

GERMAN DRIVE WEAKENS BRITISH COUNTER ATTACKS RESULT IN THE RE-CAPTURE OF TWO TOWNS

PSYCHOLOGICAL MOMENT FOR THE GREAT COUNTER OFFENSIVE BY BRITISH IS NEAR

Strong Indications that the Enemy Is Feeling Materially the Strain He Has Been Under For the Past Week, and His Power Is Greatly Impaired Through Hard Usage.

GERMAN CASUALTY LIST FOUR HUNDRED THOUSAND

German Flanks More and More Exposed to the Counter Attack that Is Sure to Come, and French and American Troops Will Join the British in Return Engagement.

The strength of the great German offensive in France apparently is fast diminishing. On the seventh day of the titanic battle there were strong indications that the enemy was feeling materially the strain he had undergone and that his power had been greatly impaired through hard usage.

Heavy Attacks Repulsed.

While the town of Albert has been captured from the British and west of Roye the French have been compelled to give ground in the face of greatly superior numbers, the British have repulsed heavy attacks, both north and south of the Somme and also driven back across the Anere river the Germans who forded the stream Wednesday. Fighting still continues of a sanguinary character on all these sectors, but everywhere the British and French are holding the enemy. Especially severe has been the fighting west of Albert, where the Germans, in an endeavor to debouch westward were repulsed by Field Marshal Haig's men with the heaviest casualties.

Retake Two Towns.

The British gains between the Somme and Anere regions are represented by the re-capture of the town of Morlancourt and Chipilly. South of the Somme they have advanced to Provyat, which lies to the south of Bray.

All along the fifty mile front from the region of Arras to the south of the Oise, near Noyon the effects of what was to have been the final stroke to end the war in a victory for the Teutons are only too plainly evident in the re-devastation of the countryside and the wreck and ruin of the towns, villages and hamlets through which the armies have passed.

Casualties of 400,000.

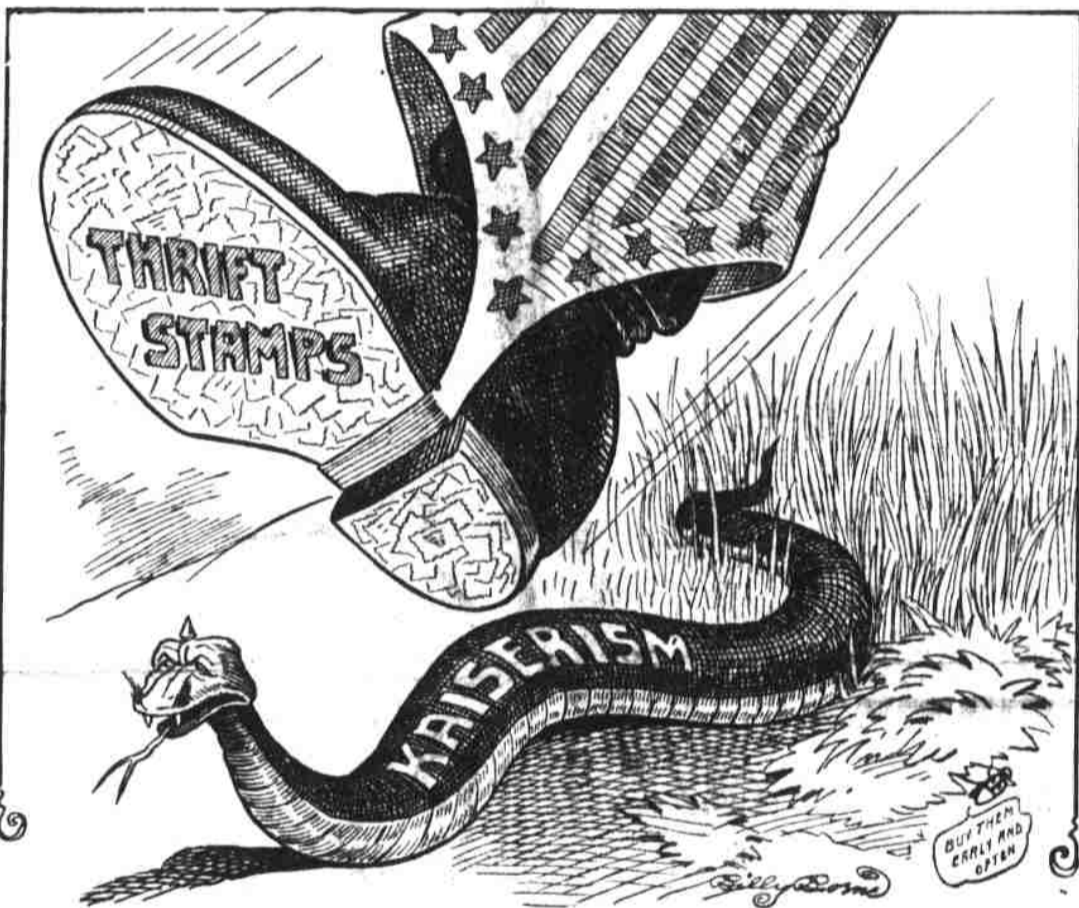
Westward from where the old battle line reared itself the Germans everywhere have pushed forward for material gains, but with foes before them who fought with the greatest bravery and stubbornness and ceded no ground unless recompensed at usurious rates in men, killed, wounded or made prisoner. It is estimated that in the great attacks in massed formation more than 400,000 of nearly a million men the Germans threw into the fray are dead, wounded or in the hands of their foes.

