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The Daily Record

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and THE DRESDEN DAILY.

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LIBERAL MISREPRESENTATION.

A CANARD NAILED TO THE COUNTER.

Last Tuesday, in common with our German contemporaries, we published a London telegram purporting to describe the "chaos" in the London Customs House on Saturday following on the rejection of the Budget. The telegram was based on statements printed in the *Daily News* of Monday. As this is a matter closely concerning business interests in this country we think it only right to publish the following statement as to the facts of the case, as opposed to the fiction of the *Daily News* which found its way into the entire German press. It is to be hoped that Wolff's Telegraphic Agency will give the same prominence to this refutation as it did to the original allegation which now proves to be unfounded. The statement below, which appeared in a London journal on Monday evening, is officially confirmed by the Press Association, a non-party and impartial news agency, whose paragraph we also reproduce:

"Chaos has come upon the Revenue Collection within the very week of the rejection of the Budget by the Lords."—*Daily News*.

During the Budget discussions the Radicals represented that chaos would follow the rejection of the Budget, and they are evidently determined to make the "facts" tally with their prophecies, however inaccurate they may be. Lord Lansdowne, in his speech on the Budget, it will be remembered, said that the Government could have chaos if they wanted it, but the statement of Mr. Asquith shows that they did not. This, however, is apparently not sufficient for the *Daily News*, which, as shown from the quotation above, if it cannot have chaos in fact, is determined to have it in fiction. The Radical Press has taken up the cry; "chaos" has already developed to "chaos on chaos"; it appears as though Mr. Ure's best efforts will soon pale into comparative insignificance. To deliberately represent that the nation's finances are in a state of chaos is surely the last word in political recklessness; the gravity of the allegation cannot be over-estimated. Moreover, there is no need to mince words in such a matter—"it is an absolute lie." This designation is not ours—it is the only one applied to the statement of the *Daily News* by those whom a press representative approached on the subject today (Monday). It is not a question of opinion. Any sincere inquiry on the point among those as to the correctness of whose information there can be no doubt, will be met with the clear pronouncement, "There is no chaos at all."

Perhaps the best way of dealing with the misrepresentations is to take them separately. The first is that tobacco and spirits are being cleared from the London Customs House without the payment of the increased duty. What are the facts? No difficulty is expected in regard to the tobacco trade. Steps have been taken which will satisfy the Chancellor as to the collection of the duty. No fear is felt about the big firms, who, as a matter of fact, will probably deposit the duty. It would be impossible to over-estimate the feeling of security over the matter. The Customs officials will lose a little, as they always do, but the "men of straw" who attempt operations will be an insignificant quantity. As a matter of fact, even if some of the big firms think they can make better use of the money than by depositing it, the Customs officials regard the matter with equal serenity. The same remarks apply to spirits. The next allegation is that arrangements are being made for the wholesale clearance of tea duty free. Against this there is to be recorded the simple fact that the tea trade have come into line very well, and are depositing the tax. There will always be the trade pirate who thinks he can make some financial advantage and then clear out of the country. He is a gentleman who is found in all changes of duties. All firms of any standing, however, know that the officials will come back on them for the duty. Dozens of telegrams have been received from the bigger ports indicating that firms will fall into line. The same fact is to be recorded concerning the collection of the petrol tax. The importing firms have agreed to deposit the amount of the tax.

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The absurdity of such reckless Radical statements as those given above will be seen when it is realised that for any "trade pirates" to make much by the evasion of the duty, they would have to set up extensive plant for the next two months, and then "scrap" it at the end of that time. The authorities smile complacently at the suggestion that anybody would attempt to do it. The actual position is that the whole scheme has really worked far more smoothly than anticipated. As a matter of absolute fact, just a slight change of duty has sometimes caused a greater upheaval than this Radical "chaos."

The following information, supplied by the Press Association, fully bears out the statements above:—

"Nobody here has any knowledge of any chaos resulting from the rejection of the Budget," said the Chairman of the Customs (Mr. Guillemard), today. It was added that far from there being any chaos, business was proceeding very quietly. There was a big clearance on Saturday, but this had been anticipated, as everybody had been waiting after the Lords' decision to see what was going to happen. A good deal of duty was paid on Saturday, the total being about £80,000, which was a very big figure; but what has been omitted from the statement this morning was the additional fact that the great bulk of the duty was deposited just exactly as if any crisis had not arisen, and it consisted of the higher rates imposed by the Budget.

