

## Sec'y Baker Reviews Work of War Department

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"And then, with your aid, the army has been able to practically stamp out intemperance and vice among the soldiers by the establishment of zones, by the establishment of patrol systems of one kind and another, by the training of these young officers in these training camps, young men of experience and fine feeling and all that, we have gotten into this great army the idea that it can be a strong and effective military army and still be free from things which have hitherto weakened and sapped the vitality and virility of armies.

"I have gone from camp to camp among these cantonments, and my first question almost invariably is to the camp commander, 'What about your disciplinary problem?'

### Army's Discipline

"Old men in the army, men whose lives have been spent in it from their boyhood and who have been all over the continental United States and through its insular possessions wherever our armies have been, who know the life of the soldier and the camp and the post, all say with one accord and no exception that they have never seen anything like this, that the disciplinary problems of the army are reduced to a negligible quantity and instead of the melancholy and pathetic parade through the secretary of war's office of court martial after court martial, of men who have fallen down and yielded to temptation under these unusual circumstances, which used to obtain. I have an infrequent case now of court martial by reason of such weakness."

Here at the request of the chairman, Mr. Baker put into the record a statement showing the number of hospitals the Red Cross established in France with the number of the personnel of each.

The secretary then resumed his testimony.

"When Lord Northcliffe returned to England he was invited, as I recall it, by Lloyd George to accept a position in his cabinet. He wrote a letter, which was printed in the papers, and in that he made this casual reference to the United States. He spoke of his visit here, and spoke of our war preparations in this fashion:

"War preparations proceeding in the virile atmosphere of the United States and Canada with a fervor and enthusiasm little understood on this side of the Atlantic."

### Cites German Document.

"He was then in England. I happen to have a copy of a confidential instruction issued by the German government in June, 1917, to the German press as to what course they should take in dealing with American matters, and they say:

"While the news about American war preparations, such as the organizing and outfitting of an army of 1,000,000 men strong, to reinforce the French-English front is looked upon in that form as bluff, the spreading of which may unfavorably affect the opinion of the German people, yet the fact must not be overlooked on the other hand that the United States with the support of its capacity for material and industrial management, is arming itself for war with great energy and tenacity."

"Your committee will have full opportunity, and will doubtless go into those things, if you will deal with the hospital situation, the medical corps,

the signal corps, you will hear the wonderful work done by the engineering department of the army; but when it is all told, Mr. Chairman, it will be a story which I am sure your committee will be glad to report to the senate of the United States as being a tremendous response to a tremendous responsibility, and when you have made this investigation I know that the American people will feel, as I think they have a right to feel, that we are in this war to win it; that we are in it to hit, and to hit hard; that we are in it to co-ordinate our strength with that of our associates; that the problem is not one of individual star playing, but of team play, with these veterans and experienced persons under actual battle conditions; that more has been done, perhaps, than the country expected, more than the wisest in the country thought was possible to do.

### No Division of Counsel

"In so far as I am personally concerned, I know what is ahead of us. I know what the American feeling about this war is. Everybody is impatient to do as much as we can. There will be no division of counsel; there will be all the criticism there ought to be upon shortcomings and failures; there will be, so far as the war department is concerned, a continuing effort at self improvement and a hospitality toward every suggestion for improvement that can come from the outside, but the net result is going to be that a united and confident American people, believing in themselves and in their institutions, are going to demand, and that at no late day, on European battlefields, in the face of veterans though they be, that they can not excel us in achievement, and when the victory is won over there, Mr. Chairman, the credit which will come to American enterprise, and to American determination and to American courage will be an honor to us, as the tenacity of purpose and splendid achievements of the British and French already shed great lustre on the names of the great people."

In his testimony at the morning session Mr. Baker said:

### Welcomes Criticisms

"I have no purpose to defend individuals or myself. If I discuss here individuals by name, if I refer to Gen. Crozier or to Gen. Sharpe or myself, it will be only to make it clear. If any of us should figure in tomorrow's casualties it would be as nothing beside the object we all ask. I am not here to deny shortcomings, but I think I can say this: that where we have found such shortcomings or mistakes we have made every effort to correct them. I most earnestly ask that when you have pointed out to you any shortcomings, whether it seem well founded or not, that you instantly refer it to me in order that the processes of the department may sift the truth.

Defending the lack of Lewis machine guns, the secretary said that Gen. Pershing does not want Lewis guns for the ground forces, but only for aviation. He said that up to last April the Lewis gun had not been satisfactorily tested with American ammunition, although widely used by England. The French, he said, never took the Lewis gun in any large numbers.

"The board," he added, referring to the board he appointed in the fall of 1916 to test machine guns, "never

delayed for one second the procurement of additional machine guns."

Obviously, he said, there were not as many machine guns for camp training as was to be desired, but he read a table showing that on Nov. 1 each camp or cantonment had been shipped 30 Colt, 65 Lewis and 45 Chauchat guns, and, in addition, each regular cavalry regiment had been supplied with ten Lewis guns, and each infantry regiment with ten Chauchats.