About twenty-five miles represents the greatest point of penetration made at any place by the enemy in his advance and on the northern and southern ends of the big salient he has his flanks dangerously open to counter-attacks, which, if successful, possibly might result in a retreat greater than the 1916 retrograde movement of Von Hindenburg and nullify in its entirety the drive that has been accomplished. It is not improbable that British and French reserves, and possibly American troops, known to be behind the battle front soon will be thrown against the weakened enemy.

Notwithstanding the strength of the German drive, nowhere has the British or French front, along the latter of which American troops have given a good account of

(CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO.)

Lets' "Stamp" It Out



GERMAN OFFENSIVE HAS BEEN HALTED NORTH OF THE SOMME BETWEEN ARRAS AND THE WESTERN EDGE OF ALBERT

South of the Somme, the British Have Held Along the River and Have Even Brought off a Successful Local Counter Attack—Many Signs Indicate That the End of the German Drive Is In Sight—Attacking Front Narrows.

(BY FRANK H. SMOONDS.)

NEW YORK, Mar. 27.—The seventh day of the battle of Picardy sees a material but not a decisive turn in the tide of allied fortune. The German offensive has been definitely halted north of the Somme between Arras and the western edge of Albert. South of the Somme the British have held along the river and even brought off a successful local counter attack. North of the Oise, west of the Noyon and east of Laassigny, the French are holding firmly. Only on the plain of Santerre, west of Roye and of Chaulnes, has the German drive continued with some measure of its old force.

As against this continued drive, which is now plainly directed at Amiens, twenty miles away, and threatens to open a gap between the French and British lines, may be set the fact that French reserves are reported arriving from the south and British reserves are also on the way. Beyond this the position of the Germans themselves in an ever narrowing wedge is becoming uncomfortable and beginning to invite a counter offensive.

End Not Far Off. It is not safe yet to say that the end of the German advance is in sight, but there are many signs which point in that direction. After seven days of terrific effort the Germans have failed to crush the British armies before them; they have failed to open a gap between the British and French armies, and they are now manifestly weary and have yet to meet the allied counter attack.

Always in the past the great offensive, even when they have penetrated the enemy line, have tended to grow narrower and narrower as they advanced, until the operative front became too narrow for successful further advance, while the flanks became longer and longer and more and more exposed. Despite the fact that this is the greatest of all offenses, the same thing is happening. The attacking front a week ago was fifty miles wide, it is less than twenty now and it is still narrowing. It would be equally a mistake to underestimate or to exaggerate the German's success; he set out to win a decision by crushing the British armies before him, separating them from the French and selling them back upon the coast as

Sir John Moore's army was rolled back upon Corunna. In the Peninsula war. He was seeking, above all, to crush his chief foe, the Briton, and it was to destroy the British army, not to take any local objective, not to advance any given number of miles, that he launched his attack.

