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VARIOUS REPORTS FROM RUSSIA TELL OF CLASHES BETWEEN THE FORCES ENGAGED IN CIVIL WAR

Preliminary Peace Discussions in Progress Between the Bolsheviks and Teutons

MEET AT BREST-LITOVSK

German and Austrian Foreign Ministers Are Proceeding Toward That City

SNOW ON BATTLE FRONTS

Only in Northern Italy is Heavy Fighting Going On

(Associated Press War Summary).

Various reports continue to come from Russia with regard to the operations of the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces in their struggle for supremacy, but out of the maze it is impossible to gain an accurate idea as to which side to the controversy is in the ascendancy.

Preliminary Peace Plans.

Meanwhile preliminary peace discussions between the Bolshevik representatives and delegates of the Teutonic allies are in progress at Brest-Litovsk. The real negotiations, having in view the bringing about of peace and the consequent retirement of the Russian army as a belligerent against the Teutonic allies, are expected to begin next Tuesday.

The German and Austrian foreign ministers, both astute politicians, are speeding toward Brest-Litovsk to take part in the parley and in the battle of wits which will take place it probably is not outside the realm of reason to infer that the Teutonic allied representatives will not be at a disadvantage in dealing with men of the caliber the Bolsheviks will have present to lead their cause.

Now Checks Fighting.

On one of the battle fronts, except that in northern Italy, are military operations of great magnitude ensuing. Heavy snow and bad weather generally has brought the fighting almost to a standstill on the western front in France and Belgium, except for small encounters by outposts and reciprocal bombardments.

On the Italian front, around Monte Solato the Austro-Germans again have taken up a vigorous offensive, throwing their troops against the Italians with the usual fierceness of attack, disregarding the losses inflicted upon them. The Rome war office reports that the enemy in his latest attack was completely repulsed.

English east coast towns again have received a visitation from German airplanes. The raiders penetrated to London, dropping bombs. Missiles also were dropped in Kent and Essex.

The American submarine F-1 has been sunk in a collision with her sister boat, the F-2, in American waters. Nineteen men perished in the accident. The F-3 was not damaged. Her crew was able to rescue five men belonging to the crew of her victim.

REPORTS INDICATE FIGHTING CONTINUES IN DON REGION

London, Dec. 17.—Reports on the Russian internal situation tonight indicate that fighting is continuing in the Don region and that reinforcements have been sent south from Petrograd.

A Kiev dispatch tonight reports that during the disarming of the Maximilianists there the Ukrainian troops seized 72 cannon, 350 machine guns and 5,000,000 cartridges. Other advices are that the Russian government commissioners are drafting an ultimatum to the Ukraine. Padoa, secretary of the Ukrainian government, has demanded the independence of Ukraine but the Rada's attitude toward the Bolsheviks authorities. The People's Commission as comprising the government of all-Russia, inasmuch as the Don, the Caucasus, Siberia and other parts of Russia have their own governments.

In connection with the armistice on the Russian front, it is stated that the Russian delegation at Brest-Litovsk has been augmented to include M. P. Pogorelov, president of the Moscow workers' and workmen's council, and others.

The Maximalist organ Prava denounces as untruthful the allegations that the Germans demanded the evacuation of Petrograd and Finland, and a grant to Germany of a monopoly in grain exports.

According to the Bolshevik public opinion department and railway administration, the arrivals of food of all kinds in the last few days have been satisfactory at Petrograd, Moscow and the populous parts of north Russia and on the north and south fronts.

KERENSKY IS REPORTED IN THE VICINITY OF PETROGRAD

Copenhagen, Dec. 18.—A report that former Premier Kerensky of Russia, has appeared in the vicinity of Petrograd, is contained in a dispatch from Haparanda, in Sweden, at the Finnish (Continued On Page Two)

American Submarine Sinks Another; Nineteen Men Lost

Washington, Dec. 18.—Nineteen lives were lost when the American submarine F-1 was rammed and sunk by submarine F-3 in home waters during a fog Monday afternoon.

The F-3 was undamaged and picked up five survivors of her victim. Secretary Daniels announced the disaster today in a brief statement which gave no further details.

