

U. S. ENGINEERS AGAIN UNDER FIRE; CORPORAL KILLED

German Shell Dropped Near Party of Engineers On Christmas Eve

BOMB KILLED TWO PRIVATES

Snow Falling In American Zone and There Is "Little Doing"

With the American Army in France, Dec. 27.—(Delayed.)—(By the Associated Press.)—A corporal of American engineers was killed and one private was wounded Christmas eve when a German shell dropped near a party of American engineers working in trenches on a section of the French front.

Bomb Kills Two. With the American Army in France, Dec. 28.—(Delayed.)—(By the Associated Press.)—During a recent moonlight night German aviators dropped bombs near a certain town and two American privates, who were in a camp in a wood, were killed.

Quiet In American Zone. With the American Army in France, Dec. 27.—(Delayed.)—(By the Associated Press.)—For three days snow has been falling intermittently throughout the American zone, interfering with the training of troops and with communications.

Motor trucks today were crawling over the hilly roads at a snail's pace because of the drifts and density of the snow. Numerous accidents were reported and the weather was so cold that many cars were frozen and could not be moved.

ORDERED PRODUCERS TO PROVIDE COAL SUPPLY

A. C. L., S. A. L. and N. S. Railways Profit by Fuel Administration's Order

By GEO. H. MANNING. Washington, Dec. 28.—As a means of securing a better coal supply for the territory in eastern North Carolina and Virginia lying generally between Norfolk and Newbern and including Wilmington, the fuel administration issued orders yesterday to the coal producers to provide an adequate supply of coal to the Atlantic Coast line, Seaboard Air line and Norfolk Southern railroads.

French Statement. Paris, Dec. 28.—The French war office issued the following official statement last night: "In the Argonne we repulsed an enemy surprise attack. Belgian communication.—During the last 48 hours there has been little activity on the Belgian front. During the nights of December 26-27 the artillery fighting was rather intense in the Dixmude sector."

GERMANY'S TERMS NOT SATISFACTORY TO ALLIED LEADERS

Purposes For Which the Allies Are Fighting Must Be Achieved, Says Lloyd-George—France Does Not Want Any Status Quo Ante Bellum Peace, According to the Foreign Minister—Washington Suspects Hypocrisy

London, Dec. 28.—"Achievement of the purposes for which the allies are fighting is essential to the future freedom and peace of mankind," said Premier Lloyd George in a letter which he sent today to the labor congress. The premier's statement is regarded as the British reply to the German peace offer.

Gives France's Position. Paris, Dec. 28.—France will not accept peace on conditions before the war, Foreign Minister Pichon declared in replying in the chamber of deputies today to the peace terms of the central powers outlined to Russia. He asserted that Germany was endeavoring to involve France in its negotiations with the Bolsheviks but that the war would go on whether or not Russia made a separate peace.

TWO WIVES OF TEUTONS' REPLY

Some Papers Think Central Powers Sincere in Peace Proposals—Others Believe It Is Trap To Catch Allies

London, Dec. 28.—Opinion here on the reply of the central powers to the Bolshevik peace terms as far as can be judged from the editorials in the morning newspapers follows two main lines. On one hand it seems to be felt that the central powers have made a perfectly sincere offer to end the war immediately, while on the other hand it is declared that they have set a cunning trap in which they hope, although vainly, to catch the allies.

"The terms may be taken as Germany's first bid. The proposals are, of course, wholly inadequate, but it is significant that the idea of conquest has been abandoned completely. This is the first indication that Germany has begun to realize the true position with which she is confronted. At the same time the demand of the allies for reparation is ignored totally. There is no doubt that the negotiations are a form of camouflage by which Germany is attempting to talk to the allies through Russia. It is a general peace that Germany and Austria-Hungary want and behind Czernin's words there is, we think, a perfectly sincere desire to end the war at once. The offer for what it is worth is obviously genuine. Germany is pledged definitely to the principle of restitution, thereby bluntly repudiating von Tirpitz and the other pan-Germans. An authoritative allied reply to Count Czernin might be a demonstration to the German peoples that the allies have no wish to contrive their destruction, hinder their development or threaten their independence. When they once understand what the allies stand for and what really are their intentions, the German people themselves will complete the destruction of that militarism which has set out to conquer the world."