Now at the end of one week the German has advanced rather more than twenty miles on a broad front, taking hundreds of guns and thousands of prisoners. He has broken through all the British lines of defense and carried the war into the open, a thing not achieved before in the west since the battle of the Aisne began in September, 1914.

United Front.

But since the time he broke the British front he has not been able to separate the various British armies or even divisions. Twice on the point of accomplishing this north of the Somme, on Saturday and on Monday, he has both times just missed what would have brought a disaster to his enemy. So far his foe has kept a united front before him and all the weight of the first successful blow has been lost, or is being lost.

This is the Marne campaign all over again, but the Marne campaign before the successful counter attack was launched about Paris and in the French center about the Marais St. Gond, by Maunoury and Foch. The moment is arriving when the allies will have a real chance to counter-attack a weary enemy, far from his rail-heads and his munitions, with a desert behind him and but a few destroyed roads to bring up his supplies upon.

The British soldiers have been outnumbered heavily and the strain must recall the strain of the retreat from Mons, although the distances have been considerably by comparison. The Germans still have the advantage of numbers, but the chances of such an allied disaster have been lessening very rapidly in the last two days and should disappear in the next two, if there be no major change in the situation.

May Invite Offensive.

For the next few hours the important things to watch are the wedge which the Germans are trying to drive in south of the Somme toward Amiens, the vital centre of British communications behind their front and the signs of an allied counter offensive. If the wedge is driven more deeply or the

front of the wedge widened, we shall have a new crisis. If it continues to narrow the Germans will court disaster by further advance, by inviting allied counter offensives on both flanks.

Always in military operations like the present the chances of a complete disaster diminish with each successive day. At first the army assumed is driven from its prepared position. It loses men, guns, its communications are cut by barrages and its transport is disorganized thus for two or three days the retreating force is threatened with complete rout and utter demoralization as he withdraws leaving guns, his wounded, his supplies.

But if the enemy cannot press his initial advantage to a final issue in the first two or three days, the penultimate begins to swing back. Time has been allowed the defeated forces to call up reserves of men and guns, new positions are prepared behind the retreating force and his condition grows daily more favorable for he is marching toward his supplies with good roads before him over which is purser must march away from his supplies and munitions.

And always recognizing the obvious danger that there may be a collapse of some too badly trained unit at some point, that there may be a local failure which will lead to a general breakdown, it is fair to say that the allied armies are further from any real danger than they have been at any time since the first blow fell. They are still retiring on a considerable front, but the rate of retirement is declining, the number of their counter attacks is increasing and the arrival of their reserves is regular and must increase.

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LONG AMBULANCE TRAINS.

AMSTERDAM, March 27.—Enormously long ambulance trains are passing through Liege and Namur, Belgium, on their way to Aix-La-Chapelle and other parts of Germany with wounded men from the French battle front, according to the Telegram correspondent.

Many of the wounded have been detained at Namur, says the correspondent, who adds that the hospitals in northern France have not sufficient accommodations for the great stream of sufferers.

FAITH OF BRITISH IN THEIR ABILITY NEVER SLACKENS

Believe Themselves Able to Cope With the Hard Hitting Germans

FIGHTING AS NEVER MEN FOUGHT BEFORE

Germans Are Beginning to Use Their Old Troops in Continuing Assault

WITH THE BRITISH ARMY IN FRANCE, March 27.—(By the Associated Press.)—The faith of the men in their ability to cope with the hard hitting Germans has never flagged from the start, and those troops which are coming back from the fierce battles of the past few days, in which they fought as they probably never had been called upon to fight before, are filled with confidence.

Using Old Troops.

One reassuring sign is that the enemy is beginning to use his old troops in continuing the assault. German prisoners declare that never before had they seen such fighting as they experienced since last Thursday. They battled like demons, and like flies they are coming into the prison camps, hungry and sullen and declaring that they are sick of the whole business.

