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Cloudy and Continued Cold to night; Fair and Warmer Tues.

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GERMANY SENDING OUT REPORTS OF COMING VICTORY

Boldly Advertising Great Offensive on West Front, Says Baker's Review

ALLIES STILL ON THE INITIATIVE IN WEST

Capture of Jerusalem Will Have Wide Effect Over All of Turkish Empire

Washington, Dec. 17.—Reports heralding an imposing German offensive on the western front are attributed to "bold enemy advertising" by Secretary Baker in his weekly review of the military situation published today. "The German higher command is apparently very eager to have us believe he is about to win a great victory," the review says. "But no element on the military situation should lead us to conclude that initiative in the west has passed from the allies to the enemy."

"During the period of the review (week ending yesterday) the general military situation in the west has remained unchanged," the review says. "Rumors of great preparations on the part of the Germans with a view to achieving some major strategic success in the west, continue to reach us. Reports of massed host concentrations in those sectors where the enemy propose to break through the French front and roll back the allied line on a broad scale, are numerous."

"The German higher command seeks peace through victory. The enemy is apparently very eager to have us believe that he is about to win such a victory. For the past two years the Germans have been on the defensive in the west. The bold advertising of an imposing offensive on the part of the enemy, which while in the realm of possibility and therefore should not be neglected or overlooked, must in no wise be interpreted to mean that the increased strength of the hostile forces will result in any permanent strategic advantage of the Germans."

"Surveying the outlines of the general war strategy on all fronts, we find that both belligerents have been on the offensive during the past six months. The central powers have taken the initiative in the eastern and Italian theaters; the allies in the major front in the west, in Palestine, Mesopotamia and East Africa."

"The enemy has confined his efforts to advancing his lines along the Russian front resulting in the capture of Riga and then by a well-conducted offensive in Italy, with the assistance of an intensive political drive, gained a marked strategic success in this sector."

"The allies in the principal theater of operations, the west, have been able to record an almost uninterrupted series of tactical advances and in spite of the concentration of a preponderant majority of the most efficient German divisions, have gained considerable terrain and taken a large quota of prisoners."

"In the outlying areas of Mesopotamia and Palestine the British have driven the enemy before them, and their offensive culminated during the week in the capture of Jerusalem. "Though the capture of the Holy City cannot be held a principal military objective of the campaign so victorious pursued by General Allenby in this theater, the conquest of Jerusalem will have a wide influence through the Turkish empire, and will go far towards reaffirming the prestige of the allied powers through the Orient."

"Germany realizes the danger attendant upon the waning of her influence in the east and will therefore be more anxious than ever to conclude a speedy peace before the 'war-map' becomes less favorable. . . . The raising of German towns in the interior, and especially the industrial centers of the Rhineland, by allied aircraft, as reprisals for the repeated bombardment of open towns in France and Great Britain by the Germans has been successfully initiated."

"Reports of observers recently out of Germany, who were present during previous air raids, state that these raids have had a very depressing effect on the civilian population and have heightened the growing discontent among the German people, who now for the first time are being brought face to face with real war conditions. . . . The armistice concluded by the Russians with the enemy now includes the entire eastern front from the Baltic to the Black sea. Negotiations are now proceeding smoothly. The German demands as reported to us specify, among other points, the immediate opening up of channels of commercial intercourse between Russia and Germany."

Oldest Station Agent Dead. Mobile, Ala., Dec. 17.—Jacob Jones, aged 83, said to be the oldest station agent in the United States, died Sunday at Surrency, Miss., where he had been since the place was established by the Mobile and Ohio road before the Civil war. Mr. Jones leaves prominent relatives in Birmingham and Meridian.

Rise in Temperature Forecast. Washington, Dec. 17.—A marked rise in temperature was forecast today by the weather bureau for the Ohio valley, the lower lake region and Atlantic coast districts by Tuesday.