Lieutenant A. E. Montgomery, commanding officer of the F-1 was among the five saved. His mother, Mrs. Julia Pratt, lives at Fort H. G. Wright, N. Y. Other survivors include: J. M. Schmissauer, machinist; father, Charles C. Schmissauer, Hills City, Tenn.

Henry L. Brown, gunner's mate; father, H. P. Brown, Macon, Ga. The list of those lost announced by the navy department shows men to be from far western states with the exception of two who are from Ohio and Pennsylvania.

GERMANS SAVED TWO SAILORS FROM THE DESTROYER JONES

Amsterdam, Dec. 18.—Two sailors were saved by the Germans from the American destroyer Jacob Jones, according to an official German announcement received here today.

The Jacob Jones was torpedoed and sunk in the war zone on Dec. 6 and 55 men on board were listed as missing. Survivors reported that one American who spoke German was taken prisoner on the submarine.

Steamer Mundale Safe.

Baltimore, Dec. 18.—The steamship Mundale of the Munson Line about the safety of which there was some anxiety, has arrived at an Atlantic port according to information received by the wife of Capt. J. A. Meech, who is in command of the ship.

GIVE FULL TIME TO WAR COUNCIL

Three Members of the New Body Are Relieved From their Present Positions

GEN. GOETHALS RECALLED

Becomes Acting Quartermaster General, Succeeding General Sharpe. Purpose of Council is to Accelerate War Activities.

Washington, Dec. 18.—Secretary Baker today moved forward the organization of his newly-created war council by relieving from their present duties three of the five officers assigned to that body. This will leave them free to devote all their time to the council's task of co-ordinating all war department activities in such a way that the time heretofore believed to be necessary for the sending to France of an army of sufficient size to insure the defeat of Germany will be materially reduced.

Mr. Baker announced that Major General George W. Goethals had been recalled to active duty and would become acting quartermaster general, relieving Major General Sharpe for service with the council. Major General Waver will be relieved by Brigadier General Harriette, who becomes acting chief of coast artillery, and Major-General William Crozier by Brigadier-General Charles Wheeler, who becomes acting chief of ordnance.

General Bliss, chief of staff, and Major-General Crowder, the other officers of the council, will retain their present positions, the former as chief of staff and the latter as judge-advocate general and provost marshal general. General Bliss retires December 31 for age, but probably will continue on the council. Preparations are being made today for the council indicated that General Crowder might be able to devote only a small part of his time hereafter to other duties.

Major Baker decided that officers of the council must be in the war department building itself and the ordnance bureau probably will be transferred to another building.

Mr. Baker indicated in his last war review that the Russian armistice has made it necessary for the United States to accelerate its war preparations. The gap in the allies' ranks vacated by Russia must be filled promptly, many officers here say. If the general situation shall continue to show a balance of power in favor of the United States and the allies when the summer campaign reaches its height in 1918.

Members of the House mission which participated in the war conference in Paris are believed to have brought back a similar message. General Bliss is preparing a detailed report and there is little doubt that his report will stress the need of haste.

It is generally believed that the American representatives at the war conference made some definite statement as to what the United States could and would do and how long it would take it. The new council probably will undertake to make certain strength was pledged.

Secretary Baker would not discuss today General Bliss' successor as chief of staff. He said, however, that a recent report that General Pershing was to be recalled to fill the post lacked any foundation.

Southern Surgeons Meet.

St. Augustine, Fla., Dec. 18.—With delegates in attendance from virtually every southern state, the thirteenth annual meeting of the Southern surgical association convened here today. Sessions will continue until Thursday.

FAIRFAX HARRISON DEFENDS CARRIERS

Say Coal Shortage Can't Fairly be Attributed Solely to Lack of Transportation

PUBLIC IS ALSO TO BLAME

Points Out That From April to November 61,000,000 Tons More Were Hauled Than During the Same Period Last Year.

New York, Dec. 18.—Coal shortage in various parts of the country "cannot fairly be attributed altogether to lack of transportation," said a statement issued here tonight by Fairfax Harrison, chairman of the railroad war board.

"The problem is primarily one of distribution, for which the public must share the responsibility," the statement declared.

