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INCREASED ACTIVITY APPARENT NOW ON THE WESTERN FRONT

Weather is Less Rigid, and Trying Out Process of a Marked Character is Reported.

With the reported amelioration in the political unrest in Austria-Hungary and a continuation of silence as regards the internal situation in Germany, the notable feature in the world war is the apparent resumption and on a somewhat larger scale of the military operations on the western front in France and Belgium.

Although for the moment these operations, viewed from the cold facts as announced by the various war offices, do not transcend in importance the unusual small operations by raiding and reconnoitering parties which have been in progress since the severe weather began, reading between the lines of the communication it is not difficult to see that the maneuvers now in progress on various sectors are in the nature of trying-out processes of a marked character.

From the North sea to the Swiss frontier the lessening in the rigors of winter has permitted the belligerents again to send forth their men in enterprises which seemingly forecast the intention shortly to resume fighting activity more extensively.

BIG GUNS ROARING

For weeks the big guns along the entire battle front have been roaring in extensive duels on numerous sectors, but the infantry has lain idle owing to the deep snows and later the morasses which formed as a result of the thaw.

On their extreme right in northern Belgium the Germans have carried out an "unimportant raid" and gained a footing in French advanced trenches east of Nieuport, while along nearly all of the front in Flanders the artilleries have increased the volume of their fire.

To the south, around Lens, Arras and St. Quentin, the fighting, although by comparatively small forces, daily is growing in strength, while eastward along the Chemin-Des-Danes, past Verdun and thence to the Swiss border the French and Germans are continually engaged on various sectors in artillery fighting and in infantry activities considerably above the normal, as compared with the early days of the war.

ON FRONT IN ITALY

On the front in Italy the change in the high command evidently has not resulted as yet in any betterment of the strategic positions of the Austro-German armies. From the Asiago plateau eastward to the Piave river and thence southward to the Adriatic sea the Italians again have been victorious in numerous minor operations raiding enemy positions and bringing back prisoners, machine guns and Austro-German elements which were endeavoring to launch attacks.

The greater portion of the striking workmen in Austria are said to have returned to work, but the situation both in Austria and Hungary is declared still to be acute owing to the desire of the people for peace. In Germany some trepidation is being evinced by newspapers of pan-German leanings over the situation in Austria.

NEWSPAPER SUPPRESSED.

The socialist newspaper, Vorwaerts of Berlin, has again been suppressed, this time for announcing the solidarity of the German proletariat with Austrian labor in the peace struggle.

British labor in conference again has upheld the war aims set forth by President Wilson and Premier Lloyd George of Great Britain and reasserted that if Germany will not accept them British labor "must fight on."

Two British steamers were sunk recently in the Mediterranean sea with the loss of 718 lives, according to announcement to the house of commons. Last week the number of British merchantmen sunk by mines or submarines was the same as that of the previous week—eight vessels—as compared with 21 the week of January 9, and a similar number the week of January 2.

FINAL PEACE TERMS OFFERED TO THE RUSSIANS BY GERMANY

Failure to Agree Means Further Encroachments on Their Territory the Teutons Threaten.

After weeks of vacillation the Germans at last have made their demands at the peace conference at Frest-Litovsk and the Russians have declined to accede to them.

Notwithstanding the fact that the imperial German chancellor in his many-times postponed speech to the main committee of the reichstag announces that he still holds the hope that an early and satisfactory conclusion of the Brest-Litovsk conference will be reached, the terms of the Germans as enunciated by General Hoffmann, one of their chief delegates to the peace conference, so far from an insuperable barrier for the bolshevik government, which has expressed a determination to carry out a policy of no annexations and no indemnities.

Courland in its entirety and all of Russia's Baltic provinces are to be retained by Germany, according to General Hoffmann in what is termed as Germany's last proposal to the Russians, and the added threat was given that if the Russians failed to acquiesce in the demands, further inroads into their territory would follow and the important port of Revel, near the mouth of the gulf of Finland, would be occupied.

NEW RUSSIAN FRONTIER.

