

AUSTRO-ITALIAN FRONT FLAMES INTO VIOLENT ACTION BUT WITH ITALIANS ON THE OFFENSIVE

Enemy Forced to Fight Hard to Hold Ground Among Peaks of Asiago Plateau

STRUGGLE A BITTER ONE

Italians Probably Seek to Upset the Long Expected Austro-German Drive

AUSTRIAN WARSHIP IS SUNK

Naval Base at Pola Attacked by Italian Units

Among the rugged peaks of the Asiago plateau, east of the Brenta river, the Italian front has again flamed into violent action.

Fighting at Dassy Heights. The fighting seems to have centered on the comparatively short section of the battle line between Mount Asolone and Monte Pertica.

Break Up Teutonic Drive. The fact that the Italian forces have taken the initiative in the fighting would seem to indicate that they have sought to carry the fight to the enemy in such a way as to break up any arrangements for the launching of a strong Teutonic assault.

American Battle Ship Destroyed. A raid on the Austrian naval base at Pola has been made by Italian units and an Austrian battleship of the 20,000 ton type has been destroyed.

HOOPER TELLS PRESIDENT BELGIUM IS NOW STARVING. Washington, May 16.—Belgium is now starving and some of the ships supplying the allies must be diverted to carry relief.

HUN AIRMEN TWICE FAIL TO REACH CITY OF PARIS. Paris, May 16.—Two successive attempts to reach Paris were made by two distinct groups of German airplanes last night.

Face Jury Unable to Agree. Norfolk, Va., May 16.—Unable to agree on a verdict the jury in the case of Stephen G. Pace, on trial in the United States court before Judge E. Howard Waddill on the charge of embezzling \$13,000 from the Portsmouth office, was tonight paroled by the court until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning when they resume consideration of the testimony.

First Official Communique Is Issued By Gen. Pershing

Russian Naval Officials Destroyed Submarines to Keep Them From Germans

London, May 16.—Russian naval officials blew up their four American submarines before retreating from Hangö, in southwestern Finland, last April, the British admiralty announced tonight.

Seven British submarines also were destroyed when the German naval forces and transports approached Hangö. None of the British vessels fell into the hands of the enemy, the admiralty announced.

AMERICAN AIRMEN TELL OF BATTLE

Capt. Peterson Accounted for Two Hun Monoplanes and Capt. Marr One Biplane

SLIPPED UP ON THE BOCHES

Capt. Peterson Said "It Was a Clinch" While Capt. Marr "Felt Sorry For the Helpline Beggar"

With the American Army in France, May 16.—(By the Associated Press.)—Captain David Peterson, of Honesdale, Pa., and Captain Kenneth Marr, California, the heroes in the aerial battle Wednesday in which Captain Peterson brought down two German monoplanes and Captain Marr destroyed an enemy biplane in the Toul sector, relate their stories of the battle today.

"I was flying near Thilacourt at an altitude of 5,000 metres," said Captain Peterson, "when I saw two German Albatross scouts going away at right angles in the distance. On was ahead of the other. I ascended 200 metres higher, circled and stopped my engine and darted after them."

"I finally got close to the last plane. At a distance of 100 yards I opened fire with incendiary bullets and the German machine almost immediately burst into flames and fell."

"I continued straight on my course," he continued, "and within two minutes had the other machine before me. He started a quick climb and I saw that some of the bullets went home. One of the wings of his machine crumpled up at the same moment. As I circled about I saw one machine burning on the ground and the other, smoking in its downward plunge, crash to the earth. That is all there is to it. It was a clinch."

As I saw the other machine, I saw an enemy machine over the American lines. "As I sailed out I saw him far away, circling out from our line amid a cloud of sparks from our 'Archies,'" he said. "I circled out wider and finally passed the German and turned again down our line, between the enemy and the sun. Both of us had the sun at our backs."

"As I opened up my motor and approached nearer," he said, "I saw that I had a two-seater to deal with. I thought the German might see or hear me, so I went a hundred meters lower until right under the tail of his machine. Then I pointed the nose of my airplane upward and went on a level with the enemy's open fender. It was a perfect day for flying and they were about to leave for a patrol over the enemy's lines. As they stepped into their machines, Captain Marr said:

"Well we're off again. Maybe we will get some more. Maybe they will get us. Anyway, it's a fine day for it. So long."

The motors started an d the two airplanes, together with several other machines, took the air and disappeared toward the front.

House Passes Pension Bill. Washington, May 16.—The house today passed the annual pension bill carrying \$185,050,000, an increase of \$1,990,000 over the total for the current year. The measure now goes to the senate.

END OF 1918 MAY FIND A POWERFUL FORCE IN FRANCE

American Army Officials More Than Ever Hopeful That This Will be Accomplished

MAY TOTAL 1,500,000 MEN

It is Expected That Within Next 12 Months Three Million Will be Under Arms

Washington, May 16.—With more than half a million men now in France, army officials now are more than ever hopeful that a powerful American force will be co-operating with the allies there by the end of the year.