Figures showing that the railroads of the country had hauled approximately 61,000,000 tons more of coal from April to November, inclusive, than they did in the same period last year, were contained in the statement, which continues:

"The railroads have not been able at all times to carry all the coal that could be offered them for movement. But has any other industry responded more efficiently to the demands created by the war?"

The statement then outlines difficulties under which the railroads have operated, "resulting principally from their inability to increase their plant and the excessive use of preference orders in government transportation."

"The charge has been made," the statement adds, "that the inability of the railroads promptly to move all the freight offered to them has been largely due to the failure of the various railway lines to work together harmoniously and unitedly in this war crisis. The allegation is without foundation."

Taking up distribution, it adds: "The railroads cannot with their existing facilities, handle a much larger tonnage of coal so long as the present system of distribution prevails. The present system of distribution involved a great amount of cross-hauling of coal and the resulting large waste of transportation. The remedy doubtless requires a surrender of convenience and old habit, but it is clear. It is to cause coal to be supplied to every section from the mine closest to that section."

IMPROVEMENT IS MADE IN TRANSPORTATION OF COAL

Washington, Dec. 18.—Improvement in coal transportation was reported to the fuel administration today by A. W. Thompson, chairman of the general operating committee of eastern railroads. The last 24 hours, Mr. Thompson said, showed ten per cent more coal moved than during the preceding twenty-four.

The railroads, Mr. Thompson said, are moving freight now at about 75 per cent of normal. Recently the percentage was declared to be as low as 30.

Fuller co-operation between the railroads and coal producers will be discussed at a conference tomorrow.

Mr. Cabrera sailed last Saturday and the state department heard of it at the time, but it did not become generally known until today when Ambassador Fletcher arrived from Mexico City to participate in the conferences which the Mexican envoy came here to hold.

M'CORMICK SAYS PERSHING'S FORCE LACKS ARTILLERY

Representative Who Visited Battle Front Attempts to Refute Crozier's Testimony

INQUIRY BROADENING OUT

Congressional Committee Will Hear Private Manufacturers or Army Supplies

Washington, Dec. 18.—The congressional inquiry into army war preparations broadened today with the senate military committee's decision to hear private manufacturers of ordnance and ammunition tomorrow and to delve into the clothing, canteen building, food and transportation situations Friday by examining Major General Sharpe, quartermaster general.

From Representative McCormick, of Illinois, who recently visited the European battle front, the committee heard statements in executive session today tending to contradict testimony of Major General Crozier, chief of ordnance, regarding adequacy of General Pershing's equipment, especially heavy artillery. Mr. McCormick said neither the British nor the French had enough artillery and that they were supplying Pershing only because the Americans were still worse off.

Postpones Action On Nomination.

As a result of the charges of delays and shortages in the ordnance outfitting, the senate just before adjourning for the holidays indefinitely postponed action on the nomination of General Crozier for re-appointment. The military committee had unanimously recommended his confirmation. Several senators, including committee members, objected to immediate action, sharply criticizing General Crozier, and Senator Chamberlain agreed that it was inadvisable to postpone until the results of the investigation were fixed.

Supports Crozier's Statement.

Evidence supporting General Crozier's statement regarding prospects of increased production of ordnance was given to the committee today by Samuel Yauco, vice-president of the Baldwin Locomotive Company and a member of the civilian advisory committee of the war industries board in charge of munitions work. He stated that with equipment of many factories which had never before engaged in making ordnance the supply would be adequate in the future to equip the American forces. He cited comparative production figures of American and British factories in making rifles and small arms and heavy artillery and declared American production is greatly on the increase.

Probably Secret Hearings.

Continuation of the inquiry this week, probably behind closed doors, was arranged for by the committee, but next week a recess over Christmas may be taken.

Representatives of the Colt, Remington and other munitions manufacturers will be given a hearing on Thursday and Gen. Sharpe on Friday and Colonel Lewis, inventor of the Lewis machine gun, on Saturday.

Comparative members say it is probable that in addition to inquiring into contracts and past and future ammunition deliveries, the committee will seek causes for recent explosions in munition plants reported to be due in some cases to neglect of safety.