### The Big Guns

On the question of big guns, Secretary Baker recalled that Gen. Crozier, Chief of Ordnance, had urged congress and the various secretaries of war continuously for larger programmes because of the time it took to make the guns. The record served, he thought, to show that Gen. Crozier had realized the delay that must be faced and sought to prepare in advance.

British and French theory of artillery usage differs, he said:

"We had to decide for ourselves what we should use."

Army experts were sent abroad to study the question. Early in June it was intimated that France had so far accelerated her industrial programme that "the wastage of industry would not fully occupy her resources and that she could supply artillery for American forces, then going to France, without curtailing her own forces. Capt. Tardieu opened the subject.

"On July 13 or 14," Mr. Baker continued, "an agreement was made by which the French government agreed to supply the principal pieces of 75-millimetre field guns and 155-millimetre rapid fire howitzers needed for the American forces being sent abroad. The American government wished to adopt the quickest solution to get the largest supply in the shortest possible time. At that time, although we were sending troops to France, it was not in any large numbers—a matter somewhat for the remote future."

"You thought it was better to use the French factories instead of waiting to build our own?" asked Senator Reed.

"Exactly," Secretary Baker replied. "Also it saved tonnage. And I'm telling no secrets when I say that ships are the crux of this problem, and every time we can use French industrial resources instead of making and sending our own products we are doing it."

### Manufactured Here.

Statistics of manufacture in this country of artillery were given by Secretary Baker, some publicly and some to the committee in confidence. He said, for example, that the first three-inch anti-aircraft gun was delivered this month and that its production is rising steadily to an estimate of 300 per month maximum.

"So," he said, in recapitulating, "I think it is fair to say (and if there is a possibility that I am wrong I want it called to my attention) that the American army in France, large as it is, and the American army to be sent there, large as that is, are and will be provided with artillery of the type they want as rapidly as they can use it, and that our own stream of manufacture to supplement this is in process, with delivery of pieces rising steadily."

Senator Frelinghuysen said he understood the shell making capacity of the country had dropped 75 per cent after the United States entered the war, the war department having permitted plants to go out of business and be dismantled.

Secretary Baker said he had no information on that point but would obtain it for the committee. He sug-

gested that plants built and owned by the British government might have been dismantled and shipped to England.

Senator Sutherland said a negro preacher had told him that his son at Camp Meade, Md., had been supplied with castoff clothing of white soldiers and no woolen underclothing. Secretary Baker said he would investigate, but declared there was no discrimination in the treatment of white and negro troops.

Secretary Baker said the idea had gotten abroad that the American army uniform is part shoddy. He declared it is all wool and that shoddy is put only in overcoats and blankets.

"When we went into the war," he said, "the standard of the army uniform was 75 per cent wool and 25 per cent cotton. But that was changed, and now every yard is of virgin wool, with a large increase in its strength."

### 60,000,000 Shells This Year.

The secretary read a report showing 60,000,000 shells are now under manufacture for delivery this year.

"I want to make one further observation," Secretary Baker proceeded, taking up army food. "I think it is not unfair for me to say that in the provision of food no army ever assembled anywhere was ever fed as ably, as well, as nutritiously and as appetizingly as this army. While there have been complaints about other things, I think it is the unanimous testimony that the food has been of the highest quality, with no suggestion of defect in its quantity or preparation, and that generally the food proposition has been carried out with the most extraordinary success."

### Sickness at Camps.

Sites for the camps and cantonments were next taken up by Mr. Baker. Praising Gen. Leonard Wood's experience and qualifications to select sites, Secretary Baker referred to the fact that the general had been a medical officer and also "originated the training camp idea, carrying it to a demonstration at Plattsburg." Gen. Wood, he added, was "recognized by common consent in the army as the most capable to select camp sites and inaugurate a training camp system."

"The fact is," Mr. Baker said, "that most of our sickness, contrary to expectations, has occurred at the camps." (In contradistinction to cantonments.)

The secretary admitted that illness at Camp Bowie was perhaps caused by too many men being housed in one tent together with a shortage in clothing.

Senator Weeks asked if the pneumonia epidemic did not result from inadequate hospital facilities.

"I don't think so," said the secretary.

"The fact is," he added, "we were overtaken by epidemics before the base hospitals were ready at some national guard camps. When Gen. Gorgas made his inspections the conditions were remedied instantly."

The secretary said that when he heard of the two letters read by Senator Chamberlain concerning bad treatment of sick soldiers he immediately asked Mr. Chamberlain for all the details.

"I want to follow those through to the very end," he said, "and find out who is responsible, in order that I can punish the guilty."

Some reports, the secretary said, have not proved serious upon inquiry, while others had, in which case corrections followed.

In the case of the body of an officer who died at an aviation training

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