DISEASE CAUSED 238 DEATHS IN CAMPS LAST WEEK

Slight Increase In National Army and Decrease In National Guard

SUMMARY OF ARMY HEALTH CONDITIONS

Pneumonia Cause of Large Percentage—Measles In Southern Camps

Washington, Dec. 28.—Deaths from disease in the National Army during the week ending December 21, numbered 118 against 97 the week before and in the National Guard 120 against 165, as shown in a summary of army health conditions made public today by the war department of the National Army. Measles, 77 were due to pneumonia and of those in the National Guard 87.

Our Position Unchanged. Washington, Dec. 28.—The attitude of the American government has not changed, and it is felt in Washington that the present German proposals of no annexations and no indemnities are insincere. An alleged view of the German peace terms in high British circles says that Germany desires a general peace and does not want a separate peace with Russia.

Major-Generals Wright and Greble Examined By Committee in Executive Session—Sharpe Testified

Washington, Dec. 28.—More firsthand information regarding equipment, ordnance, clothing and other supplies of General Pershing's forces and also at national army cantonments was received today by the senate military committee from Major-Generals William Wright and Edwin St. J. Greble, commanders at Camp Doniphan, Okla., and Bowie, Texas, respectively. The officers who recently returned from a visit to the French battle front were examined in executive session by the committee.

PRESIDENT WILSON IS 61 YEARS OF AGE TODAY

Washington, Dec. 28.—Coincident with the taking over of the railroads, President Wilson today is celebrating his sixty-first birthday. No special ceremony is planned at the White House as the war time rush of time makes impossible any deviation in the president's daily routine.

UKRAINIANS OCCUPY ARMY HEADQUARTERS

London, Dec. 28.—Ukrainian forces, according to a report received from Petrograd from the Ukrainian rada, and forwarded by Reuter, have occupied the headquarters of the fourth, eighth and eleventh armies on the Rumanian and southwestern fronts. The Russian rada reported that a quantity of guns and rifles was seized. The Ukrainians have occupied the station at Braloff and disarmed the guards.

PACKING HOUSE INQUIRY BEING HELD AT BOSTON

Boston, Dec. 28.—The investigation into the packing house industry, begun by the Federal trade commission last week, was resumed here today. Francis J. Hemeny, special counsel for the commission, said the commission came here "to develop a few tag-ends of the investigation regarding the Chicago Stock Yard's company's control and to develop the question of competitive conditions in the meat industry particularly in Boston and vicinity. Victor Murdock, a member of the commission, presided at the hearing.

PEACE CONFERENCE TAKES 10-DAY RECESS

Petrograd, Dec. 27, 6:30 p. m. (Delayed).—The delegates of the central powers to the peace conference at Brest-Litovsk have agreed to a ten-day recess in the peace negotiations which will be resumed January 4 at a place not yet determined.

AMERICAN BANK IN PETROGRAD RAIDED

Manager of Russian Branch of National City Bank of New York Arrested and Detained for Time

Petrograd, Dec. 28.—Soldiers acting under the orders of Finance Commissioner Menshinsky yesterday surrounded and seized all private banks in Petrograd, including the branch of the National City Bank of New York. The manager, B. R. Stevens, was arrested and detained for a short time. Many bank directors were arrested. Several surrendered the keys to the bank vaults, but Stevens refused.

The National City bank of New York was granted a license last January to commence business in Russia, with particular reference to the financing of railroad construction. The license was the first granted to a foreign bank to do business in Russia since 1879.

After his arrest he was permitted to return to the bank, which was placed under guard. The bank directors who were arrested were accused of "sabotage." Telephone service throughout the city was stopped for an hour.

"We let it be known long ago that private banks could send reports weekly to the state bank. This was done but the reports were incorrect. It was then decided to occupy the banks, revise their activity and then see that they resumed business. The keys are in the hands of Commissioner Cholenyky, of the state bank, as are the books and documents which have been seized."

