Tighten Dry Laws Immediately, Urges Hoover Commission

President in Message Backs Recommendations—Four Cures Are Offered

No Modification Hint

By ROBERT R. LANE
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WASHINGTON—President Hoover today sent to Congress the preliminary report on prohibition of his Law Enforcement Commission, and accompanied it by a message which, on analysis, will not be entirely pleasing to the ultra drys.

The President accepts full responsibility for the recommendations made in the report for the commission by its chairman, George W. Wickersham. To that extent he satisfies the demand of the House leaders that any program for changes in prohibition enforcement be avowedly his own.

The commission did not pass on the success or failure of the Eighteenth Amendment, nor did it make the slightest mention or hint at any modification of the Volstead Act.

The recommendations, based on seven months' study, specifically are:

Transfer of the prohibition unit from the Treasury to the Department of Justice.

Codification of more than twenty-five Federal laws bearing on prohibition passed in the last forty years.

Legislation to make padlock injunctions more effective.

Provisions for relieving congestion in the Federal courts by having United States commissioners try petty cases.

In the report of the commission and even in the text of the short message of the President, there is ample evidence that neither the commission nor the Chief Executive is at all certain prohibition enforcement, as is, entirely satisfies the public needs or is in its permanent form.

Readjustment Hinted.

A salient paragraph in the President's message hints that ultimately there may be a readjustment of the respective responsibility of federal and state governments. This is strongly reminiscent of Chairman Wickersham's letter to Governor Roosevelt of New York, which was read to the conference of Governors. In it Mr. Wickersham suggested that the states that have adopted "concurrent" legislation with the Volstead act, "deal with purely intrastate" enforcement, leaving to the Federal government the problems of smuggling at the border and the interstate transportation of liquor.

The same idea seems to be embodied in a memorandum by Attorney General Mitchell to the President on judicial procedure, which Mr. Hoover also sent up to the Congress. In conclusion Mr. Mitchell wrote:

"In respect to prohibition, attention has recently been directed more to federal than to state agencies for enforcement. Placing all federal agencies in good order is not the only requirement. It has never been contemplated that the whole task of enforcing prohibition should be borne by the Federal government.

"Any constructive plan for better prohibition enforcement must give attention to improvement in state as well as federal agencies, and to the adjustment between them of the burden of enforcement."

This "adjustment" of the enforcement burden was the idea incorporated in the Wickersham letter to Governor Roosevelt.

The White House messenger arrived with the report just as the House appropriations committee was presenting the prohibition appropriations for next year, which involve only a slight increase.

Speaker Longworth delayed the reading for some time and, contrary to plans, the report was first presented to the Senate, where both dry and wets listened with close attention.

Believes Changes Will Cure Many Abuses

The President said in his message:

"I believe the administrative changes mentioned will contribute to cure many abuses. Beyond these immediate questions are others which reach deeply into the whole question of the growth of crime and the enforcement of the laws. The causes of crime, the char-

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Pithy Paragraphs By Wickersham

WASHINGTON (AP)—Here are some of the pithy observations of the Law Enforcement Commission in its first preliminary report on prohibition:

It is impossible wholly to set off observance of the prohibition act from the large question of the views and habits of the American people with respect to private judgment as to statutes and regulations affecting their conduct.

We must not forget the many historical examples of large-scale public disregard of laws in our past.

The reported arrest in the last fiscal year of upward of 80,000 persons from every part of the continental United States indicates a staggering number of what might be called focal points of infection.

To adjust the machinery of federal administration, as it has grown up for other purposes, to this huge problem of enforcement of prohibition is not easy and will require much further study.

If on no other grounds than to give the law a fair trial there are obvious and uncontroverted difficulties, abundantly pointed out by experience, which may, and, as we think, should be met so as to make enforcement more effective.

It is an anomaly that the cases are investigated and prepared by agencies entirely disconnected with and not answerable to those which are to prosecute them.

A few simple legislative enactments, in our opinion, could be made greatly to strengthen enforcement.