

SWEDEN SENDS PEACE NOTE TO COMBATANTS AND NEUTRALS

Germany Continues to Agitate for a Peace Conference of Belligerents

SWEDEN, FOLLOWING SWITZERLAND SENDS PEACE NOTE URGING PEACE UPON BELLIGERENTS

U. S. Officials Silent Until German Reply is Received --Verdict of American Press

Washington, Dec. 27.—Official information has been received here that Sweden has addressed a peace note to the belligerents and sent copies to neutrals urging consideration of terms for peace.

Berne, via Paris, Dec. 27.—The Tagblatt announces that the Swedish diplomatic representatives have handed to both belligerents and neutrals a note in support of those of President Wilson and the Swiss Government.

The London Daily Telegraph stated this morning that it understood that the Swedish Government had sent a note to the belligerent nations similar to that despatched by Switzerland.

Washington, Dec. 27.—Germany's reply to President Wilson's peace note has not been received here in official form early to-day, and officials were reserving their comment until they had opportunity to study it.

Despite the disappointment because Germany has not acceded to the President's suggestion and laid down her terms, the general view prevailed that Sweden was another step forward in the peace movement because it left room for subsequent negotiations.

The United States under-stands in the sense of her reply to the Entente belligerents and the immediate outlook depends upon whether the Allies will modify their determination not to enter a conference before terms have been laid down. It was pointed out that way had not been closed for Germany to lay down terms as the Allies demand, in diplomatic negotiations of such magnitude and scope, officials do not look for a solution to be immediately apparent, but expect the way to be paved carefully and slowly. The next move will not be determined until after the official text of the reply has been received and carefully considered. President Wilson will discuss it thoroughly with the cabinet probably Friday.

New York, Dec. 27.—Editorial comment on Germany's reply to President Wilson's note published here this morning are as follows:

Germany's answer to President Wilson's note completely evades the issue. The President requested from each of the belligerents a definite statement of the objects of the war and the terms upon which they consider peace. Germany has evaded this proposal and has carefully phrased its reply to the Entente Governments.

The President did not ask for a peace conference. He recognized the fact that a conference at this time was impossible, but expressed the hope that an "interchange of views would clear the way at least for a conference."

Germany refuses all interchange of views and returns to the text of the note of December 12, which contained the proposal of the Teutonic powers "to enter forthwith into peace negotiations."

In the light of Germany's reply to the President it is impossible to believe that there was either honesty or sincerity of purpose back of the original peace proposal. It is plain enough now that the President's action (Continued on page three.)

Weather Bulletin

Toronto, Dec. 27.—A fairly important disturbance centered near Lake Superior has caused snow in Manitoba and northern Ontario and sleet and rain in the lower lakes region. In Quebec and the Maritime provinces and also in Alberta the weather has been fair and cold.

Forecasts: Mild with occasional sleet or rain; Thursday westerly winds and colder.



ENEMY BOASTS THAT SOMME BATTLE ENDED IN VAIN RESULT

German Press Instigated to Declare it is Really Finished, and That German Fortifications are Impregnable

Berlin, Dec. 27.—Via Sayville wireless—The almost complete cessation of the fighting on the Somme front during the past four weeks has enabled the Germans to complete a new system of trenches along the whole front, says the military critic of the semi-official Overseas News Agency, in an article to-day. He declares the great battle that began there on July 1 may now be considered to have been terminated, and that the fact of the Germans being enabled to reconstruct their lines means that all the efforts and losses of the five months fighting of the Entente forces was in vain.

As to the new defences, the writer says they have been perfected to such a degree that even the foremost trenches are now protected by barbed wire, and that the troops have dug cup dugouts. Moreover, he asserts the new defensive lines are stronger than those of July 1, "as behind the first line trenches, which were constructed under hostile artillery fire, are more than a dozen of the strongest sort of defensive lines which have been built, absolutely without interference and with great care."

Says Offensive is Exhausted

As a further sign of the exhaustion of the offensive, the writer notes, "let us in the air activity by the Entente, although German squadrons had been carrying out raids towards the east."

Regarding the Roumanian campaign, the military critic points out that navigation on the Danube for the Russians has been stopped with the occupation of Fitcha by the Bulgarians, leaving the Russians only the railroad lines to Reni and Jassy, while the Russian troops in Dobruja have been driven into the extreme northwestern corner of the province.

German Press "Instructed."

London, Dec. 27.—A Reuter dispatch from Amsterdam to-day says: "German newspapers are being instructed to declare that the Somme battle has now been really finished. They state that the German position is now stronger than on July 1, and that behind the forces of German lines are more than a dozen very strong defence lines."

Bring Peace Nearer

New York, Dec. 27.—A news agency dispatch is published here to-day as follows:

With the French Armies in Alsace-Lorraine, via Belfort and Paris, Dec.

ARTILLERY NEAR VERDUN ACTIVE

French Lieutenant Brings Down His 14th Enemy Airplane

Paris, Dec. 27.—"The night was calm, except on the front between Vacherolle and Vaux (Verdun sector) where the artillery was very active," says to-day's announcement from the war office.