In the most recent fashion, Hoffmann delineated on a map before the astonished Russian delegates the new Russian frontier as the Germans intend to run it—from the shores of the gulf of Finland eastward to the Moon sound islands and then to the west of Minsk and thence to Brest-Litovsk—leaving within German boundaries some of Russia's choicest territory.

Amazed at the audacity of the German program, the Russian delegates asked for time to consider the demand. This was grudgingly given, together with the announcement that it was the last postponement that could be expected. The latest advances are to the effect that the Russians have unanimously rejected the German terms.

THERE WILL BE AMERICAN FRONT IN FRANCE SHORTLY

The Impression That the Day is Not Distant Gains Strength—War Department Program Developing.

Washington, Jan. 23.—While declining to comment directly upon the statement attributed to President Wilson, that there will be twice as many American soldiers abroad next June as had been originally planned, Secretary Baker said today:

"The program of the department has been constantly developing one and many difficulties and limitations have been removed or overcome. I cannot discuss numbers of men in France or anticipated to be in France at any particular time, but we have made substantial progress."

When General Pershing sent his first battalions into the trenches with veteran French troops, formal announcement of the fact was made here, coupled with the explanation that these units were rounding out their training course. A similar announcement, either directly from General Pershing or from the department, is expected when American troops finally take over whatever sector of the battle line it is that they are destined to fight in.

Recent press dispatches from General Pershing's headquarters have shown that a considerable part of his force, at any rate, was now regarded as fully trained.

The war department has had little to say on this subject. There have been no hints dropped as to when the American front would be established, but the impression is gaining here that the day is not far distant.

Stone Criticizes Republicans.

Washington, Jan. 21.—Smouldering fires of partisan feeling were set ablaze in the senate today by Senator Stone, veteran democrat, with a long prepared speech accusing republicans of playing politics in their criticisms of the government's conduct of the war and calling Theodore Roosevelt "the most seditious man of consequence in America."

There has been plenty of advance notice of the speech, which administration leaders sought vainly to induce the Missouri senator to abandon or postpone. The senate galleries were crowded, and republican spokesmen were waiting with repiles. There were many sharp interruptions during the two hours Senator Stone was speaking and when he closed Senators Penrose, Lodge, New and others on the republican side answered with vigorous defense of their rights to make proper criticism of inefficiencies and with counter-charges of partisanship.

Senators Lewis, Kirby and other democrats joined the fray, which lasted until the session ended tonight with adjournment until Thursday. It was suggested in the lobbies that the two-day recess was arranged in the hope that both sides would cool off and permit the controversy to be dropped. Many senators who did not take the floor today were busy with notes, however, and doubt is generally expressed that another outbreak can be prevented. Senator Johnson, of California, was particularly busy with his pencil when Senator Stone attacked Colonel Roosevelt.

News Notes.

Two hundred and twenty members of the crew of the British monitor Ragland lost their lives when the vessel was sunk in conflict with Turkish ships.

America will have more ship tonnage in eighteen months than all other nations combined, said Charles M. Schwab, steel magnate, at an address delivered last night in New York.

Gen. Tasker Bliss, chief of staff, who will represent the U. S. army at the supreme allied council, arrived in Paris Thursday.

Austria is faithful to her allies and will fight to the end, is the declaration of Count Czernin, the Austro-Hungarian foreign minister.

Freight Embargo Declared by Eastern Railroads.

Washington, Jan. 23.—An unofficial embargo on all freight, except fuel, food and munitions practically was in effect tonight east of the Mississippi and north of the Ohio and Potomac rivers as a result of Director-General McAduff's authorized embargo today on three eastern trunk lines. Although the restriction was applied formally only to the Pennsylvania and the Baltimore & Ohio east of Pittsburgh and the Philadelphia & Reading, other railroads accepted little freight today, particularly if it was destined for eastward movement.

This situation probably will continue for several days until milder weather permits railroads to move the great quantity of general freight accumulated during the past two weeks of winter storms.

CHAMBERLAIN MAKES 3-HOUR REPLY TO THE PRESIDENT

Oregon Senator Claimed Mr. Wilson Grossly Maligned Him, but Disclaimed Any Personal Rancor.