MEANS ACQUITTED OF KING MURDER

"Not Guilty," Jury Reported Sunday Morning—Will Be Indicted for Forgery in New York

Concord, N. C., Dec. 17.—"Not guilty" was the verdict of the jury in the case of Gaston B. Means charged with the murder of Mrs. Maude A. King, widow of a Chicago millionaire, who was shot to death at Blackwelder Spring, near Concord, on the evening of August 29 last. The jury made known its verdict at 10:22 o'clock Sunday morning, after having deliberated since 7 o'clock Saturday night. The finding was made known to Judge E. B. Cline in the Cabarrus county court room in the presence of the defendant, his wife, his father and mother, other relatives, representatives of counsel and several others who had learned that the jury was about to make its report and hurried to the court house.

There was no demonstration, probably prompted by a warning Judge Cline had given before hearing the jury's report, accompanying it with instructions to Sheriff Caldwell to arrest anyone who made any demonstration. However, a little later, when the prisoner had been formally discharged, and the court adjourned, Means was surrounded by relatives, attorneys and friends who hastened to shake his hand and congratulate him upon his acquittal.

After his release, accompanied by his wife, Means left the court room and went to the home of his father. A little later he reappeared on the streets of the town where scores of friends extended congratulations. As Judge Cline had been formally discharged and Mrs. Means were leaving the court room they met one of his sisters who had just arrived and the two women rushed into one another's arms, weeping for joy.

At 9:30 o'clock Sunday morning the jury sent Sheriff Caldwell to Judge Cline's hotel to request that he appear in the court room. The judge was at breakfast and it was 10 o'clock before he reached the court room. To the crowd that had assembled, he made known the fact that the jury was about to appear but that he had not been apprised whether it was ready to announce a decision. In the event such was the case, there must not be any demonstration, regardless of what the jury's finding might be. Then he directed the sheriff to arrest any one violating his instructions. He also cautioned against any attempt to talk with any of the jurors before they were discharged.

When the jurors had filed into the court room Judge Cline told them that during his charge of the day before, he had inadvertently referred to the fact of the shooting as "in the evening" and asked if they interpreted that to mean an expression of his opinion as to the fact of the time of the tragedy. In unison, the jurors replied they had not. The clerk of the court then asked the formal question as to whether a verdict had been arrived at. J. Frank Goodman, who had been chosen foreman, answered in the affirmative. Directing the defendant to stand and raise his right hand, the clerk then asked the jury if they "found the defendant guilty or not guilty of the crime charged."

"Not guilty," replied Foreman Goodman.

Judge Frank Osborne, of counsel for the defense, then asked Solicitor Hayden Clement if he had any further charge against the defendant, to which the solicitor replied "I have none." Judge Osborne then formally asked the court to release the defendant from custody, and Judge Cline said: "The defendant is released." Gaston B. Means entered upon the first full day of freedom since he went to jail in September, waiting preliminary hearing before a magistrate.

Will Be Indicted in New York. New York, Dec. 17.—Gaston B. Means, acquitted of the murder of Mrs. Maude A. King, faces indictment in this county for forgery and embezzlement. District Attorney Swann has announced.

"There is concrete evidence in our hands tending to show that Means forged many documents, on which he obtained large sums of money from Mrs. King's estate," said Mr. Swann, and there is evidence pointing to him as the embezzler of the major portion of Mrs. King's wealth.

"Until I hear from Assistant District Attorney Dooling, who aided in the prosecution of Means in Concord and who worked on the case against him, I shall be unable to say just when we shall take the evidence before the grand jury."

"The people of New York can rest assured that all the facts in the Means-King case will be brought to light in this county. Forgery and embezzlement are extraditable offenses of jurisdiction of the state is indicted for these crimes in this county he will be brought here for trial."

MAKES REPORT OF ARMY ORDNANCE

Orders Placed for Million Rifles and Every Effort Made To Secure a Large Output of Machine Guns

Washington, Dec. 17.—Army ordnance conditions of the present fiscal year are treated only briefly by Major General Crozier, chief of ordnance, in the annual report of his bureau, made public today. Since the report was written, General Crozier has furnished the senate military committee a much more complete record of what has been done to arm the forces in France or under training in the United States.

The reports show up to June 30, or orders have been placed for 1,000,000 American Enfield rifles, details for the re-chambering of the British standard gun for American ammunition having been completed June 1.