"Lieut. Herteaux on Dec. 24th, brought down his 14th airplane between Chaulnes and Hyencourt le Grand (south of the Somme)."

CIVIL WAR VETERAN DEAD

Wetertown, N. Y., Dec. 27.—General Edwin A. Merrill, formerly consul-general at London and surveyor and collector of the port of New York, died at his home in Potsdam yesterday. He was born in Sudbury, Vermont, eighty eight years ago and was in the Civil War.

HOME RULE FOR ALL OF IRELAND

New Proposals for Settlement of Irish Trouble Do Not Exclude Ulster

London, Dec. 27.—Informal discussions and consultations are proceeding for settlement of the Irish question says The Manchester Guardian. New proposals, which are being considered, provide for something in the nature of equal representation for Unionists and Nationalists in an Irish parliament. Home Rule for all of Ireland is the basis of the suggestions, which do not contemplate the exclusion of Ulster.

Plenty of Coal Here at Last

Substantial evidence was offered to Brantfordites this morning that the embargo hitherto existing on the importation of coal had been lifted, insofar as the Grand Trunk are concerned. Twenty-five car loads of coal were received this morning and another fifteen were expected here by five o'clock this afternoon. Forty cars of coal for local distribution, will relieve, to a great extent, the threatened coal famine in Brantford.

"LUCKY YOUR SHIP IS AMERICAN"

"Or We Should Have Torpedoed It With Great Pleasure"

SACRAMENTO

Was Stopped in the English Channel by German Sub.

Havre, Dec. 27.—Captain Plator, of the American Steamer Sacramento, who arrived here from Buenos Aires with a cargo of wheat reports that he was stopped in the British channel by a German submarine. The commander of the submarine ordered him on board with his papers and after examining them said:

"You are carrying wheat, which we consider contraband of war, to France. It is lucky for you that your ship is American, otherwise we should have torpedoed it with great pleasure. You can proceed. Good luck to you."

The only steamer of the name of Sacramento listed in available Maritime records is reported by the New York Maritime register to have been recently transferred from American to British ownership. She was blacklisted by the British Admiralty in Germany in April 1916, on charges of aiding German ships in the Pacific, but was removed from the blacklist last October.

THREE DEAD

Toronto, Dec. 27.—The third of the three section men who were on a hand-car when it was struck by all its incidental perils to the United States. Will he now continue to give force and character to the German maneuver under the same threat.

NORWEGIAN SHIP SUNK

London, Dec. 27.—11.30 a. m.—Lloyd's reports the sinking of the Norwegian Steamship Sno, 1,823 tons gross.

Hydro Breakdown; Hundreds Unemployed

Munition Workers and Other Factorymen Thrown Out of Work in Toronto—Factories at a Standstill

Toronto, Dec. 27.—A serious breakdown in the provincial hydro lines early this morning has put hundreds of munition workers and other factory employees out of work for the morning. The trouble commenced about 4 a. m. when the power went off for about five minutes. After an interval of about an hour it went off again and stayed off till 6.30 when domestic lights went on, but the lighting in the streets was very dim, like candle power. After a short interval all lights went out and people going to business had to cross their way in the dark. At 7 o'clock in the portions of the city served by the civic cars the greatest inconvenience was suffered, all the cars being put out of commission, and workers had to walk to the nearest point where city cars were available. Many, however, did not trouble to do this as walking was very difficult on the ice-covered streets, which in some places had a glass-like surface that made the operation dangerous.

It was stated at the Hydro offices at 9.30 a. m. that the trouble was between Cookville and Dundas. The line had been broken between Dundas and Cookville, both there at the same point by the weight of sleet.

COURTEOUS REPLY TO PRES. WILSON THEN PROCEED ENERGETICALLY WITH THE WAR

Countercharges Made by Germans on Trial

Huns Accused of Conspiracy in San Francisco, Charge American Manufacturers With Breaches of Neutrality

San Francisco, Dec. 27.—Counter-accusations of violation of neutrality are expected to continue to-day at the trial of Franz Bopp, German consul-general and six assistants who are charged with conspiracy to violate American neutrality by handling shipment of munitions to the Entente allies, a Consul Bopp, whose examination was completed yesterday, said that American manufacturers were not over-zealous in their regard for strict observance of neutrality and that in various ways they sought to aid enemies of the German Government. It was to trace these alleged violations that the local German consulate employed agents to visit various parts of the United States and Canada. Bopp said, but not for the purpose of dynamiting railroad tunnels and munition ships as the government alleges.

Theodore Roche, chief counsel for the defense introduced correspondence yesterday from the Department of State to Count von Bernstorff, the German ambassador on the subject of American built submarines for the British Government. It included a statement from Charles M. Schwab to the effect that the Bethlehem Steel Company was not building any submarines for the Entente Allies. Schwab acknowledged that the Fall River shipbuilding company had undertaken to build ten submarines, but that none would be delivered to any of the belligerents during the war.

Secretary of State Lansing quoted Schwab in another communication to Count von Bernstorff in connection with the protests which had been made by the German ambassador on the question of parts of submarines made in this country. Schwab said in his statement that submarine forgings and castings made by the Union Iron Works in this city were sent to Montreal, Canada but that the company's interest in them ceased when they were delivered to the owners. Bopp maintained that this act was unneutral and unfriendly.

