INVESTIGATION RELATIVE TO THE TREATY OF PEACE WITH GERMANY: HEARING; SIXTY-SIXTH CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION, S. RES. 64, PART 1, PP. 3-26; 52-58

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649240289

Investigation Relative to the Treaty of Peace with Germany: Hearing; sixty-sixth congress, first session, S. Res. 64, Part 1, pp. 3-26; 52-58 by Various

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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Trieste

INVESTIGATION RELATIVE TO THE TREATY OF PEACE WITH GERMANY

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS UNITED STATES SENATE

SIXTY-SIXTH CONGRESS.

FIRST SESSION

PURSUANT TO

S. RES. 64

DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS TO INVESTIGATE WHETHER COPIES OF THE PEACE TREATY WITH GERMANY ARE IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK, BY WHOM AND HOW THEY WERE OBTAINED, AND SO FORTH

PART 1

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations

WASHINGTON
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
1919

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS.

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C. F. REDMOND, *Clerk.*

Sen. H. C. Lodge

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INVESTIGATION RELATIVE TO THE TREATY OF PEACE WITH GERMANY.

MONDAY, JUNE 9, 1919.

UNITED STATES SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, D. C.

The committee met at 10.30 o'clock a. m. in executive session, pursuant to the call of the chairman.

Present: Senators Lodge (chairman), McCumber, Borah, Brandegee Fall, Knox, Harding, Johnson, New, Moses, Hitchcock, Williams, Swanson, Pomerene, Smith, and Pittman.

At the request of the chairman Senator McCumber assumed the chair.

The committee had under consideration the following Senate resolution:

[S. Res. 64, Sixty-sixth Congress, first session.]

Whereas the Senator from Idaho, Mr. Borah, has stated in the Senate that certain interests in the city of New York have secured copies of the peace treaty with Germany while the American people have been unable to secure one; and

Whereas the Senator from Massachusetts, Mr. Lodge, has stated in the Senate that he knows of four such copies of said treaty of peace with Germany now in New York and that the only place where it is not allowed to come is the United States Senate; and

Whereas the Senator from Idaho, Mr. Borah, has stated that the interests now having possession of said copies of said treaty are peculiarly interested in the treaty: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Committee on Foreign Relations be, and it hereby is, authorized and directed to investigate the matter with a view to ascertaining the facts, and particularly to ascertain and report to the Senate the names of the persons, corporations, or interests which have secured copies of said treaty and from whom they were secured and by what methods, and also to ascertain and report to the Senate in what manner and to what extent said interests are "particularly" interested in said treaty. For these purposes the Committee on Foreign Relations, or any subcommittee thereof, be, and it is, authorized to send for persons, books, and papers, to administer oaths and to employ a stenographer, at a cost not exceeding $1 per printed page, to report such hearings as may be had in connection with the same, the expenses thereof, including the cost of travel, to be paid out of the contingent fund of the Senate, and that the committee, or any subcommittee thereof, may sit during the sessions or recesses of the Senate.

Senator MCCUMBER (acting chairman). Gentlemen, if you will allow the acting chairman now to make an inquiry as to the desire of the committee, my understanding is that this morning we are simply to pass upon the question of whether or not we will have the investigation outlined in the resolution of Senator Hitchcock, and that, bearing upon that subject and before passing upon it, we shall hear from Senator Borah and Senator Lodge. Then, after passing upon that, we will determine whether or not we will have public hearings. That would seem to me to be the logical order in which we should consider the matter.

Senator MOSES. Why is there any question about conducting the investigation, inasmuch as we are both authorized and directed by the resolution of the Senate to conduct it?

Senator MCCUMBER. The question is as to publicity at this time; whether we shall have public hearings.

Senator HITCHCOCK. Mr. Chairman, in order to get something before the committee, I move that at this preliminary meeting newspaper men be now admitted.

Senator WILLIAMS. I move, as a substitute, that all the hearings of the committee in this matter be open to the public.

Senator FALL. I second that motion.

(The question was taken and the motion was agreed to.)

Senator MCCUMBER. If we are going to have a public meeting, then I suppose we should invite the newspaper men to come in as well as those to be heard.

