

Week at Washington

The joint statehood bill was passed by the senate Feb. 7. The bill provides for the admission to statehood of the state of Oklahoma, to be composed of Oklahoma and Indian Territory, and New Mexico, according to the present boundaries, with Arizona eliminated.

The suit brought by Warren B. Wilson, a Chicago lawyer, who sued for an injunction to restrain the secretary of the treasury from paying the republic of Panama any of the amount of money provided for under the treaty of the United States with Panama, has been decided against him. Mr. Wilson alleges that the Panama Canal act was unconstitutional, that the United States was without right to acquire foreign territory, and that he brought the suit on his own initiative.

Owing to a report of a \$27,000 shortage in the funds of the postoffice at Koloa, Hawaii, Acting Fourth Assistant Postmaster General Conrad, has removed Manuel A. Rego from the postmastership at that place and designated Louis Kahlbaum in his stead.

John Goodnow, consul general at Shanghai, called at the state department on Feb. 7 and announced that he wished to resign. His successor has not yet been named.

An Associated Press dispatch dated Washington, D. C., Feb. 7, says: "Secretary Morton has announced the award of the contract for the armor as follows: To the Bethlehem Steel company, the armor for one battleship and one armored cruiser, 5,666 tons and all bolts and nuts, ninety-four tons. To the Carnegie Steel company, the armor for one armored cruiser, 2,162 tons. In announcing the award it is stated that, while the Midvale Steel company has submitted trial plates that have successfully withstood the required ballistic test, it has not yet commenced the regular production of armor in quantity, and the bureau of ordnance does not deem that the production of the trial plates submitted is such a guarantee that the company can produce suitable armor in the quantities required as would warrant at this time in awarding to that company a contract for armor."

The incorporators of the American National Red Cross met at the state department in Washington. About two dozen persons were present, but Miss Clara Barton was a notable absentee. Secretary Taft called the incorporators to order. A temporary organization was effected through the selection of John W. Foster as temporary presiding officer and Lieutenant John W. Crawford, Admiral Dewey's aid, as secretary.

President Roosevelt has sent a message to congress recommending the appointment of a board of surveys to superintend national surveys and explorations in the Philippine archipelago. He estimates that it will require eight or ten years to complete the work and recommends that appropriations be made from time to time to pay the expenses.

The river and harbor bill is nearly

completed. Provisions for the appointment for more than 100 surveyors are contained in the bill.

Secretary of the Navy Morton has written a letter to Paymaster General G. H. T. Harris, chief of the bureau of supplies and accounts, informing him that although his retirement will occur on March 10, it is the wish of the department that he retain his position for at least a year after that date. This request is made in recognition of his excellent service.

The president has signed the Philippine railroad bill, which authorizes railway construction in the islands and confers on the Philippine government the authority to guarantee bonds to the extent of four per cent of \$30,000,000.

The Washington correspondent for the St. Louis Republic, under date of February 7, says: "The feature of the debate in the house today on the freight rate bill was the speech of Mr. McCall of Massachusetts, who, in opposition to the proposed legislation, declared that it was not to be imagined that the Supreme Court would stand between the government and its victim, following that utterance up with the statement that the courts usually reflected the policy of the party in power. The views of the speakers as to legislation needed were many and varied, but with the exception of Mr. McCall and Mr. Sibley of Pennsylvania all were agreed that the time had arrived for the granting of relief. The names of William J. Bryan and President Roosevelt figured prominently in the discussion, the allegation being made from the democratic side of the chamber that the president, in his recent message to congress on the subject of rate legislation, only reiterated the views of Mr. Bryan and the declarations of the democratic party in three platforms. In accordance with the rule adopted yesterday, the committee today in committee of the whole, convened one hour earlier than usual, the exclusive business for the day being debate on the bills regulating freight rates. Mr. Richardson of Alabama continued his speech begun yesterday. He dismissed the legal points involved. It was, he said, in the federal courts that the railroads get their protection. The special court proposed by the Townsend bill he characterized as a fifth wheel in the judicial wagon, with no necessity for it except to embarrass the movement for equalizing rates. Mr. Richardson denied that the Davey bill embodied any of the provisions of the so-called Hearst bill. Mr. Rainey (Illinois) vigorously asserted that it would not have hurt the Davey bill if the democrats had incorporated in it every provision of the Hearst bill, because it represented "the present progressive and radical tendency of the democratic party in the United States." Mr. Adamson (Georgia) took issue with the statement of Mr. Grosvenor yesterday, and said all the world would give the democrats credit for forcing action, whether they claimed it or not. If the republicans did not complete the legislation now, he predicted that the country would damn them for trifling with so important a matter and preventing action. "Both parties want it," he said. "The president now wants it. The man who ought to have been president for years wants it. All who wish to be president want it and even the railroad presidents want it, and are invading the capitol, white house and public press to make known their anxiety." He urged his colleagues not to stop at Speaker Cannon's adjuration to pass "some kind" of a bill only,