John A. MacGregor, president of the United Iron Works, is to be called to-day by the defense and questioned as to the delivery of submarine parts to Canada and also as to the truth of reports that the company sent workmen to Canada to assemble the submarines. The defense contends it will prove that Consul Bopp was justified in sending agents to Canada to find out the facts and make them the basis for protests by the German embassy.

WILSON LIKE THE VICTIM OF BLACKMAIL CONSPIRACY

New York Editor and Writer Points Out That Germany Alone Would Benefit by President's Proposals

(By Frank H. Simonds.)

New York, Dec. 26.—If there was any doubt in anyone's mind as to who would benefit by Mr. Wilson's peace proposals it should be abolished now. Coolly, skillfully, completely, the Germans, in their response to Mr. Wilson's note, have turned the document into their own ends. The very promptness of their response shows their enthusiasm.

And what is the next step? Is Mr. Wilson to be blackmailed by the threat of a German submarine campaign in an endorsement of the German proposal for a conference of the belligerents?

The Object.

It is beyond all cavil that the underlying motive of his first action disclosed by the helpless Lansing, was to prevent, if possible, a new German submarine campaign, with all its incidental perils to the United States. Will he now continue to give force and character to the German maneuver under the same threat.

Everyone ought at least to recognize the possibilities of the situation in which Mr. Wilson and his country now find themselves. Conceivably, Mr. Wilson will now take the opportunity supplied by the German re-

office early this morning, announced that two circuits were down between Cookville and Dundas stations. He credited it to the sleet storm last night. At 10 o'clock he stated that the service would be restored in half an hour. Chief Engineer Gaby of the Hydro commission, stated that between 40,000 and 50,000 horsepower was cut off by the break in the line. The firms affected are those which receive their power out of Cookville and Strachan avenue stations.

"Most of the munition factories and other works are at a standstill this morning as well as the civic cars," said Chairman P. W. Ellis, of the Toronto commission. "It is a very unfortunate occurrence as the hydro has been giving excellent service."

At eleven o'clock the power came on again. The double transmission line had been broken between Dundas and Cookville, both there at the same point by the weight of sleet.

Fatal to Lose Any Time Over Peace Manoeuvres, Says London Press

Berlin, Dec. 26.—Via London.—The German answer to President Wilson's note was taken to the United States embassy to-day by Foreign Minister Zimmermann, personally. Dr. Zimmermann touched with Ambassador Gerard. No indication of the tenor of the note appeared in the German papers to-day. Its text will be published to-morrow.

London, Dec. 27.—A despatch from The Hague to Reuters' Telegram Company says German agents have arrived at The Hague to make preliminary arrangements for German delegates to the peace conference suggested in the German reply to President Wilson's note.

The despatch follows:

"In view of the preparatory meeting of delegates to a peace conference suggested in the German reply to President Wilson's note, German agents have arrived at The Hague and are making inquiries for hotel accommodations for German delegates."

London Comment

London, Dec. 27.—The promptness of the German Government's reply to President Wilson's note is characterized by the Evening newspapers to-day as evidence of Germany's eagerness to bring the war to an end. The Standard says:

"It would be a mistake to neglect the German peace manoeuvres, but it would be even more so to regard them as a sign of weakness on their part. We trust the government will give President Wilson a perfectly courteous but also a definite reply and then get on with the war as energetically as possible."

The Pall Mall Gazette says:

"Germany has not been slow to seize the advantages given her by President Wilson's masterly diplomacy. It would be a real triumph for Germany to have herself recognized as the wire-puller of the power whose subjects her submarines drowned with impunity and which lectured her in the name of all the cardinal virtues. It would teach the world, that by letting the Americans do the talking, Germany understands how to get her own way eventually in the sphere of practical politics."

"The studied impartiality of the American note supplies Germany with a coat of whitewash of which she was badly in need. Germany proposes an immediate conference of belligerents, which appears to her to be the most promising way of promoting a fissure in the Entente. The allies have only one possible attitude to this, namely, they will hold no discussion with an unprincipled and unscrupulous power whose most solemn engagements are mere scraps of paper. If Mr. Wilson's real object was to elicit a plain statement of the aims and terms of both sides, Berlin's answer shows that he failed."

"It did not require a note to procure a plain statement of the Allied cause. Upon the German side the invitation meets with summary dismissal. The ill-conceived note has been frustrated and the most dignified course now would be its frank withdrawal."

Continued on page four

JAPANESE DIET OPENS SESSION

Emperor Speaks of Strength of Alliance With the Entente

Tokio, Dec. 27.—The Diet was opened to-day by the Emperor, who in his address from the throne, expressed his gratification that the relations between the empire and the treaty powers were growing closer. He declared that the alliance with Great Britain and the convention with France were becoming stronger and called attention also to the new conviction with Russia which he termed a matter for congratulation. The Emperor explained that he had ordered the ministers to draft bills necessary for the development of the country, keeping in mind the world situation, and asked the Diet to cooperate in passing these measures. The House was then adjourned to January 21.

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