Washington, Jan. 24.—In a three-hour speech to the senate today, Senator Chamberlain, chairman of the military committee, replied to President Wilson's statement that he had distorted the facts in charging that the government had broken down in its war preparations. He declared the President has grossly maligned him, and not only defended but emphatically reiterated his assertions made in a recent speech in New York. He said the President did not know the truth, and that he did.

The senator disclaimed any personal rancor against either the President or Secretary Baker, saying his only motives were patriotic, to rouse the country and to speed up the war by wiping out inefficiency. In support of his position he cited numerous incidents of alleged inefficiency in connection with army ordnance, clothing supplies and sanitation brought out during the military committee's war inquiry.

Senators and many representatives crowded the floor, and the galleries were packed as Senator Chamberlain spoke. He began quietly, declaring it was with a feeling of sadness that he found it necessary to rise to a question of personal privilege to defend his veracity and integrity, heretofore unassailed, but as he launched into the speech, he grew emphatic and at times vehement.

When the Oregon senator concluded, Senator Kirby, a member of the military committee, replied on behalf of the administration, flatly contradicting the chairman's assertion that facts brought out in the investigation proved the war department inefficient. Then the Senate adjourned until Monday to cut off further discussion.

NEW YORK'S MAYOR HAS FIRED HIS OWN APPOINTEE

Metropolitan Police Commissioner Leaves Office After Having Served Just 23 Days.

New York, Jan. 23.—An upheaval in the New York police department, the most sensational in years, was caused by Mayor John F. Hylan today when he demanded the resignation as police commissioner of Frederick H. Bugher, whom he appointed to the office on Jan. 1. Mr. Bugher promptly complied with the demand and established a record for brevity of service as police commissioner.

Mayor Hylan established another precedent when he appointed a uniformed man as acting commissioner, selecting for the post Lieut. Richard E. Enright. The law which provides for a civilian head for the police department, was complied with by giving Enright a leave of absence.

Enright, for many years head of the police lieutenant's benevolent association, has had a picturesque career on the force. He is 46 years old and was appointed a patrolman in 1896. He reached the rank of lieutenant nine years later, but never got beyond that grade. He is a bachelor, lives in Brooklyn, and is reported to be affiliated with Tammany Hall.

The ostensible reason for the removal of Bugher was his failure to suspend members of the motorcycle squad on charge of levying tribute on motorists accused violating traffic regulations. Bugher declared, however, that he was about to place these men on trial and that the real reason for his dismissal was his refusal to submit to dictation by the mayor in the matter of appointments and his determination to keep politics out of the department.

NATION-WIDE ATTEMPT TO STOP ILLICIT BLOCKADING

Campaign Directed Mainly at South, Where So Many of the Army Cantonments Are Stationed.

Washington, Jan. 24.—An appeal to governors and members of Congress to support a nation-wide campaign against illicit liquor distilleries was prepared today by Internal Revenue Commissioner Roper, whose reports show "moonshine" traffic increasing rapidly. The campaign will be directed mainly against southern dry states, where the location of most of the military camps has added a special reason for the clean-up movement.

Commissioner Roper will ask governors to furnish state agents to cooperate with government inspectors in putting illegal stills out of business and to prosecute the campaign actively during the next two months, ordinarily the busiest period of the year for moonshiners. The appeal probably will be issued in a few days.

In line with the movement to improve liquor and vice conditions about military camps, new restricted zone regulations have been prepared by the war department and the department of justice, and will be announced soon. They have been drawn in an effort to make it more difficult for persons who buy liquor and give it to soldiers, to escape penalties of the law. More severe penalties also may be imposed on soldiers who drink liquor.

A sensible girl has misgivings about a man who is addicted to the free and unlimited coinage of compliments.

Serve and Save. Buy War-Savings Stamps!

MR. GRIFFIN URGES UNION CITIZENS TO SAVE FOOD.

We are Not Observing Wheatless and Meatless Days as Every True American Should.