Unhappy experience with over-sanguine estimates of what can be accomplished make them slow to put their hopes into definite predictions, however, and it was not possible tonight to obtain specific confirmation of the report from Paris that 1,500,000 fighting troops before January 1 had been promised.

The statement of Premier Clemenceau's newspaper that such a promise had been made was not believed by army officers generally to mean that the American government had definitely pledged itself to deliver a certain number of men within a certain time.

Secretary Baker could not say definitely that one would be forthcoming daily hereafter. That rests with General Pershing, but Mr. Baker indicated his hope that the expeditionary commander would find it possible to follow that course.

As to the military situation in the two sectors held by American troops the communique was exceedingly brief, increased artillery activity on both sides, both north of Toul and in Lorraine, were noted with the comment, "nothing else to report."

Designation in the communique of the flight for which Major Ralph Royce was decorated by the French army corps commander as the "first American flight over the enemy's lines" was taken here as an announcement that a complete American air squadron is now in operation at the front.

Army officers here hope that while Gen. Pershing may as yet feel that it would be improper for him to issue formal statements as to operations where his forces are holding sectors in French corps, or army fronts, the raiding and scouting operations signs of the dash and initiative which they have expected the American troops to show in action.

The officers saw in the official reports of the raiding and scouting operations signs of the dash and initiative which they have expected the American troops to show in action.

American soldiers in France are very active in air. May 16.—The war department today made public an official communique from Gen. Pershing in two sections, the first repeating a communique that came in press cables this morning and the second giving additional information of the activities of the American troops. The second section said:

In Lorraine, May 12, three snipers, scouts of the intelligence service, went out in camouflage sniping suits to find German snipers and encountered 18 to the enemy at strong point near dug-out. They shot four of whom one appeared to be an officer, secured valuable papers and retired under heavy fire. One failed to reach our lines and the major commanding the sector sent three officers and four men to find him.

This patrol also penetrated enemy's line and reached the strong point attacked by first patrol. Here the enemy was now enforced and our patrol was driven back by hot rifle and machine gun fire. On reaching our lines one of the men of this patrol also was found missing. Two officers who went out to find him killed an enemy scout and brought back his body for identification purposes. The man missing from the second patrol has not been found, but the third intelligence scout of first party has returned.

On May 12 three officers of our aviation forces were cited in orders by the commanding general of a French army corps and decorated with the croix de guerre. Major Ralph Royce, of Hancock, Mich., for making first American reconnaissance over enemy's lines and for always setting fine example to his squadron. First Lieut. Herbert R. Garside, of New York City, pilot, and Second Lieut. Paul D. Myers, of Milwaukee, observer for an infantry mission on April 12. Flying at 300 metres they finished their mission in spite of intense fire from enemy machine and anti-aircraft guns.

The text of the first section follows: "North of Toul in Lorraine there was a marked increase of artillery activity on both sides. Today two of our aviators brought down three German machines. There is nothing else of importance to report."

ENGLAND WOULD CONSIDER PEACE OFFER IF MADE BY SOME ACCREDITED PERSON

Foreign Secretary Balfour Explains Before House of Commons the Letter From Emperor Charles to Prince Sixtus—Declares That the Central Powers Have Made No Effort Toward a Fair and Honorable Peace.

London, May 16.—The British secretary for foreign affairs, Arthur J. Balfour, in giving explanations in the house of commons today in connection with Emperor Charles' letter to Prince Sixtus of Bourbon, recently made public by the president of the French republic, declared that no effort at conversations has ever been made by the central powers in the interest of a fair and honorable peace and he added:

"If any representative of any belligerent country desires seriously to lay before us any proposals we are ready to listen to them."

The letter in question had been examined by a committee of the French chamber, said Mr. Balfour, and the conclusion reached was that it did not provide an adequate or satisfactory basis for an honorable peace.

Mr. Balfour in his explanations was replying to questions submitted by the right hon. Walter Runciman, former president of the board of trade, who asked whether, when Emperor Charles' letter was communicated to the French government and by the French government to the British prime minister, it was communicated to any other of the allied governments.

It was authoritatively stated today that the American government fully (Continued on Page Two.)

WILL BUILD MANY SHIPS OF CONCRETE

Shipping Board Decides to Proceed Immediately With the Enlarged Program

TO HAVE FOUR NEW YARDS BELGIUM ONE CONDITION

In Addition to Eighteen Ships Already Contracted For Fifty-Eight Others Will be Ordered When Sites Are Selected.

Washington, May 16.—The shipping board has decided to proceed immediately on a large scale with the building of concrete ships and will increase the program out of the appropriation of two and one quarter billion dollars which has been asked for the next fiscal year.