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CABRERA GOT MAD AND LEFT WITHOUT A WORD

Will Attend "Neutrality Conference" in Argentina

Mexican Representative Came to the United States to Seek Modification of Embargo—Trip to Buenos Aires Attracts Interest.

Washington, Dec. 18.—Luis Cabrera, special envoy of the Mexican government sent here to seek modification of restrictions upon American exports to Mexico, has departed for Buenos Aires without troubling himself with the formality of good-byes to the state department. He goes to attend a so-called neutrality conference in the Argentine capital.

Mr. Cabrera sailed last Saturday and the state department heard of it at the time, but it did not become generally known until today when Ambassador Fletcher arrived from Mexico City to participate in the conferences which the Mexican envoy came here to hold.

Camps Found Overcrowded And Unsanitary and Men With Insufficient Clothing

Surgeon-General Gorgas Holds These Conditions Largely Responsible for the Disease Epidemic at Sevier and Four Other Camps.—Reports His Findings to Secretary Baker and Makes Recommendations.

Washington, Dec. 18.—Insufficient clothing, overcrowding and bad sanitary conditions are held largely responsible for disease epidemic at Camp Sevier, S. S.; Camp Dowle, Texas; Camp Funston, Kansas, and Camp Doniphan, Oklahoma, by Surgeon-General Gorgas in reports to Secretary Baker made public today on the result of his personal inspection of the camps.

With the exception of Funston, none of the camp base hospitals have been completed, General Gorgas says, and this is handicapping the medical officers in treating patients. He recommends the rushing of this work, particularly the installation of necessary plumbing.

Conditions at Camp Sevier, Greenville, S. C., where the 20th division, composed chiefly of former national guard organizations of South Carolina, North Carolina and Tennessee, are shown in a letter from General Gorgas to the chief of staff of the army. The letter, dated at Camp Sevier, November 29, last, follows:

General Gorgas' Letter. "Sanitary conditions here are serious. Sixty men have died of pneumonia in the last month. The camp has been exposed to a general epidemic of measles, about 2,000 cases having occurred within the last month. During the same period they have had 175 cases of pneumonia and 15 cases of meningitis. The new conscripts of this command are men who are non-immune to measles. They come from the neighboring southern states where population is scarce, and therefore have not had measles in childhood. Always, with measles, a certain number of cases of pneumonia occur. The mortality of pneumonia from any cause is always high.

"The basic unsanitary condition, however, is overcrowding. In the past, in this camp, the division commander had had to put 11 and 12 men in a (Continued On Page Two)

PROBE OF SHIPPING BOARD IS ORDERED

Senate Commerce Committee Will Investigate the Whole Situation Thoroughly

NOT PHRASES ARE USED TO MIX NONE WITH FEED

Continual Disagreement and Reorganization of the Board Gives Cause for Various Charges by Members of the Senate.

Washington, Dec. 18.—Continual reorganization of the government's machinery for building a merchant marine culminated today in the ordering of a thorough investigation of the whole situation by the senate.

Almost at the moment Chairman Hurley of the shipping board was announcing the resignation of Rear Admiral Harris as general manager of the emergency fleet corporation and the appointment of Charles A. Piez, of Chicago, to the place, resolutions for investigation were being adopted in both houses among heated charges of "red tape," "inefficiency," "a crime," and other phrases of denunciation.

Action came on the resolution introduced by Senator Harding, of Ohio, who denounced the board's continuous difficulties as an "interminable tangle of red tape."

Senate Acts Quickly.

With haste rarely shown the senate ordered the inquiry, referring to the commerce committee which will meet Thursday to arrange its procedure.

It is more than likely that the whole inside story of the shipping board's progress, beginning with the celebrated row between former Chairman Denman and Major-General Goethals will be laid bare.

The keynote of the demand for investigation, to which there seemed to be no dissent from either side in the senate, was the necessity of building ships if the nation is to win the war.

Senator Chamberlain, an administration spokesman, declared the shipping board had resolved into a "debating society," and added:

"Something has got to be done, for nothing can be accomplished as long as there are constant changes being made in the personnel of the board."

