

# The St. John Standard

VOL. X., NO. 46.

TEN PAGES

FRIDAY MORNING, MAY 17, 1918.

FAIR AND MILD

PRICE TWO CENTS.

## BRITAIN TO HEAR ANY PEACE OFFER; GERMANS MAY STRIKE IN FEW DAYS

### SEVEN BRITISH SUBMARINES ARE BLOWN UP

Commanders Obligated to Destroy Them When Germans Came Along.

### BOATS WERE IN A FINNISH HARBOR

Russians Also Blew Up Their Four American Built Submarines.

### FINLAND DESIRES TO BE MONARCHY

Germans Claim They Will Advance No Further in Russian Territory.

London, May 16.—Russian naval officers blew up their four American submarines before returning from Helsinki in southwestern Finland, last April, the British Admiralty announced tonight. Seven British submarines also were destroyed when the German naval forces and transports approached Helsinki. None of the British vessels fell into the hands of the enemy, the admiralty announced. The seven British submarines were destroyed during the five days from April 3 to April 8.

The admiralty says the project of blocking the harbor by sinking ships in it had been rejected by the Russian admiral commanding-in-chief. The effect of the destruction of the British submarines upon the crews of merchant vessels was, however, the statement says, excellent and saved many ships which would have fallen into the hands of the enemy.

For a Monarchy.

Helsinki, May 16.—An appeal signed by representatives of all the bourgeois parties, including the Young Finns, calling upon all citizens to support a monarchical form of government for Finland, is published by the Hufvudstadsbladet, the appeal recommends the reconstitution of the Landtag, and also that Finland join the Central Powers. (The fact that a number of prominent members of the Young Finns group were advocating monarchy has previously been developed in Helsinki dispatches.)

The present Landtag comprises 51 members of the Old Finnish group, 25 Young Finns, 24 Agrarians, 21 Swedes and about 20 Socialists.

Russians Evacuate.

Stockholm, May 16.—A Helsinki dispatch says the Russian have begun the evacuation of territory along the border of Finland. They still hold the frontiers of Ino but otherwise are withdrawing as far as Kronstadt. The railway from Valkeasaari to Petrograd is being deserted by the Russians, the dispatch reports.

Russian Protest.

Washington, May 16.—A copy of the protest made by the Soviet government to the German ministry of foreign affairs on April 26, against German aggressions, made public today by the state department shows that the Russians gave notice of their intention to mobilize "all necessary forces in order to secure the freedom and independence of the Russian republic which is now menaced beyond the limits established by the Brest-Litovsk treaty."

The protest concludes by declaring that if the German government finds it impossible to maintain the conditions of the treaty, "it is absolutely necessary to establish with precision what are the exact new demands in the name of which the German government directs Ukrainian, Finnish and German troops against the Russian Soviet government."

A clear and precise answer to these questions is absolutely necessary. A Moscow dispatch today to the state department said Germany had given assurance to the Russian Soviet government that German armies would advance no further into Russian territory.

### THE LLOYD-GEORGE GOVERNMENT WILL LISTEN TO ENEMY

Great Britain Decides to Abandon Her Knock-Out Policy—On Eve of Great Military Developments and Whitsuntide Recess, Foreign Secretary Makes it Clear to World that Government Holds Door Open to Peace. Overtures—Asquith Pleased.

Britain Perfectly Willing to make any Approaches Necessary for Honorable Conclusion of Hostilities—Deliverance Will Greatly Aid Lloyd George Government, it is Claimed, and Place it in Harmony With President Wilson's Views.

Special Cable to N. Y. Tribune and St. John Standard. (By Arthur S. Draper.)

London, May, 16.—The British moderates express complete satisfaction with the course of today's peace debate in parliament. It was opened by Walter Runciman. Balfour's reply marked a distinct advance. As spokesman for the government he expressed for the first time views entirely in accord with those of President Wilson's. The great significance of the debate lies in the fact that it marks the abandonment of the "knock-out" policy. On the eve of great military developments and the close of parliament for the Whitsuntide recess, the foreign secretary made it clear to the world that the British government held the door open to peace overtures and was perfectly willing to make any approaches necessary for an honorable conclusion of hostilities. Though holding firm to the belief that enemy statesmen have thus far failed to show any desire to conclude a fair and honorable peace or that German public opinion had contemplated what the Allies would regard as honorable peace, Balfour was at great pains to let the world know that Britain at all times stood ready to consider the termination of the war on an honorable basis.

