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Contends That Washington Officials Have Been Fooled By the German Diplomats

New York Herald Says Wilson Has a Cabinet Crisis on His Hands—Says the United States Has Listened to the Voice of the Teutonic Tempter and Has Fallen Into a Trap—Situation Worse Now Than at Any Time Since the War Began

New York, Feb. 11.—Under the heading "The crisis being steadily intensified" The Herald says: "The Herald would be untrue to its policy, if it did not explain that the situation at Washington, instead of being cleared by the reported understanding with Germany is far from it. It is worse now than at any time since the European war. "The United States has suffered terribly in lost prestige in the last few days but one imagined matters had been so manoeuvred by our statesmen supine under the influence of the German Ambassador, that we were now posing as a sort of half-witted being, who had been slapped in the face repeatedly by German diplomats at home, and yet who had been dragged into a league with Germany

for the destruction of merchantships, that do not conform to disarmament after March 1st, for Germany yesterday, following Austria-Hungary, served notice on the United States and the rest of the world, that, after March 1st, all merchantships which carried guns would be sunk without benefit of warning, and, what is more deplorable, the United States, listening to the voice of the Teutonic tempter, has fallen into the trap, having already suggested that the Entente Allies trust Germany, and carry no guns, even for defence. "Now what are we going to do here with a Cabinet crisis on our hands; with the possibility of Germany again balking at the final wording of the Lusitania note; with submarine warfare breaking out anew, and our position, just what The Herald warned against; strained relations with the Allies and double and detestable relations with the Lusitania, Arabia, Ancona and Persia murderers? Was there ever such a mess where the honour and dignity of the country was concerned? No."

Inactivity on the Various Battlefronts Still Continues

LONDON, Feb. 12.—Except for Aetolis region in France and Volhynian and east Galician sections of the Russian line virtual inactivity that has prevailed for several days still continues. "Italians and Austrians are keeping their artillery duels going on the Austro-Italian front despite the heavy snow in the mountain regions here. They are delivering infantry attacks against each other but without appreciable results. In Albania, the Austro-Hungarians have occupied Tirana, a short distance northeast of Port of Durazzo, also dominating the heights in that region. Petrograd says the Russians in their operation against the Turks continue to make progress, and that all attempts in their operation against the Turks continue to make progress and that all attempts by the Ottomans to assume the offensive has been put down by Russian fire. Bombardments of Turkish positions on the Black Sea coast is being kept up by the Russian torpedo craft. On the other hand Constantinople asserts that the fighting between the Turks and the British in Mesopotamia,

the British attempted an advance from the right Bank of the Tigris but were compelled to retreat to their old positions. Hand fighting is still in progress around Vimy where the French are endeavouring to recapture the positions taken from them recently by the Germans. Berlin reports that four French attacks in this region have been put down. **TWO GERMAN BANKS GO "DEAD BUST"** London, Feb. 12.—The Express gives prominence to despatches from Switzerland announcing the failure of two large banking institutions in the South of Germany, one with alleged liabilities over \$125,000,000. The Express says it is of the belief that these are forerunners of others and more extensive failures due to the ruin of Germany's export trade and depreciation in value of the mark.

French & American Correspondents, Representatives of the Associated Press, View Great British Navy "Somewhere in North Sea."

Personnel of the Whole Fleet Seemed to be Remarkably Fit and Eagerly Interested in Their Work—Scattered About the Fleet Are Several Destroyer Squadrons with Light Cruisers as Leaders and Merchant Ships as Parents

Somewhere in the North Sea, via London, Feb. 11.—Britain's first line offensive fleet, an incomparable combination of speed and gun powder, and ready for instant action, was inspected yesterday by a party of French and American correspondents, representatives of the Associated Press, who were permitted to view from the bridge of a torpedo boat the Navy with which is expected to meet the first shock of the German attack. In the fleet were virtually all of the veteran, fighting craft which have been in action in this war, but they showed few scars, with the exception of an occasional dent in armour. The pride of the place was held by the battle cruisers which have been in engagements from the Falkland Islands to the Dardanelles, and have borne the brunt of sea-fighting. Unpopular with officers they were constantly coaling, and never more than cautiously praised by opponents of the super-Dreadnought policy, these huge fighting machines hold the premier position in the British Navy, in which warship speed is now regarded as the first and most important principle of naval strategy.