Senator Williams, declaring for the investigation, said:

"No one can close his eyes to the fact that we as a nation have not done our full part in this war."

"The best thing that can be done," Senator Williams continued, "is to let your own people know all about the matter."

Says Board Invites Inquiry.

Senator Lewis, the democratic whip, declared officers of the shipping board would welcome the investigation, because it would show who was responsible for the conflicts.

OFFICERS ARE NOT FORBIDDEN TO MIX WITH THEIR MEN

Is Possible and Useful to be Faithful to Both Discipline and Democratic Ideals

BAKER REPLIES TO SENATE

Writes That Distinctions of Rank Are Solely in Interest of Military Discipline

Washington, Dec. 17.—In response to a senate resolution asking whether there are war department rules and regulations to prevent social intercourse between officers and men of the army, Secretary Baker today wrote Vice-President Marshall that distinctions of rank in the army imply no social distinction and are solely in the interest of military discipline.

Frequently in a country like this, the secretary said, the advantage of education and culture in favor of the soldier. Nevertheless, he said, safety demands that the soldier and officer acquire by continuous and unvarying practice the habit of instant obedience to his superior.

Mr. Baker's letter follows:

The Secretary's Letter. "I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of a resolution in the senate of the United States under date of December 11, 1917, directing me to inform the United States senate 'What, if any, rules or regulation there are of the war department which prevent officers from having intercourse with privates and mingling with them in social intercourse or which tend to caste distinction between enlisted men and commissioned officers when they are of duty.'"

"In response thereto I submit for the information of the senate of the United States the following paragraph of army regulations in regard to the relationship between officers and enlisted men as the only rule or regulation now existing relative to this matter:

Rule Regarding Relationships. "Superiors are forbidden to injure those under their authority by tyrannical or capricious conduct or by abusive language. While maintaining discipline and the thorough and prompt performance of military duty, all officers, dealing with enlisted men, will bear in mind the absolute necessity of so treating them as to preserve their self-respect. Officers will keep in as close touch as possible with the men under their command, will strive to build up such relations as confidence and sympathy as will insure the free approach of their men to them from counsel and assistance. This relationship may be gained and maintained without relaxation of the bonds of discipline and with great benefit to the service as a whole."

Must Be No Favoritism.

"In this paragraph will be seen an endeavor to arrive at a true balance in the proper relationship between officers and enlisted men; on the one hand, to encourage an exchange of confidence and co-operation between the officer and the soldier, and on the other, to avoid personal intimacies between an officer and any particular soldier or soldiers which might have a tendency to lead to favoritism or the suspicion of favoritism in assignments for duties or cause discontent on the part of those not selected for special intimacy by the officer in question. All officers are expected to so exercise their judgment under this regulation as at all times to enjoy (Continued on Page Two.)

HOUSE DEFERS ACTION ON FARM BOND BILL

Members Want the Measure to be Properly Discussed

The Bill Was Passed by the Senate and Authorizes the Treasury to Purchase \$100,000,000 of the Farm Loan Bonds.

Washington, Dec. 18.—The administration bill authorizing the secretary of the treasury to purchase \$100,000,000 of farm loan bonds during the next fiscal year was adopted by the senate today without a record vote after it had been amended so as to eliminate authority for a similar purchase next year.

Immediately after the vote the bill was sent over to the house with a view to action there before the holiday adjournment. After some discussion, however, the house postponed consideration until January 3. Chairman Glass, of the banking committee, announced that the senate had adjourned and that it would be impossible to enact the bill into law until after the holiday recess, in view of what he called the lack of comprehension on the part of those opposing it.

Representatives Lenroot, Wisconsin; Snell, New York, and others asserted the measure was too important to pass without proper discussion. Mr. Snell contended that the land banks were tending towards insolvency.

The senate amendment to limit the (Continued On Page Two)

Tags for Halifax Relief.

Boston, Mass., Dec. 17.—This was Halifax tag day in Boston. Canvasbags were sold in all parts of the city in an effort to raise \$10,000 which the city public safety committee has pledged to the mass-Halifax relief fund. A parade of sailors from one of the training stations here called attention to the fund.