Senator LODGE. Yes.

Senator MCCUMBER. Let them come in.

(At this point the doors of the committee room were opened to the public.)

Senator HITCHCOCK. I submit to the committee a copy of a cablegram received from the President, which expresses his position in the matter, if the committee would like to have me introduce it at this time.

Senator LODGE. It seems to me you should begin with the resolution. The resolution refers to Senator Borah and to me as the foundation of the investigation. Of course, we ought to begin, and other matters come in after you have heard us. This is an executive matter. The document was never in our possession, and we ought to hear, I think, what the executive department has to say.

Senator FALL. Mr. Chairman, I think the dignified course for this committee to pursue would be to send at once for the Secretary of State, to notify him that the committee is in session and ask him to come here to-day, so that we may ascertain just the status of this treaty. We have no knowledge that the President has not authorized or even directed the Secretary of State to give out the treaty, and we have no knowledge that he has not given out the treaty; and we have no knowledge whether there are any copies of the treaty in existence anywhere in the United States that have not been given out with the consent of the Secretary. We should first ascertain that. I think we should ascertain from him what the status is.

Senator BRANDEGEE. The Secretary of State is not here, you know. There is an Acting Secretary of State.

Senator FALL. Well, he is called the Secretary of State in the newspapers. He is designated as the Acting Secretary of State. I move, therefore, that we notify the Acting Secretary of State that we are in session and have the chairman get in communication with him at once.

Senator WILLIAMS. Mr. Chairman, the President of the United States is at the head of the Diplomatic Service of the United States, and the Secretary of State, unlike other Cabinet members, is an officer at the head of a department. I move, therefore, that the communication of the President of the United States be read to the committee.

Senator BORAH. I do not know just what authority a man that is under investigation has to speak. I have no knowledge of the cablegram of the President; but I shall insist on the Secretary of State coming here.

Senator WILLIAMS. Let that come up later.

Senator BRANDEGEE. May I suggest to the Senator from Mississippi that he let Senator Fall's motion be passed, and not to make his motion as a substitute, but let the President's telegram be read?

Senator WILLIAMS. I move that the President's wire be read pending this motion of the committee.

Senator McCUMBER. If there be no objection, it will be so ordered and the telegram will be read.

Senator HITCHCOCK. The telegram reads as follows:

JUNE 7, 1919.

TUMULTY,
White House, Washington:

Please convey the following to Senator Hitchcock:

"I am heartily glad that you have demanded an investigation with regard to the possession of texts of the treaty by unauthorized persons. I have felt that it was highly undesirable officially to communicate the text of a document which is still in negotiation and subject to change. Anyone who has possession of the official English text has what he is clearly not entitled to have or to communicate. I have felt in honor bound to act in the same spirit and in the same way as the representatives of the other great powers in this matter, and am confident that my fellow countrymen will not expect me to break faith with them. I hope the investigation will be most thoroughly prosecuted."

WOODROW WILSON.

Senator McCUMBER. Now, will you renew your motion, Senator Fall?

Senator FALL. I renew it.

Senator McCUMBER. You have heard the motion of the Senator from New Mexico.

Senator HITCHCOCK. Mr. Chairman, I would like to inquire of the Senator what is to be gained by the motion at this time. We are here not to investigate the State Department. We have been directed by the Senate to investigate certain statements made by Senators on the floor of the Senate to the effect that unauthorized copies of a treaty were in the possession of New York interests while being withheld from the Senate. Now, we know that they are withheld from the Senate, and we do not need to inquire of the Secretary of State to ascertain that fact. What we want to ascertain is simply who has possession of the copies of the treaty in New York, and how did they get possession of them.

Senator BORAH. We want to know who it is that is withholding it from the Senate. That has a very great bearing on who has it in New York.

Senator HITCHCOCK. The President says he is withholding it.

Senator BRANDEGEE. I rise to a point of order. We have invited the newspaper men to come in here, and they want to get a connected idea of what is said. We ought not to talk all at once. There should be a connected statement made.

Senator FALL. The President says, as I understand it:

I am heartily glad that you have demanded an investigation with regard to the possession of texts of the treaty by unauthorized persons.