With the exception of a dent in her forward turret armour, similar to a scar just above the water-line, this ship of the British Navy displays little sign of the terrific hammering she got, when three German battle-cruisers concentrated their fire on her. Carefully mounted in the companionway is an 11-inch unexploded shell, which the Seydlitz hurled through the Lion's armour below the waterline. No evidence has ever been found to justify the story that the Lion was torpedoed. No sign is left of the 12-inch shell which blew the bulkhead of the Admiral's quarter away after going through the deck, except the casing cap, occupying a place among the Lion's trophies. Even the Captain's bath-tub, which was hurled overboard by the explosion of an 8-inch shell, which probably came from the ill-fated Blucher, has been replaced. The engine rooms of the Lion showed no sign of the ship ever having been in battle. The turbines looked as if they were just out of the shop. The officers explained the reason that there were so few casualties was due to the fact that the men were so scattered about the ship during the action that an exploding shell was unable to kill more than one or two at a time. The tripod masts, with control of the bridge and crow's nest, had been subjected to no severe trial, as the secondary batteries of the German ships had never been within range of their big guns. They then devoted their attention to the more vital parts of the ship. The torpedo boat picked up a portion of the party from the Lion, and the remainder from the almost equally celebrated Tiger, which looked like a newly-commissioned ship, despite the many times she is reported to have been sunk. The officers and crew of the Lion say they still marvel how little harm was done her vital parts by the rain of heavy shells. The shell which did most harm did not penetrate the armour casing of the engine room, but dented it in, so far that the salt water got into the broken feed pipe. This reduced her speed from 27 to 18 knots, and forced her to withdraw from the battle. Any vessel of a speed less than 25 knots had no chance of keeping in range of the fleeing German warships. The oil-burning torpedo boat tore along the line of battle cruisers, with her interested civilian passengers on the bridge, exclaiming with interest as through the mist, great ships, bearing historic names, which were made memorable by their own feats, were passed in the formation in which they expect to meet the German fleet of battle cruisers. The long line of light cruisers lost itself in the fog. Some of these vessels are veterans. They show signs of the rough patrol work they are called upon con-

stantly to do, but many are newly-commissioned, and have yet to wear the scars of service. Speed, which is now the fetish of the Navy, reached its zenith with these light-cruisers. Any of them could easily over-run the fastest liner so far built. Scattered about the fleet are several destroyer squadrons, with light cruisers as leaders, and merchant ships as parents. After sweeping around the destroyers the torpedo boat headed towards the pre-dreadnought, looking formidable enough to a layman, but lightly referred to by the officers as the accompanying party of the third line unit, or "bait."

The personnel of the whole Fleet seemed to be remarkably fit and eagerly interested in the work, despite uncomfortable conditions under which their patrol work in the North Sea is done. Junior officers welcome the coming of spring and summer, but not so the Captains and Commanders, who complain that the long days in the Northern latitudes mean twenty hour stretches on the bridge. Darkness spells safety, while light entails vigilance. The battle cruiser Princess Royal, which was visited by the party, had only two members of her crew in the sick bay. Both of these men were suffering from injuries caused by football, which is played with great zest whenever a field is available. The officers occasionally get some golf, but both men and officers must depend upon their shipboard duties for their chief means of exercise. Rumours of the possibility of Zeppelin raids on the fleet were rife, and officers and crew expressed the eager hope that the Zeppelins would come and give the gunners a chance to test their anti-aircraft guns. The last glimpse the party caught of the great fleet was an occasional flash through the darkening mist as signals were exchanged between the various divisions.

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Latest From Battlefront in Mesopotamia

London, Feb. 12.—The War Office to-night made public the following official despatch received regarding operations in Mesopotamia, which reports that as a result of an attack by Arabs supposed to be friendly on a reconnoitering party returning to Vasey from a reconnaissance up Shattelmai branch of the Tigris River, the British suffered casualties aggregating to 375; the Arabs lost considerable over three hundred men killed. A small expedition despatched on January the ninth completely surprised the Arabs and destroyed four of their villages. The British suffered only 6 casualties.