Atmosphere Cleared.

No peace debate of the war has served a better purpose. The atmosphere has cleared and the Lloyd George government will benefit greatly as a result. Balfour accepted the conclusion of the foreign affairs committee of the French chamber of deputies that Emperor Charles' letter did not form the basis for an honorable peace. He explained that its contents were not conveyed to President Wilson a year ago because the Emperor stipulated that only President Poincare, Foreign Minister Briand, King George and Premier Lloyd George should be informed of his offer.

Later when the Stockholm conference question arose, Balfour says that the Emperor's letter did not influence his decision. Asquith, who is a supporter of the peace by negotiation policy and the leader of the Moderates, was quick to sense the change in the government's attitude towards peace. He followed Balfour immediately with a speech expressing satisfaction and congratulation.

Forces to Utmost.

The Lloyd George government is now definitely committed to President Wilson's policy which calls for "force to the utmost without stint," but contains the proviso that any honest enemy advance will be met half way. It means that the Lloyd George government has not abandoned its will to war, but that it will not wave aside any honest offer. This change in policy should have a profound effect upon the course of the war and the negotiations preceding peace. It means that secret negotiations will have a chance in the future. It means that parliament will have a greater voice in the control of peace negotiations. It means that another document, such as the Charles letter will be treated in a different way. It means that the Junkers and German militarists have been thrown on the offensive. It means that the liberal and moderate forces of the Central Powers will have a stronger weapon to use against the Pan-Germans and the Imperialists.

Good Will Come.

No longer can neutral emissaries, such as Colyn, complain that Great Britain gives no support to the anti-

militaristic party in Germany. Whether this will hasten peace depends entirely upon the strength of the moderate forces in the enemy countries. Certainly it will not prolong hostilities. Nothing but good can come out of the debate. Important as is Balfour's utterance, the broad question of the attitude towards Alsace-Lorraine is hardly less vital to any consideration towards peace. Britain, he said, had never given the least encouragement to the suggestion that she was fighting for the Alsace-Lorraine of 1790 and 1814. Nor was it any fixed or solid part of the French government, he said.

This clears up a highly controversial point and does, definitely one of the big issues in France covered by the secret treaty between France and Russia defining France's war aims as being all the territory up to the west bank of the Rhine. Henceforth the Lloyd George government will hardly be the target of as many parliamentary sharpshooters as has been the case hitherto. The pacifists and moderates will have little or no complaint so long as they believe that the Lloyd George government is supporting President Wilson's policy. The German militarists can get little encouragement from the debate. For that reason it is certain that there will be no change in the military plans. Great battles will be fought in the days to come and much blood and treasure is yet to be sacrificed.

The moment for the exchange of peace overtures is yet to be arrived though some have been made. Lord Curzon in a speech to the foreign press dwelt upon the subject of peace. He said that there are three conditions for which the Allies are fighting, and that they are:—(1) A just peace; (2) An honorable peace; (3) A peace which insures the security of the world for generations to come from the horrors from a devastating war.

The full significance of the utterances from leading ministers is hardly apparent now, but future developments will emphasize the importance of today's pronouncement of policy. Usually peace debates have resulted disastrously to the advocates because they have been held up to ridicule. Today the government took a different course and it has increased notably in strength thereby. Philadelphia, May 16.—"War to the

### KING GEORGE V. ADDRESSES THE U. S. LABOR MEN

London, May 16.—In addressing the American Labor delegation at Buckingham Palace today, King George said it had always been his dream that the two countries, English-speaking nations with the individual national characteristics, should work together in close and harmonious relations towards the ideals of progress and civilization common to both peoples.

"Fate has decided that the war should fulfill this dream. The two nations have made common cause in the defence of freedom and justice. In the future days of peace may they continue to stand side by side to attain the same ideals and aspirations."

"We wish you a safe and happy return home. Science is daily increasing the power of rapid ties between us; the continent of America, thus facilitating the interchange of these visits, and so strengthening the ties of mutual understanding, confidence and good fellowship which, please God, may ever henceforth unite us."

E. O. McCormick of San Francisco replied briefly in behalf of the Americans, thanking His Majesty and expressing the pleasure the visit had afforded the delegates and how they appreciated it. Each member of the delegation was presented to King George and Queen Mary as well as to Princess Mary, and nearly an hour was spent in informal conversation.

### GOVT. MAJORITY REACHES FIFTY

House of Commons Votes at Late Hour to Refer Yukon Election Dispute Back to Committee on Privileges.