Union county people are not observing wheatless and meatless days as they should, according to County Food Administrator Lee Griffin. Although the Food Administration has no authority to enforce the observance of a wheatless Wednesday, a meatless Tuesday, and a porkless Saturday, Mr. Griffin believes that it is the duty of every true and loyal American to help his country to this extent. It does not cause any suffering, or any inconvenience, for the housewives to substitute other dishes for meat and wheat on these days, and it is the urgent request of Mr. Griffin that a more rigid observance of the days be made in this county.

Already the meat consumption of this county has been reduced 25 per cent by the meatless days, and the reduction would still be more if people generally complied to the Food Administration order. The wheatless days are of still more importance locally. Already there is a dire shortage of wheat flour, and wheatless Wednesdays would lessen the demand considerably.

The merchants are generally complying with Mr. Griffin's recent order relative to the amount and price of sugar and flour allowed to each consumer. There is no tendency to violate the spirit of the order either. A few, however, violate the order intentionally, though Mr. Griffin has not yet realized the necessity of securing Secret Service men here to conduct investigations. At any time should he think conditions warranted such action the County Food Administrator can secure the services of trained investigators from the State and National Food Administration, and it is Mr. Griffin's intention to secure them should violations of his orders be reported.

Relative to the observance of the wheatless and meatless days, Mr. Griffin gave out the following:

"The intensified food conservation program that has been planned by the Food Administration as a result of the desperate cries of need from the other side calls for the observance of two wheatless days in the week, Monday and Wednesday, and one wheatless meal every day; one meatless day, which shall be Tuesday, and two porkless days, which shall be Tuesday and Saturday, in each week.

On the two wheatless days and at one meal every day all consumers of foods, private homes, hotels and restaurants, etc., are requested to use no wheat bread, biscuits, crackers, pastry, macaroni, or breakfast food containing wheat and to use wheat flour in no form except in such small amounts that may be needed for thickening soups or gravies or for a binder in corn bread and other cereal breads.

"On meatless Tuesday no meat should be used except fish, poultry and game. On porkless Saturday mutton and lamb should be used in preference to beef. 'Porkless' means without pork, bacon, ham and lard or other pork products.

"If the United States meets the food demands of its associates in the war and provides for the starving neutrals of Europe anything like the amount which our shipping will be able to take to them our own people must save at least one-third of their normal consumption of wheat from now until the next harvest. The same thing is true of pork and approximately true of beef."

Mr. Smith Contracts For as Many Stamps as Law Allows.

Rural Carrier C. M. Griffin is doing some excellent work selling war saving stamps. During the 40 or 50 days since these stamps were placed on sale, Carrier Griffin has sold them to the amount of \$1,000. Mr. G. W. Smith, Sr., is the biggest purchaser so far. He has bought and paid for \$700 or \$800 worth and has bargained for the full amount allowed to any one purchaser, \$1,000. Mr. Smith is a whole-souled fellow who always goes his full strength in a proposition that he "sits down upon" as being the right thing, and his zeal and enthusiasm in the purchase of war stamps has lent encouragement not only to purchasers but to those in whose hands the sale of these government obligations has been placed. Mr. Smith is making his purchases largely through patriotic impulses.

Mrs. Blair Was Victim of Pleasant Surprise.

(From the Marshville Home.) Miss Flora Bunting, who has been the guest of Mrs. M. P. Blair for the past few weeks, left Saturday for her home in Bloxom, Va. Just before leaving Miss Bunting handed Mrs. Blair a note with the request not to read it until she had gone. When Mrs. Blair heard the train "pull out" she immediately unfolded the note which conveyed the intelligence that for the past week Miss Bunting had not been her guest, but that instead Mrs. W. W. Littleton had been with Mrs. Blair. Miss Bunting was married in Charlotte Sunday, January 13th, to Mr. Littleton and had kept the secret from her friends. Mr. Littleton's home is also in Bloxom and he and Miss Bunting had been engaged for some time. He is now in training at Camp Greene.

You can't spend your money and save it too! Buy War-Savings Stamps!

Soldier Killed at Spartanburg.

Spartanburg, S. C., Jan. 23.—Private Floyd Dickey, company A, 108th infantry, was killed; Private Stoville, company P, of the same regiment, was shot in the hip, and Private Beard, of company A, escaped without injury when the three men last night attempted to escape from the regimental guard house at Camp Wadsworth. Private Laid and Private McCarthy were the guards in charge of the prisoners at the time of the tragedy.