On the machine gun situation, General Crozier says that several types of weapons have been found efficient by the machine gun board but that procurement of an adequate supply was question of securing deliveries. "In other words," he adds, "the number of machine guns on hand when war was declared was so small that it was necessary to keep going at the greatest possible capacity those machine gun factories which were already in operation and to utilize their output when the guns so manufactured had been reported by the board as efficient, even though they may not have been reported as most efficient. Every energy has been bent to secure satisfactory output, and considerable progress in this direction is made. Funds appropriated to date are adequate for the purpose. "It is shown in the report that all American field guns are to be similar in caliber to the French "75's" which have been so much discussed since the war began. The French semi-automatic breech mechanism also has been adopted in modified form, so that American and French batteries in France can be served from the same ammunition factories. Anti-aircraft guns of the "75's" type also have been ordered. Both these and the machine guns used for barrage work in trench fighting, were designed and ready for manufacture on June 30. General Crozier expressed appreciation of the co-operation of the French and British ordnance experts in turning out these guns."

General Crozier says a process of supplying our troops with these guns "necessarily will be slow and disappointing, although every advantage has been taken of the assistance secured from abroad."

SENATE INQUIRY RESUMED TODAY

General Crozier on Alleged Delay in Supplying Army Weapons

Washington, Dec. 17.—Inquiry into alleged delay in supplying the army with guns and the curtailment of funds ratified by the ordnance bureau for that purpose was taken up again today in open session by the senate military committee after a two days' executive session. General Crozier continued his detailed statement of the ordnance situation as far as it revealed nothing the war department considers a military secret. At the Saturday hearing General Crozier told the committee that while congress had been generous with funds the appropriations recommended by the general staff invariably were reduced by civilian executives, and the reduction of ordnance was chargeable to legislative committee.

General Crozier declared there was "entirely too much red tape" in getting money. While an emergency appropriation request for a lump appropriation of \$2,532,537 was made by the war department April 5, the day before war was declared, it was June before congress made appropriations under the estimates.

"But you had millions of dollars left of appropriations made a year before," interrupted Chairman Chamberlain. "I have not been entirely satisfied with any explanation made of this matter. For instance you had money appropriated for machine guns and you haven't the guns yet. We appropriated for small arms and you spent the money for pistols instead of rifles."

"We were far shorter of pistols than rifles," General Crozier answered, "and we are not going to be slowed up in this in the slightest degree on account of rifles."

"I don't think the country will be satisfied with that explanation," said Chamberlain insisted. "We need rifles for target practice and training purposes and in the field."

How prospective appropriations by congress were anticipated was recited by General Crozier. For instance, he said, orders were placed for 9,000,000 rounds of ammunition early last spring before any funds were available. He detailed how many new factories that had never before made gun forgings were given large contracts to increase ordnance production.

"We have placed orders of more than \$1,500,000,000 since the war began," General Crozier explained, citing the magnitude of operations. "That is more than fifty per cent over the entire government's expenses for any year since the Spanish-American war."

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE GERMANS AND RUSSIANS BEGUN

UNITED STATES WILL KEEP UP 'WAITING POLICY'

Not Likely To Recognize the Bolsheviki Government—German Money to Russia

Washington, Dec. 17.—Recognition of the Bolsheviki government by the United States still is remote, it was indicated today at the state department. Reports in Europe suggesting a developing sentiment in favor of dealing with the new regime as a de facto government have found no response here and it was made plain that the United States would continue its policy of awaiting developments.

Reports from Ambassador Francis are now coming through with more regularity but consuls in many parts of the country appear unable to communicate with Petrograd. It was suggested here that one of the direct efforts of the armistice between the German and Russian armies might be the financing of the Bolsheviki by Germany with paper money. When the war began Russian money was being printed in Germany and the plates are still in Berlin. Diplomatic dispatches to the state department from Teheran contained an appeal for the relief of the famine-suffering people in that region.

W. W. PITTS INJURED IN AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT

W. W. Pitts of 278 Haywood street sustained two broken ribs and a number of bruises yesterday afternoon when his automobile overturned on Haywood street. Dr. M. H. Fletcher and Lawrence Jones took the injured man from beneath the machine and carried him home, where he was given medical attention. A broken steering gear caused the accident which also damaged the automobile considerably.