Ottawa, May 16.—The Yukon election case goes back to the committee on privileges and elections. Following a discussion which lasted for a large part of the day, and following two divisions of the House, a motion of non-concurrence was adopted, and the report of the committee for further consideration. When the motion of non-concurrence was presented, Mr. Devlin moved an amendment of concurrence. This, after considerable debate, was negated, by 118 to 68. Then Mr. Campbell, of Nelson, Man., seconded by Hon. W. S. Fielding, moved a further amendment that the report "be referred back for the purpose of devising means of submitting the matter in dispute to competent judicial authority. This amendment was lost by 113 to 70, and the main motion expressing non-concurrence, was declared carried on division.

On the Devlin amendment Hon. W. S. Fielding voted with the opposition, while Messrs. Fielding, Campbell (Nelson, Man.) and Mackie (East Edmonton) voted with the minority when the vote was taken on the second amendment.

### UNITED STATES WILL HAVE STRONG ARMY

Paris, May 16.—The United States has promised to have one million five hundred thousand fighting men in France by the end of 1918, says L'Homme Libre, Premier Clemenceau's newspaper. These troops, it adds, must have their own organization and services, which will mean at least two million specialists, workers, men in the quartermaster's department and others.

death," demanded former President Taft in his keynote speech at the opening session today of the Win-the-War Convention of the League to Enforce Peace. "After a stirring plea for a fighting army of 5,000,000 men, Mr. Taft said: "We should set our faces stern and unbending toward one end—war. Let us have peace, but let us have war that we may have peace. To sound the trumpet, stern, implacable war to the end, this convention was called."

### EVERY OUNCE OF ENEMY STRENGTH TO BE EXERTED

Light Moonlight Enemy is't Moonlight Enemy is Liable to Start His Mighty Thrust at Beginning of Coming Week—Germany Will Use Everything, Bombing Airplanes, U-Boats, Big Guns, Vast Army and Possibly Big Fleet.

Among Rugged Peaks of Asiago Plateau, East of Brenta River, Italian Front Has Again Flamed up into Violent Action, Army of Victor Emmanuel Taking Offensive on that Battle Line.

Special Cable to N. Y. Tribune and St. John Standard. (By Arthur S. Draper.)

London, May 16.—The lull continues. Though short, sharp bursts of fire at various points occur at frequent intervals, they are not the big storm itself but merely signs that it is brewing. Flanders and the Plains of Picardy are heavy with mud. Every other day showers sweep over the battlefield and swell the brooks and rivers between the belligerents.

There is a general belief that Ludendorff has timed his blow for the beginning of next week when the moon will be in the same phase as it was in March 21. Every ounce of German strength will be put into the next thrust. On land, on sea, and in the air the enemy will strive desperately to crush the British defenses. The daring British attacks on the Belgian coast are almost certain to bring German naval action. Not since early in March has a German airplane appeared over the district around London. When the great thrust is launched Britain expects that Germany will use everything—her bombing airplanes, her U-boats and destroyers, and possibly her high seas fleet. Next week the moon will be in the right place for nocturnal activity. It will furnish enough light for the movement of troops and aerial attacks.

Will Attempt Surprises.

Ludendorff will attempt to spring surprises in the next stages of the offensive and depend upon the weight of his forces to follow up any early advantages he may gain.

Germany is well supplied with young officers who are able to act upon their own initiative and upon them will fall the tactical direction of the coming thrust.

If the next blow comes in Flanders or at Amiens, it is not likely that there will be any preliminary bombardment, because neither side is deeply entrenched. It is probable that the enemy will hurl over a lot of gas shells, followed by a rain of high explosives.

Last night he used a lot of gas shells around Dickenbusch Lakes south of Ypres and in the fighting up to the front before Amiens but the infantry has remained in the trenches. According to the German press reports the recent Emperor's conference resulted in the pooling of German and Austrian military resources.

What really happened probably was that Emperor Charles agreed to Ludendorff's demand that Austria strike against Italy. The German militarists dictate Austrian policy today with the same authority that they handle affairs at home.

Fighting in Italy.

Among the rugged peaks of the Asiago Plateau east of the Brenta River, the Italian front has again flamed up into violent action. The aggressive has been taken by the Italians however, and the Austro-German forces, instead of launching their long expected assault on the Italian lines, have been compelled to fight hard to maintain the positions where they have stood since last November.