The three prisoners asked to be carried across the company street and when the guards complied with the request one prisoner seized a guard's gun and the other two ran. Another guard came up, capturing the prisoner who had attempted to seize the gun and the two guards then fired at the fleeing prisoners. Dickey died in the base hospital this morning. Military authorities at Camp Wadsworth have begun a rigid examination.

CHARLOTTE SCHOOLS CLOSED TO PREVENT SPREAD OF MENINGITIS

Pool Rooms, Churches, Bowling Alleys and Other Places of Public Nature Closed By Order of Mayor.

Camp and city are co-ordinating efforts towards preventing any possible spread of spinal meningitis, says last night's Charlotte News.

A conference between the authorities of each was held in the mayor's office at 2 p. m., there being present Mayor McNinch, commissioners Wearn and Moore; Dr. C. C. Hudson, city health officer; Major B. W. Brown, of the United States public health office, whose jurisdiction is in the "five mile zone"; Major Gates and Colonel Eastman, representing Camp Greene. Mayor McNinch presided at the conference.

Discussion was full and free, each member of the conference being desperately in earnest to at once take such action as will prevent any further spread of the disease.

Mayor McNinch stated to the conference his opinion as to the gravity of the situation and what steps he proposed to take, asking the health officers and representatives from Camp Greene to express their opinions as to the measures he proposed.

Drs. Hudson and Brown and Major Gates and Colonel Eastman, as well as Commissioners Wearn and Moore strongly approved the action proposed.

PUBLIC PLACES TO CLOSE

This action, herein given, will be officially promulgated this afternoon in a proclamation by the mayor, which will announce the closing of the following places in Charlotte for a period of two weeks—Until February 7th:

"All schools, both public and private; public libraries, moving picture houses and theatres, churches, church reading rooms, Sunday schools, lodges, dance halls and public dances, the Y. M. C. A., the Y. W. C. A., billiard rooms and pool rooms, bowling alleys and shooting galleries, and all public gatherings, of whatever kind."

EFFECTIVE AT 2 P. M.

The order, as stated above, became effective at 2 o'clock and will be in effect, unless lifted by decision before now and that time, until 7 o'clock on Thursday morning, February 7. Immediately after the adjournment of the conference at the city hall at 2 o'clock Commissioner of Public Safety R. H. Moore dispatched officers of the police force to moving picture houses, theaters, pool rooms, and the other places affected and instructed them to be closed at once.

SITUATION GRAVE

Mayor McNinch said today regarding the steps taken: "I realize the far-reaching effect I have taken and did not reach a decision in the matter until all the elements entering into it had been given careful consideration. "We have before us a grave situation to deal with and I am convinced that heroic treatment is demanded, and will result in ridding the community of this dread disease. I regret that it is necessary to adopt any measure that will bring financial loss to any citizen, but consider that the health and safety of the community should outweigh all other considerations. "I appeal to all citizens of the city to co-operate heartily and to conform to both the spirit and the letter of the law."

CAMP TO CO-OPERATE

The order also states that the authorities at Camp Greene will co-operate with the city in the measures adopted to the extent of allowing soldiers to come to the city only on official business and that those coming for such a purpose must have a pass stating that they came for that purpose.

No new cases of spinal meningitis had been diagnosed up to noon today, though three new cases were discovered yesterday and last night.

The new cases are Chas. Foreman, of Montreat, rooming at the Y. M. C. A.; the 5-months' old child of Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Carr, of 612 East Ninth street; Bessie Hovis, 14-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hovis, on South Caldwell street; Frances Martin, 8-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Martin, Jr., of East avenue; James G. Graham, little son of Mr. and Mrs. Graham, on North Caldwell street, and Mrs. Cheevers, on Ceil street.

The physicians say that Miss Hovis is not afflicted with the same type of spinal meningitis as the others, that the type she has is not contagious. The others are contagious. All of the afflicted are reported today as de-

MARSHVILLE MAN BOUGHT COTTON AT TWENTY CENTS

Should Mr. J. E. Thomas Win His Suit He Stands to Profit \$600 on Future Cotton Delivery Contract.