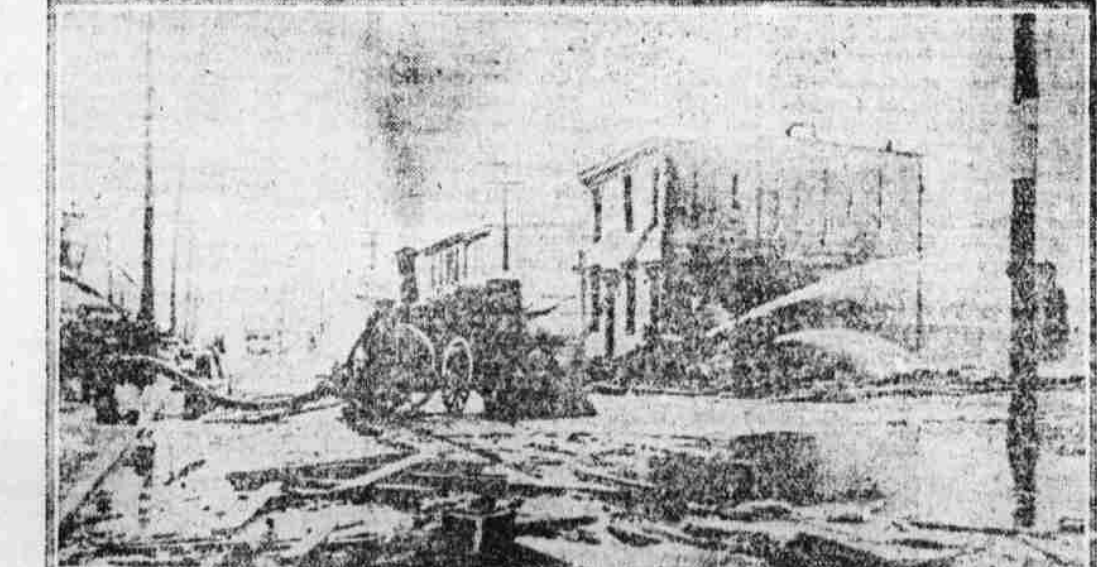
Congressman Enlists. Washington, Dec. 17.—Representative Johnson of South Dakota, enlisted today as a private in the regular army and was assigned to Camp Meade. He has not resigned his seat in the house.

Digging for Bodies in Ruins at Halifax



This picture shows a scene near the waterfront of Halifax not far from the point of the explosion of the munitions ship Mont Blanc, where rescuers were digging for bodies of those who went down in ruins or were later buried to death.

Scene on Gottingen Street, Halifax, Half Mile From Explosion



This photograph shows the destruction wrought by the explosion of the munitions ship Mont Blanc at Halifax. The picture was taken while fire engines played on the remains of the fire that burned a large part of the city.

Armistice Between Bolsheviki and Central Powers on Eastern Front in Effect Today—No Military Transfers Except Those Already Begun—Counter Revolt Still Menace

ALLIES MAY RECOGNIZE PRESENT GOVERNMENT

Germans Not To Concentrate Troops Between Black Sea and the Baltic—Intercourse Between Troops From Sunrise To Sunset—Attacks on War and Commercial Vessels To Stop—Labor Strikes in Petrograd

When the armistice agreement between the Russian government and the central powers goes into effect on the eastern front today the emissaries of the several countries will begin negotiations toward looking toward peace between Russia and her former enemies. Meanwhile it is indicated in London that allied powers may be preparing to deal more sympathetically with the Bolsheviki government.

The armistice between Russia and the central powers is to continue for 28 days, and for an indefinite period afterward unless a seven days notice is given. Both sides agreed not to carry on military transfers on the eastern theater except those began when the treaty was signed.

May Recognize Bolsheviki. London newspapers forecast that the allies will give recognition of the Bolsheviki "in order to prevent Russia from passing under the political domination of Germany."

Great Britain is said to have decided to release Teitelbaum, a Russian political prisoner and the Bolsheviki are now permitting British subjects to leave Russia. To the American delegates at the Paris conference it is said to hold the key for the opening of the allied attitude toward the Bolsheviki.