It is reported that a special committee will investigate the closed banks, spending a week in the process, and that the institutions will not be permitted to resume business in the meantime. The city is facing a serious financial shortage, especially in currency of small denominations which has been unavailable for several days.

SAVING MAY BE BILLION A YEAR

Some officials even estimate that the saving will be a billion dollars a year, and that the government will be able to garner revenue from the government operation plan in addition to insuring railroad securities holders against loss.

EFFORTS BEING MADE TO IDENTIFY YOUNG WOMAN'S ASSAILANT

Police officers arrested a negro man about 3 o'clock this morning whom they hope to identify as the one who attacked the young white woman Wednesday night, but at noon identification had not been made. The officers ransacked the city and surrounding country yesterday and last night, and the trail first taken by Arthur Taylor's bloodhounds toward the Weaverville section was the one which led to the arrest early this morning. The suspect will today be taken before the county judge to see if he recognizes him as the man who attacked her.

GOVERNMENT TOOK OVER ALL RAILWAY SYSTEMS AT NOON

Without Formal Ceremonies, 250,000 Miles of Railroads Merged Into One Great System for Winning of War—Railroad Men Pledge Their Support to Country—Orders to Pool All Traffic Expected to Relieve Congestion

Washington, Dec. 28.—At noon today approximately 250,000 miles of American railway systems silently merged into one great continental chain for the winning of the war. Under President Wilson's decision, the great event, regarded by many as the opening of a new epoch in government operation and control of public utilities, passed by without any formal ceremony.

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so far toward centralizing authority under the federal government. The Association of State Railroad Commissioners will give full support to the new plan as long as their functions are not reduced materially, but they are expected to protest against being deprived of adjusting minor questions of rates and rules within their territories.

Director-General McAdoo was conferred at the time with the members of the railroads' war board and Robert S. Lovett, chairman of the priority shipment committee. The members of the war board—McAdoo, Lovett and others who have been working, within the limitation of law, to do what the government itself now proposes to accomplish, pledged their support to the government administration as has practically every railroad man in the country.

Mr. McAdoo's first official order was designed to pool all traffic, equipment and terminals to relieve the congestion which has gripped the country since the outbreak of the war. The immediate result of the order will be to wipe out competition and re-route traffic over the shortest lines. In a statement issued last night, Mr. McAdoo said he had given almost no thought to the personnel of his staff but made it clear that until his plans mature railroad operation will be conducted through existing railroad organizations.

Criticism in Congress. Although approved by the great majority of railroad men, there was some disposition toward criticism in congress principally on the ground that the government proposed to allow the railroads too much, but there was no indication that the president's plans would be seriously opposed and everything was prepared for explaining the situation in an address to congress.

Many members of house and senate predicted that the step was only the beginning of government operation on drafting employees. The president was expected to ask the brotherhood heads to give the fullest measure of support to government operation and to leave their pending demand for higher wages for determinate in the future.

Under government control every effort will be made to interfere as little as possible with the personnel of the companies, but it is considered inevitable that some employees will be cut off. This applies particularly to the large staffs maintained by many roads for soliciting traffic. These reductions probably will be more than offset by the employment of more men for operating.

The effect of government operation on drafting railroad employes for army duty is a question to be worked out, but it seems probable that under the new draft regulations recently put into effect by Provost Marshal General Crowder a large proportion of the employes will be considered too valuable in their present work to be drafted for fighting.

One of the immediate effects of the new plan will be the re-routing of much freight now passing over congested lines, particularly in the east. The railroad war board has sought to (Continued on Page 2)

POLICE ARREST NEGRO WHO MAY BE GUILTY

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Citizens of Asheville today called on county and city officers, it is stated, to offer a reward for the arrest of the guilty man. One of these men stated that the county would be asked to make the first move in this direction as the affair occurred outside the city, and that he had assurance that the city commissioners would also offer a sum of money for the apprehension of the negro.

"If the county and city do not offer a reward," said this man, "a private subscription will be taken for the purpose. Such outrages must not go unpunished without making every possible effort to find and convict the criminal. To ferret out the right man and give him the proper punishment according to law will be a protection to innocent men who are often in danger of lynch law at the hands of outraged citizens."