Paying 20 cents a pound for cotton in June, 1917, to be delivered in the fall may have appeared a little risky on that date, but should J. E. Thomas of Marshville win his suit against C. A. Niven he stands profit about \$600 on such transaction. On that date he contracted to pay the defendant 20 cents a pound for ten bales of cotton to be delivered prior to December, 1917, but according to his complaint, which was filed recently with Clerk of Court R. W. Lemmond, the defendant has not lived up to his agreement. The defendant has not yet filed his answer, and the reason for apparent failure to deliver the cotton is unknown.

Should the court grant Mr. Thomas relief, his cotton today would be worth 32 cents a pound. Figuring 500 pounds to the bale, ten bales would net him approximately \$600.

The United Cash Store is a party to the action. The defendant is a tenant on one of its farms and has delivered several bales of cotton in payment of rent and supplies to this firm, according to the complaint.

The plaintiff, in his complaint, alleges that on June 4, 1917, the defendant, C. A. Niven, entered into a contract with the plaintiff, by the terms of which said defendant sold and agreed to deliver to the plaintiff ten bales of good white cotton as gathered and to be of the first gathering not later than December 1, 1917, the cotton to average 500 pounds in weight per bale, which said cotton was then growing on the plantation of the defendant in Marshville township, adjoining the lands of J. E. Thomas, James Marsh, M. C. Holmes and others, and for said cotton the plaintiff agreed to pay 20 cents per pound when delivered.

The complaint states further: "That the defendant is a tenant of the defendant United Cash Store company, is to pay it one half of the crops raised on said plantation and is also indebted to said corporation for advances made as landlord in the sum of about \$500.

"That the defendant has already gathered and delivered to the defendant landlord three or four bales of cotton and has a matured crop of twenty or more bales of cotton which is worth more than enough to pay off said bill for supplies which is now due the defendant corporation.

"That, after paying the defendant corporation its rents and bill for supplies the defendant C. A. Niven will have something like eight or ten bales of cotton left, which he refuses to deliver to the plaintiff under said contract.

"That the defendant has declared his intention not to comply with his contract with the plaintiff, and is rapidly gathering his cotton crop and secretly disposing of same, and is removing, and disposing of his crop with intent.

Judge Webb granted the plaintiff's plea for a receiver pending the hearing of the case, and Mr. Fred Ashcraft was appointed. The case may be heard at the next term of Union county civil court. It is expected to arouse a great deal of interest, as many others are said to have made similar contracts.

Children Discovered Stolen Goods.

(From the Marshville Home.)

While some children were playing in Mr. S. E. Hamilton's pasture Saturday they discovered a man's shirt partly covered with leaves. The children's curiosity was aroused and they began to make investigation. When the leaves were removed they came into possession of almost enough goods to open up a gent's furnishing store. Four suits of clothes, two pair of shoes, overalls, collars, ties, etc., were found. They proved to be a part of the goods stolen from the store of McBride & Hallman on Christmas night.

Seventy-Nine Miners Probably Perished.

Hallfax, N. S., Jan. 23.—Seventy-nine men are believed to have perished in an explosion early tonight in the Allan shaft of the Acadia Coal company's colliers at Stellarton, N. S.

Eleven men at work on a higher level at the time of the explosion made their way out safely, but the others were on the lower level and were entombed. Eight bodies have been recovered by rescue workers who risked their lives in desperate efforts to save their comrades.

A war saver is a life saver! Buy War-Savings Stamps!

As well as could be expected and their recovery anticipated.

The commissioners and camp authorities are confident that in the action today they are acting within the wishes of the public; this being based on the number of assurances received this morning from prominent citizens who, learning of the contemplated order, hastened to assure the commissioners that the plan was a wise one.

Superintendent Harding of the public schools was of the same opinion. In addition to much expert opinion Dr. Hudson, city health officer and Major Brown, of the United States public health office, favored the measure, as did the camp representatives, and the concurrent opinion indicated that the proclamation, aside from being a wise precaution, would have the merit of public approval.