Labor strikes appear to be the great obstacle before the Bolsheviki at present, especially in the Petrograd district. The railway and fuel situations are serious. The counter revolt is still more or less a menace to Bolsheviki authorities and the constituent assembly is another knotty problem. The confiscation of all property lands and money of the Russian church has been decreed by the Bolsheviki who also have abolished all privileges of the clergy.

Terms of the Armistice. Petrograd, Dec. 16.—The terms of the Russo-German armistice, according to a statement issued here, obligate no transference of troops until January 14 (January 1, Russian); no increase of troops on the fronts or on the islands in the Moon sound or a re-grouping of forces.

The Germans are not to concentrate troops between the Black sea and the Baltic east of the 15th degree of longitude east of Greenwich. Intercourse between the troops may be allowed from sunrise to sunset. Groups are limited to 25 persons at a time who may exchange newspapers and unsealed mails and who may carry on trade and exchange articles of prime necessity. A special agreement will be made by the naval general staff regarding the extension of the armistice to the White sea and the Russian coast in the Arctic zone. It is agreed also that attacks on war and commercial vessels must stop in these regions in order to avoid attacks in other seas. The armistice on the naval front embraces all of the Black sea and Baltic sea east of the meridian 15 degrees east of Greenwich. The demarcation line fixed for the Black sea is from the light house of Slinka to the estuary of the Danube to Cape Garos. In the Baltic the line runs from Reoguel to the western coast of the island of Kihna to the island of Balthar to Kihgarne. Russian war vessels must not cross south of this line and the other parties must not go north. The Russian government guarantees that entire war vessels will obey the rules of the provision and that Russian warships will not be allowed to sail among the Alan islands.

Text of the Armistice. The text of the armistice agreement follows: Between the representatives of the higher command of Russia on the one hand, and of Bulgaria, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey on the other hand, for the purpose of achieving a lasting and honorable peace between both parties, the following armistice is concluded:

The armistice shall begin on December 14 (December 1) at 2 o'clock in the afternoon and continue until January 1 (January 14). The contracting parties have the right to break the armistice by giving seven days' notice. Unless notice is given the armistice automatically continues. The armistice embraces the land and aerial forces on the front from the Baltic to the Black sea, and also the Russo-Turkish front in Asia Minor. During the armistice the parties concerned obligate themselves not to increase the number of troops on the above fronts or on the islands in Moon sound, or to make a re-grouping of forces.

Neither side is to make operative any transfers of units from the Baltic-Black Sea front until January 1, excepting those begun before the agreement is signed. They obligate themselves not to concentrate troops on parts of the Black sea or Baltic sea east of 15 degrees of longitude east of Greenwich.

"The line of demarcation on the European front is the first line of German troops. On the Russo-Turkish front the line of demarcation will be arranged at the mutual consent of the chief commanders."

"Intercourse will be allowed from sunrise to sunset, no more than 25 persons taking part at a time. The participants may exchange papers, newspapers, unsealed mails and also may carry on trade in the exchange of articles of prime necessity."

"The question of release of troops freed from service who are beyond the line of demarcation will be solved during the peace negotiations. This applies also to Polish troops."

"Naval fronts: The armistice embraces all the Black sea and Baltic sea, east of the meridian 15 degrees east of Greenwich, applying to all naval and aerial forces. In regard to extension of the armistice to the White sea and the North Arctic Russian coast a special agreement will be made. Attacks upon war and commercial vessels must cease in the above regions and attacks in other seas must be avoided."

"After fixing the lines of demarcation in the Black and Baltic seas and limiting the movement of warships, the agreement stipulates that commercial navigation of these seas will be permitted under rules to be formulated by a commission."

BAPTIST BARACAS TO DO CHARITY WORK

The executive committee of the Baracas class of the First Baptist church at a recent meeting at C. G. Green's home, appropriated \$50 for charity and decided to spend \$10 each month for the relief of the needy in Asheville. A committee was appointed to carry out these plans. The treasurer's report showed a good balance on hand and in spite of the fact that many of the young men have volunteered or have been drafted, the attendance record of the class is still around 100 each Sunday, it is stated.

JUST 6 DAYS LEFT TO SHOP READ THE ADS