

# COX PREPARED TRAP FOR HARDING, CAUGHT SELF, AVERS JUDSON WELLIVER

**De Kobra, Who Had Been With Cox's Party, Was Expected To Give Harding Information To Trap Him; Cox Supposed Harding Took Bait And Made Charge, Is Allegation.**

Marion, Ohio, Oct. 19.—An unsuccessful attempt by Governor Cox to trap Senator Harding, was charged in a statement issued from Harding headquarters here tonight, in response to suggestions by the Democratic nominee that Mr. Harding had conferred with Maurice de Kobra, a French journalist, regarding the French attitude toward the League of Nations.

The statement issued over the signature of Judson C. Welliver, headquarters director of publicity, said that Senator Harding never had heard of de Kobra until today, though the latter had made an unsuccessful effort to see him in Indianapolis last Friday. It was asserted further that de Kobra, who said he had been traveling with the Cox party, "was evidently expected by Governor Cox to secure an interview with Senator Harding and to say certain things to him."

"Therefore," the statement continued, "when Senator Harding on the next day at Green Castle, Ind., made his casual observations about France having sent a spokesman to him informally, Governor Cox assumed that the de Kobra mission had been suc-

cessful, and that Senator Harding had taken the bait."

## Harding Declined Discussion.

Senator Harding himself declined to discuss the governor's references to de Kobra or to say anything further in regard to his utterance at Green Castle. He indicated that with his reply to President Wilson's letter on the subject last night he was inclined to regard the incident as closed, and that he did not intend to reveal the identity of his informants or any other details of the "informal" advice he received from them.

Mr. Welliver's statement follows:

"In his speech at Rochester, N. Y., last evening, Governor Cox is quoted as saying, in reference to Senator Harding's statement that 'spokesmen of France' had informally asked that America should lead the way for an association of nations:

"I dare Senator Harding to tell America publicly whether or not the representative of France was Maurice de Kobra of Paris. If this be true, and I have strong reasons for believing it is, I wish to remind you of Senator Harding's oft-repeated assurance that he intended to take counsel always with others. We have here an instance of the kind of counsel he will seek in connection with international affairs. Monsieur de Kobra appears to be a fine gentleman, but he is profound in international affairs."

"Governor Cox has fallen into a neat little trap that had been set for Senator Harding. Senator Harding never saw M. de Kobra and never heard of him until today. The facts about this pleasant little conspiracy are briefly these:

**Asked Audience With Harding.**

"On Friday evening last, a few min-

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# Cox Prepared Trap For Harding, Caught Self, Aers Judson Welliver

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utes after Senator Harding's train had arrived at Indianapolis, M. de Kobra came to me at our hotel, introducing himself as the correspondent of La Liberte of Paris, and asked that an audience with Senator Harding be arranged. I declined, and Monsieur de Kobra became insistent. He said he had been traveling with Governor Cox's party and, having secured the Cox viewpoint on international matters, was now desirous of an interview with Senator Harding, in order that he might present the Republican side of the matter. He was insistent upon seeing Senator Harding and seeing him immediately. I finally told him it was impossible.

## Harding Never Saw De Kobra.

"Monsieur de Kobra did not, at that time or any other, even speak to Senator Harding. Senator Harding was not informed of M. de Kobra's importunities, indeed, never saw, or met him at any time. Monsieur de Kobra was evidently expected by Governor Cox to secure an interview with Senator Harding and to say certain things to him. Therefore when Senator Harding on the next day at Green Castle, Ind., made his casual observation about France having sent a spokesman to him informally, Governor Cox assumed that the de Kobra mission had been successful, and that Senator Harding had taken the bait. The governor proceeded to expose his own part by daring Senator Harding to say whether his French informant was de Kobra. Governor Cox has merely over-reached himself in his attempt to trap Senator Harding.

"As already stated, Mr. de Kobra was denied an interview with Senator Harding, and Senator Harding never heard of the gentleman until his attention was called today to Governor Cox's speech.

"The incident is peculiarly illuminating as to the methods of the Democratic campaign, but the joke is on Governor Cox, who has thus exposed the cheap methods his campaign is employing."

Senator Harding will leave Marion tomorrow morning on his last speaking trip outside his own state.