Germans Claim to Have Sunk a British Cruiser And Damaged Another

Berlin Says German Torpedo Boats Sank the New Cruiser Arabis and Torpedoed a Second Class Cruiser—British Admiralty Deny These Claims and State the Vessels Mentioned Above Were Four Mine Sweepers and That Three Have Returned to Their Base

London, Feb. 11.—An official statement from Berlin received here to-day, claims that a British cruiser has been sunk by a German torpedo boat craft, and another British cruiser torpedoed. The British official press bureau denies this. The German statement was to the effect that the German torpedo craft met the British cruisers off the Dogger Bank on Thursday night, sunk the new cruiser Arabis and torpedoed a second class cruiser. Giving out the German

message for publication, the Press Bureau appended the following: The new German statement is as follows: On the night of the tenth and eleventh during the advance of our torpedo boats our boats met on the Dogger Bank some 120 sea miles east of the English coast, several English cruisers which once fled. Our boats pursued them and sank the new cruiser Arabis. We obtained a hit with a torpedo on a second cruiser. Our torpedo boats rescued the commander of the Arabis with two other officers and 22 men. Our forces suffered damage but no losses. The British Admiralty states that the cruisers above-mentioned were four mine-sweeping vessels, three of which have returned in safety.

Thinks Germany Wins Big Diplomatic Victory If States Withdraws Its Protection

London Papers Say There Will be no Change by Britain or Her Allies in the Status of Their Merchantmen—Merchantmen Were Only Armed to Protect Themselves From Attacks of Enemy Submarines

London, Feb. 12.—There is no evidence that the British Government or the Allies propose to change the status of their merchantships, or their policy of arming merchantmen on account of the Austro-German declaration. The Government as yet has not formally considered the subject but the consensus of opinion as shown by newspaper authorities who have been interviewed is that Germany's declaration of her policy means no alteration in her policy except it may operate to keep neutrals off ships of belligerent powers, thus giving a clearer field for submarines to sink merchantmen.

Summing up the situation it is considered Germany will win an important diplomatic victory if the United States agrees to withdraw its protection from its citizens travelling on armed ships. Such a decision by the United States is pointed out would be wholly in Germany's interest since that country has no merchantmen on the seas. As far as Germany's practice is concerned naval writers declare her submarines generally sank merchantmen whenever they could and will continue the same practice. It has been the British contention that German submarine methods which at best, gave merchant sailors only a hazardous chance for their lives by taking to the sea in small boats, justified merchantmen fighting in self defence. Merchantmen adopted this policy of resistance only after several such cases had occurred.

OFFICIAL BRITISH

London, Feb. 12.—We sprang three mines yesterday north of Carnoc, another south of crater No. 8. To-day the enemy sprang a mine southwest of Hohenzollern redoubt, but we suffered no casualties. Hostile artillery has been active to-day north of Albert and north of Loos about Apres. Armentieres and Elverdinghe were shelled during the day. This afternoon we sprang a mine northeast of Givenchy.

FRENCH TROOPS HAVE CROSSED VARDAR RIVER

Paris, Feb. 12.—A Saloniki correspondent of The Petite Parisian telegraphs that French troops have crossed the Vardar River and are now encamped at right bank of the river and the region of Ijanitza and Vera. The town of Vera is an important railroad station on the line between Saloniki and Manastir.

SUGGESTS POSSIBILITY OF PEACE

Amsterdam, Feb. 12.—The suggestion of the possibility of the conclusion of peace in the near future is made by Baron Von Zedlitz of the Prussian Diet, according to the Vossische Zeitung newspaper which quotes him as saying: As regards the destruction of Germany's aims in the war in view of the whole present war situation, the conclusion of peace in the near future is not impossible and therefore the announcement of our fundamental aims in the war appears to be necessary if the voice of the people is to be heard at the right time. Baron Von Zedlitz is the leader of the Free Conservatives in the Prussian Diet. **Other Messages On Page Three**

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