but to pass the substitute of the minority.

Mr. Shackelford of Missouri said the words of President Roosevelt, in his message on the subject, were bold ones, spoken in behalf of the people, but they were but a reiteration of the sentiments of Mr. Bryan and of the declarations in three democratic platforms. Mr. Shackelford then referred to the recent remarks of Mr. Williams of Mississippi, the minority leader, that the democrats would 'toe-mark' the president on this question. It was not, he said, with some emphasis, a question of toe-marking the president. 'It is a question of marching shoulder to shoulder with the president, so long as he is toe-marking the declarations of the three last democratic platforms.' It also was a question with the democrats of President Roosevelt 'marching shoulder to shoulder with the great Nebraskan, who has taken the lead in this great question.' He urged his colleagues not to lag behind 'even the president,' who had asked for a correction of all the abuses. 'And so,' he added, 'we are toe-marking the president when we are not including or incorporating within our bill one-third of the remedies he has demanded.' Mr. Shackelford referred to the recent conference at the White House of the president with several railroad presidents and expressed it as his belief that when the Townsend bill became a law, and it was found that the railroad presidents were favorable to it, President Roosevelt would feel that he had authority to remove every man of the interstate commerce commission and appoint an entirely new body.

The first voice raised against rate legislation was that of Mr. McCall of Massachusetts, who maintained that it was incompatible with the fundamental principles of private property. The granting of authority to the interstate commerce commission to fix rates, he said, was crossing the line between regulation and confiscation in a manner that outraged the most patent principles of justice, and he inquired if anyone could imagine a more ideal method for the destruction of private property and one more likely to corrupt the American people. The powers vested by the bill, he said, were too vast and dangerous to be wielded by any political government and were likely to lead to the destruction of cities, and to government ownership of railroads over the pathway of confiscation. The very air, he said, vibrated with the demands of an aroused public appetite. 'But who imagines,' he inquired, 'that the supreme court of the United States will stand between the national government and its victim?' He declared immediately afterwards that unfortunately there was a disposition on the part of the courts to uphold the policy of the party in power. Despairing that the railroads would get the protection to which they were entitled, Mr. McCall said that if the lid of this Pandora's box should be removed everything would escape from it but hope. He declared it would be better to let the struggles between the cities and the railroads go on than to set up a little machine or a deity such as the enlarged commission proposed would be. He therefore would not give the bill his support. Further opposition to rate legislation at this time came from Mr. Sibley of Pennsylvania, who called on his colleagues to pause and ponder before they acted. He reiterated his views heretofore expressed that there should be a large opportunity to gather information as the basis of intelligent action. Mr. Lamar of Florida, charged that Mr. McCall's views were those of the most complete reactionaries of the government against regulating the railways. Mr. Lamar claimed for W. J. Bryan and the democratic party the credit for first stirring the people to action. Had not President Roosevelt thrown the question of regulating freight rates into

congress like a bombshell, he asserted, the house would have sat for twenty years to come without action upon it.

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