Moreover reports from all the ports other than London show that business was being transacted without any unusual features—quite peaceably, and without any trouble at all. Preparations had been made to meet any crisis, but none had arisen.

THE PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE.

(SPECIAL CABLEGRAM.)

WASHINGTON, Wednesday.—President Taft's Message to Congress, issued yesterday, is brief and couched in a moderate tone. The proposed amendments to the Anti-Trust and Interstate Commerce Laws, together with the new legislative measures for the conservation of national resources and improvement of waterways, are reserved for Special Messages. The Message commences with a declaration that the relations of the United States with all foreign Governments continue on a normal basis of friendship

and good understanding and are generally developing in a satisfactory manner. European conditions are next discussed, emphasis being laid on America's diplomatic negotiations with Great Britain. A question of greater international significance than the fishery problem has not as yet been laid before the Hague Arbitration Court. As the Canadian Boundary Commission did not succeed in arriving at an agreement within the stipulated period, this matter must also be a subject for arbitration. The agreement reached between the United States and Canada in regard to the settlement of differences concerning certain boundary waters has not yet been ratified by Great Britain. Negotiations for an international conference to discuss the best means of guarding against fur raiders are proceeding with Great Britain, Japan, and Russia, and promise a satisfactory ending. The results of the London Conference on Maritime Law signify an extraordinarily satisfactory codification of international maritime law, and it is permissible to hope that the practical and loyal character of the resolutions will ensure their general acceptance, thereby eliminating one of the obstacles which hitherto has stood in the way of an international Prize Court. The attitude of the United States towards Belgium's annexation of the Congo territory is one of benevolent encouragement and confidence that the step will eventually bring about the results so greatly desired and satisfy the dictates of humanity, in which the whole world is united. Norway's invitation to participate in the forthcoming International Spitzbergen Conference has been accepted by the United States, whose Government, however, will not sign an agreement which excludes all but Europeans from any sort of administration of the islands. With reference to the Near East, including Turkey and the Balkans, the Message remarks that the conditions are more favourable for an important American share of commerce in that quarter than ever before, owing to the progress of the constitutional régime.

Turning to Latin America, the President affirms that altered conditions in the United States and the Southern Republics have done much to dissipate the fears which led to the Monroe Doctrine. But neither this doctrine nor any other must be allowed to protect an irresponsible administration which seeks to evade its obligations on the dishonourable pretext of appealing to American power. Inter-Colonial American trade promises substantial development in accordance with the continual improvement of commercial and financial institutions, to which belongs the projected chief bank for Latin America. After the Message has mentioned an improvement in the Venezuelan situation, the transference of the Alsop dispute to King Edward for a decision, and America's friendship with Mexico which was renewed by the President's recent meeting with President Diaz near El Paso, it deals with Nicaraguan affairs and the provisional government there. Two Americans were executed by direct order of President Zelaya, charged with having been regular officers in the well-organised Revolutionary army which had now mastered half the Republic. The American Government will endeavour with circumspection and prudence to get at the facts of the situation, keeping a strict watch on American interests and the cause of civilisation in Nicaragua.

With reference to the Far East, the Message reiterates that America stands for fair play all round and the integrity of China. The participation of American banks in Chinese railway loans appears to be finally and satisfactorily arranged after many months of negotiation. Friendly relations exist with Japan. According to its emphatic assurance, Japan will make no claims for mining privileges in Manchuria which are inconsistent with the American-Chinese Treaty.

A clause of the Message relates to the Secretary of the Treasury's report of a deficit and recommends a further issue of Panama Canal bonds. Economies made by the President have resulted in next year's Budget being 55 million dollars less than for the present year. Congress is reminded that it cannot concern itself with the charges of corruption against the New York Customs administration until the investigation is concluded. In regard to the new Tariff Law, the President hopes and believes that it will not lead to a tariff war, and that he will never be

(Continued on page 2.)