The British army continues to exact a great toll of life from the enemy. Last night the entire area of the Somme battlefield, where the German emperor's troops have spread themselves, was subjected to a most terrible bombardment, which lasted until daylight. The gunning along the front for the past week has been appalling, and the zone is shrouded with a lowering grayish haze from burning explosives.

Practically No Change.

There has been practically no change in the British line since yesterday. The most sensational rumors are continually coming back from the direction of Albert, most of them to well on the way to Amiens. But the Germans were still sitting under the

(Continued on Page Seven.)

AMERICANS WATCH FOR FIRST SIGN OF COUNTER ATTACK

Believe It Will Come From French Sector, Which Stands Like Wall.

BRITISH DEFENSE STIFFENS SHARPLY

Evasive Tactics of Haig Have Germans Where They Must Continue Attack

WASHINGTON, March 27.—French and British official statements were scanned eagerly tonight by officials and military men here for first signs of the counter blow which they think will be delivered soon by the allied armies in France, where the rush of the German drive apparently has been definitely checked.

While no official report has reached the war department showing the participation of American forces beyond a few engineer units, there was reason to believe that some part of General Pershing's army might take part in the attempt to hurl the Germans back.

Brief Summary.

The only report reaching the department today was a brief summary sent in by General Pershing showing the British battle lines as they stood early yesterday morning. The German claim that 24 guns had been taken also was quoted. Tonight's reports from London showed the British defense to have stiffened sharply in the last few hours. Counter-attacks mentioned, it was indicated, were of a local character and not to be confused with the great efforts to be expected to develop now at any moment.

Officers said the shock of the German drive appeared to have been absorbed by the withdrawal strategy of General Haig.

Depends on Counter Stroke.

All depends it is said, upon the forces the allies have been able to muster to deliver the counter-stroke. There has been every indication that both British and French have been using reinforcements sparingly, conserving their reserve power for the day that is just ahead. The strategic reserve plans of the supreme war

(Continued on Page Seven.)

MOMENT NEAR WHEN THE RESERVES OF THE ALLIES WILL ENTER THE CONTEST

Battle Will Then Take on New Phase, Clemenceau Declares.

FULLY CONFIDENT.

PARIS, March 27.—Premier Clemenceau told the army committee of the chamber of deputies today that the moment was near when the reserves of the allies would enter into action. The great battle now being waged in France would then take on a new phase, and he added, there was every reason to hope that the enemy would not retain the benefit of the gains made at such a bloody price.

There was a settling down along the British and French fronts, where the Germans were trying to break through and even within the last few hours there had been noted a slackening in the enemy's effort.

The premier was before the committee for more than an hour and a half. He dealt at length with the situation and spoke with full confidence in the future. Strategic considerations, he said, did not belong to the domain of the government, but he gave details of the military situation with an explanation of the measures taken, in agreement with the high commands of the Franco-British armies to assure effective direction of the operations.

FAMOUS ATHLETE DIES.

NEW YORK, March 27.—Martin J. Sheridan, world famous athlete, died of pneumonia at a hospital here tonight.

LLOYD-GEORGE URGES "MORE AMERICAN TROOPS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE"

Sends Message Urging People of United States to Hasten.

ARE BADLY NEEDED.

NEW YORK, March 27.—A message from David Lloyd-George, prime minister of Great Britain, calling upon the United States to send "American reinforcements across the Atlantic in the shortest possible space of time," was read tonight by Lord Reading, British high commissioner to the United States at a dinner given here in his honor.

"We are at the crisis of the war, attacked by an immense superiority of German troops," said the premier in his message. "Our army has been forced to retire. The retirement has been carried out methodically before the pressure of a steady succession of fresh German reserves which are suffering enormous losses."

"The situation is being faced with splendid courage and resolution. The urgent pluck of our troops has for the moment checked the ceaseless onrush of the enemy, and the French have now joined in the struggle. But this battle, the greatest and most momentous in the history of the world, is only just beginning. Throughout it the French and British arms buoyed with the knowledge that the great republic of the west will neglect no effort which can hasten its troops and its ships to Europe.