The fighting seems to have centered on the comparatively short section of the battle line, between Monte Sassone and Monte Pertice. These two heights about three miles apart, rise to an altitude of about five thousand feet, while between them there is a sort of "saddle" on which the Tonton forces have taken up strong positions.

The fact that the Italian armies have taken the initiative in the fighting would seem to indicate that they have sought to carry the fight to the enemy in such a way as to break up any arrangements for the launching of a strong Teutonic assault. This

has many precedents in the present war, a strong offensive at a threatened point being considered the best defense under certain circumstances. Nowhere have the Italian lines been reached by attacking parties of Austrians.

In Flanders and Picardy, only heavy artillery fire has marked the fighting during the past day. American gunners have been at work in the general bombardment that has been going on and have again set buildings in Montdidier in flames.

A Russian Army?

A daring raid on the Austrian naval base at Pola has been made by Italian units and an Austrian battleship of the 20,000 ton type, has been destroyed.

It has been announced from Washington that an official order has been issued by the soviet government of Russia calling for the formation of an army which will fight for the security of the Russian empire, which has been menaced by the aggressions of the Germans.

### MAGDALEN STEAMSHIP CO. BEING WOUND UP

The affairs of the Magdalen Islands Steamship Co. which owned the steamer Amelia are being wound up. The Amelia has been sold for \$50,000 to G. A. Wooten of Halifax and B. L. Rafuse of Bridgewater, N. S., acting for British interests. The Amelia will be used as coal carrier between Cardiff and Liverpool and Glasgow.

The steamer Northumberland of Charlottetown, owned by the C. G. R., will make a few trips to the Magdalens.

### CHATHAM MAN'S FEET FROZEN; AMPUTATED

Chatham, May 16.—Thomas Burke, son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Burke of this town, was brought here today from Dryden, Ontario, with both his feet off. Young Burke was the victim of a driving accident near Dryden some weeks ago when his horse ran away and left him some miles from home in a blinding snow storm. His feet were so badly frozen before he found shelter that both had to be amputated.

### THE AUSTRIANS SUSTAIN SOME HEAVY LOSSES

Italian Troops Carry Out Offensives Operation on Monte Asolone.

### BRITISH SUCCESSFUL ON ITALIAN FRONT

Artillery Activity Grows Stronger in Legarina and Arsa alleys.

### BITTER FIGHTING STATES VIENNA

Hand to Hand Encounters Develop on Two Mountain Heights.

Rome, May 16.—Italian troops carried out an offensive operation yesterday in which the Austrian trenches on Monte Asolone, between Brunt and Piave rivers were entered at two points. The Italians inflicted heavy casualties and took prisoners.

In addition to this aggressive movement by the Italians, the war office reports a successful patrol action by the British at Aconva in which prisoners also were taken. Enemy raiding parties were repulsed.

The artillery activity grew stronger in the Legarina and Arsa valleys and on the Asiago Plateau.

The Statement.

The text follows: "Our infantry detachments entered the enemy trenches on Monte Asolone at two places. A portion of the garrison was killed. The survivors fled, leaving a few prisoners in our hands. British patrols raided the enemy positions at Corno, capturing an officer and a few men.

"Various attempts by the enemy to approach our advance line in the Resole valley, at Fortini, in the Posina valley, and on Coldi Chela, failed.

"In the Legarina and Arsa valleys on the Asiago Plateau there was increased artillery activity on both sides."

Austrian Statement.

Vienna, via London, May 16.—Bitter fighting between the Brenta and Piave rivers, on the Italian front, is reported in the official statement issued by the war office today. The statement reads: "Between the Brenta and the Piave several Italian reconnoitering thrusts were repulsed. As a result of these attacks hand to hand fighting developed on Monte Asolone and Monte Pertice."

### STEAMER SUNK IN COLLISION

Dutch Steamer Zaanland Goes Down at Sea—All Hands Saved.

Washington, May 16.—The steamship Zaanland, one of the Dutch vessels recently requisitioned by the United States government, was sunk in a collision at sea May 13. The navy department tonight announced that all on board were rescued and will be returned to this country. The vessel was a cargo carrier of 5,700 deadweight tons manned by the navy for army purposes.

### U. S. STEAMER SUNK

Washington, May 16.—The American steamer Neches, a cargo carrier of 7,167 tons, was torpedoed and sunk on the night of May 14, or in the early morning hours of May 15, without loss of life, the navy department today announced.