Eighteen concrete ships aggregating 117,000 tons have been contracted for. It was announced today that 58 other concrete vessels at a cost of about \$42,250,000 will be ordered as soon as sites for the four new government yards are chosen.

A committee of experts will visit the south looking over available ground. Their recommendation is expected soon.

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WAR INDUSTRIES BOARD AND STEEL MEN TO MEET Secret and Important Meeting Called to Take Place in Washington Today.

Washington, May 16.—A secret and important meeting of the steel committee of the American iron and steel institute, headed by Elbert H. Gary, with the war industries board has been called here for tomorrow.

The whole question of curtailment of industries as well as that of steel will be thrashed out at the meeting. A "show down" will be demanded by the steel men. The government will be asked to determine definitely and give figures how the steel companies shall be operated and how far the government must go in controlling their output as they do now, or how much more drastic their control must be.

Information as to the war industries board's purpose in calling the meeting was refused today by Bernard M. Baruch and other officials and every effort was made to guard carefully the fact that leading steel men of the country had been called in.

Officials familiar with the steel situation said today that a shortage in steel and pig iron which has shown little if any improvement since the steel men pledged themselves to devote their entire capacity to government orders made tomorrow's meeting imperative. Increased demands of the allies for steel and the inability to meet in full American requirements are the chief factors.

HUN OFFENSIVE OF TERROR IS WAGED AGAINST CIVILIANS

Henry P. Davison Describes Methods Germans Are Using in France and Italy

TOWNS BOMBED AT NIGHT

Declares That German Propaganda Cannot Exist Where Red Cross is Working

New York, May 16.—A German offensive of terror against the civilian population of France and Italy was described today by Henry P. Davison on his return from a 12,000-mile tour of inspection of Red Cross work abroad.

He is chairman of the Red Cross war council and comes back to inaugurate the drive for \$108,000,000. "The outstanding feature of German methods at the present time," he said, "is the effort to terrorize women, children and old men at home. While the German troops are making their drive on the front, airplanes are bombing nearly every night towns behind the lines with the deliberate and declared purpose of terrorizing civilians."

Mr. Davison described the attempt to uphold civilian morale as "one of the great missions of the Red Cross," adding:

"You need have no concern for German propaganda where the Red Cross is working. We have workers all over Italy and France carrying a message of comfort and cheer, helping especially to care for the sick and the needy, particularly among soldiers' families."

Mr. Davison had personal experience with German terrorizing of civilians from the air at night. He was in a town in France when 37 people were killed and houses demolished by a German airplane which had stolen through a barrage and flew as low as 300 feet. American ambulance men busied themselves at rescue work and the airplane returned and bombed them.

He regards the bombing of Paris by big guns as part of the offensive of terror and says that the damage to buildings is so slight that one might drive about the city a week without noticing it unless it should be pointed out.

"The military situation in general," he said, "is very serious, but I think I reflect the feelings of the Red Cross in saying that the allies will win. Of that there is not a doubt."

A summary of some of the Red Cross relief, described by Mr. Davison, follows:

"In France relief is being extended in 121 cities and towns; in Italy in 45 cities and towns with branches in 218 other places.

"In France the Red Cross operates 15 hospitals; in England 5; in Italy 2. In addition supplies are furnished to 4,361 hospitals in 1,609 cities and towns in France and to 645 hospitals in Italy. A steady stream of Red Cross ambulances in the Italian front are operated by 129 American boys.

"Fourteen rolling canteens at the French front have supplied 3,246,000 hot drinks to French soldiers. Canteens in Paris district have supplied millions of meals and drinks to soldiers.

"A factory has been established for the manufacture of artificial limbs and five splint factories are operating under Red Cross supervision."

Speaking of the Red Cross drive next week he said:

"We need to let it be known to our own soldiers and the soldiers of our allies and the peoples behind their lines that we are working for them with our heart and soul."

PRESIDENT OPPOSED TO SENATE WAR INQUIRIES

Another Test of Strength Between Administration Leaders and Critics is Impending.

Washington, May 16.—Another test of strength is impending in the senate between administration leaders and critics of the government's war preparations. Upon receiving word today that the president still strongly disapproved the resolution for further war inquiries by the senate military committee, even in modified form, both sides laid plans for the fight which probably will begin tomorrow.

Democratic Leader Martin and Senator McKellar both stated that the senate would be given plenty of opportunity for consideration and debate. A meeting of the military committee tomorrow was called by Senator Chamberlain for discussion of the situation.

During the day Senator Brandegee of Connecticut presented to the senate the letter and affidavits received by him from Gutzon Borglum. Senator Brandegee said he had no intention of suppressing the papers but believed they should be referred to the military committee.

Miss Perry Won Her Case. Greenville, S. C., May 16.—The first legal case ever plead by a woman lawyer in South Carolina was tried here today. Miss James Perry, who was recently admitted to practice law in this state, representing the defense. She won the case. Miss Perry also has the distinction of being the first woman admitted to practice law in South Carolina.