

UNITED MINERS' CONVENTION TO DISCUSS TERMS

Called by President to Explain Action of Executive Board in Calling off Miners' Strike

Indianapolis, Ind., Dec. 17.—John L. Lewis, acting president of the United Mine Workers of America, tonight stated that it had not yet been determined just when or where the general convention of the United Mine Workers of America to be called soon would be held. It was decided at the meeting of the general committee of the mine workers here last night to call such a convention to explain to the 2,000 delegates from the locals of the unions the reasons for the action taken by the committee in accepting the President's proposal for ending the strike.

Mr. Lewis stated that the question of approval or disapproval of the general committee's action would not come before the convention, as the decision reached at Indianapolis last week was final.

Officials of the United Mine Workers today stated that a part of the organization's strike benefit fund, said to exceed \$15,000,000, would be used in dispensing Christmas cheer among needy miners' families.

FIRE DESTROYS KIRK APARTMENT AT FREDERICTON

Four Families Turned Out Into the Bitter Cold With Thermometer Registering 30 Below.

Special to the Standard
Fredericton, Dec. 17.—Fire broke out at 11 o'clock tonight in the Kerr Apartment House, Charlotte street, which is one of the three apartment houses, situated side by side, and owned by Gordon Scott McDonald, W. A. Robertson, Dr. McKay. But very little of the household furniture of any of the tenants was saved. The building had an original cost of about fifteen thousand dollars, and there is only four thousand dollars insurance on it.

U.F.O. DELEGATES MEETING IN 6TH CONVENTION

Delegates Warned That It Was An Annual Gathering and Not a Political Convention.

Toronto, Dec. 17.—U. F. O. delegates. This is an annual meeting, not a political convention. Government remarks accordingly. Such was the intimation displayed prominently today, at Massey Hall, where the United Farmers of Ontario met this morning for the first session of their sixth annual convention, but it was conceded that, notwithstanding this slogan, the convention will take into itself a fairly ample responsibility with respect to the policies of the Province of Ontario, if not for the whole Dominion of Canada. Owing to some confusion regarding the seating arrangement, the convention was an hour late in getting down to business.

President R. H. Halbert, M. P. elect for North Ontario, fresh from his victory in the Dominion by-election, was greeted with vociferous applause when he made his welcoming address. He recalled that the U. F. O. held its first election of officers in a room in a hotel. Now, he pointed out, the organization was meeting in the largest hall in the province, and he doubted if it was big enough to accommodate all the delegates.

SENATE'S PEACE TREATY FIGHT TO BE RE-OPENED

Subject Bobbed up on the Floor of the United States Senate During Discussion of R. R. Bill Wednesday.

SENATORS THINK IT TIME TO ACT

Opinion Voiced That Politics Should be Forgotten and Senate Act to End Suspense and Establish Peace.

Washington, D. C., Dec. 17.—Expressions that seemed to point toward re-opening of the Peace Treaty fight within a few weeks were voiced on the Senate floor, today, when the subject bobbed up in the midst of consideration of the railroad bill. The symposium of views that went into the record, during the brief debate, included opinions from virtually all of the factions of the devoted Senate membership, but they all struck a note of conciliation. Differing widely in their suggestions for a solution, they stood together on the general proposition that politics ought to be forgotten, and that the Senate, acting independently of executive opinion, ought to do something promptly to end suspension and establish a state of peace.

Settle Question.
The discussion reflected the trend of negotiations, which have been in progress privately among Senators, for an agreement that would get the question finally out of the way. There was increased activity in that direction during the day, and some of the Senators predicted some formal action early in the new year.

Senator Knox, of Pennsylvania, a leader of the irreconcilable Republican group of Treaty opponents, and a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, brought the subject to the floor by another attempt to get before the Senate his two resolutions to establish a Senate of peace. The measure was blocked, but he obtained unanimous consent to send the measures to the committees, where he expects to renew his request for action.

Give and Take.

A plea, made by Senator Knox, for some sort of a settlement was seconded by Senator Smith, of Georgia, a reservation Democrat, who declared the time had come to stop academic discussion which held up the Treaty and get together in a give-and-take effort for compromise. Action at once was urged by Senator Nelson, of Minnesota, one of the mild reservation Republicans, and by Senator Myers, of Montana, a Democrat, who voted last session for some reservations and also for unreformed ratification.

In the compromise negotiations proceeding at private conferences among Senators, the principal activity seemed to be among the Democrats, the Republican reservationists indicating that they awaited some concrete proposition from the other side of the aisle. The Democratic managers were hopeful that such an agreement would be reported, but they expected it would not take tangible form until after the holidays.

D'ANNUNZIO FAILS TO KEEP HIS AGREEMENT

Was to Have Withdrawn His Troops from Fiume Yesterday—Women Cause Him to Change His Mind.

Trieste, Tuesday, Dec. 16.—(By the A. P.)—The withdrawal from Fiume of Gabriele D'Annunzio and his troops, which was set for this morning, did not take place owing to the women of the town having implored the poet-soldier to retain the present garrison. There, D'Annunzio announces that he will not leave Fiume until the poet-soldier, which he has ordered for Thursday, approves of his departure. A group of women in Fiume has organized against the withdrawal of the poet.

Italy Displeased With Tonnage Awards Made By The British

Rome, Tuesday, Dec. 16.—Figures placing Italy's losses in mercantile tonnage during the war at six per cent of the Allies' total loss, as stated in a communique issued by the British Embassy here regarding the distribution of enemy tonnage among the Allies, are disputed by the Tribune today. The newspaper calls this figure unjust, and it quotes from an official report to show that Italy lost through destruction by submarines and mines alone 45 per cent of her tonnage or 1,387,000 tons.

Besides this, declares the Tribune, the Allies are counting as enemy ships all those that flew the Austro-Hungarian flag, including Trieste-Hull vessels, constructed with Italian capital, belonging to Italians who now are an integral part of the Italian population. In her pre-war fleet Italy possessed only enough tonnage to serve two-thirds of her population of 36,000,000 declares the newspaper and it asks how she can get along with less than half that tonnage for a population of 46,000,000.