

ALLIES STRONG ENOUGH TO SMASH ENEMY LINE BUT WEATHER PREVENTS BIG DRIVE

Have Men and Munitions to Break Through at Right Moment, but Condition of Ground Would Make Impossible Quick Movements of Artillery Essential to Big Offensive—Winter in East More Severe Than Last Year and No Big Move Until End of January—Berlin Admits French Forces Penetrated German Line.

London, Dec. 29.—Despatches from both east and west express the belief that the winter weather is likely to prove the most severe obstacle to war operations on the principal fronts during the next few weeks.

"The most dreaded period of winter is from the end of December to the end of January," was a French general's reply a year ago to the demand for a great offensive. The same remark would probably apply equally this year.

Reuters' correspondent at western headquarters, after remarking that the British staff is confident that the Allies are now so strong in men and munitions that they can break through the German lines whenever the right time comes, declares that the weather is the chief reason for postponing the big movement, and adds:

"Such a movement needs careful planning and extreme caution."

Rolling-up tactics always involve the possibility of counter-attacks, which may end in rolling-up the aggressor. With the face of the country in a porous and mushy condition, it is impossible to effect the essential quick movements of artillery, without which any big offensive is foredoomed to failure.

"The allied troops would probably have little trouble in occupying the great part of the German front trenches forthwith, because the enemy holds these lightly. But then with the ranges registered to a mile by myriads of artillery and machine guns, such a step would be sheer suicide, until the opportunity is right."

Hard Winter in East.

A Russian correspondent writes: "The most severe part of winter has now begun in the Russian theatre. All reports agree that the weather this year is harder than usual. It is increasingly doubtful if any serious events will occur until the end of January."

Despite the weather the duel in the Vosges mountains, in the western zone, continues, and may eventually prove to be one of the big operations of the war. The gains in either direction thus far have been small, but the French claim progress in their efforts to establish themselves on the crest of the foothills which here dominate the plain.

By all accounts Saloniki is now safe. Certainly the Central Powers show no haste to attack the Allies' position. Seventy-five thousand Serbians have reformed at Scutari, and Elasson, in Albania, and the Montenegrin army, which heretofore has been debarraded geographically from taking any large part in the war, is now throwing itself energetically into the contest against the Austrians.

Reports that the Austrians are attacking Scutari are authoritatively denied. According to the latest advice the Austrians were at Bietopolje, where they were recently repulsed by the Montenegrins, and cannot reach Scutari without crossing the Albanian Alps and the flooded river Drin.

No official announcement is yet available in London as to the decision of the cabinet in favor of compulsion, but the political atmosphere has been considerably cleared up by the admission that the principle of compulsion is accepted by a majority of the members of the cabinet. Public opinion has not yet crystallized, but there is widespread approval of Premier Asquith's general attitude, and there is a feeling that the public is quite ready to be convinced.

The difficulties within the cabinet may be expected to diminish as the question shapes itself in practical form.

A joint meeting of the representatives of the Labor party with the federation of trade unions has been summoned for tomorrow, and a detailed statement of the Labor attitude is likely to follow.

French Aviators Get Behind Bulgarian Line

Paris, Dec. 29.—Despite numerous difficulties, such as landing grounds and a mountainous country, French aviators have succeeded, according to an official note issued here, in carrying on reconnaissance about ninety-three miles into the interior of the Bulgarian lines.

In the month of November alone there were no less than fifty-four reconnaissance, during which observa-

BERLIN TO SUBMIT NEW PROPOSALS

For Settlement of Difficulties with U. S. Over Lusitania Affair.

NOT KEEN TO CONTINUE THE CONTROVERSY.

Latest Move Significant in View of Strained Relations Between Washington and Vienna.

Washington, Dec. 29.—New proposals from Germany for a settlement of the Lusitania controversy, which the Berlin foreign office hopes will be acceptable to the United States, are expected to be presented to the state department next week. It is understood the negotiations between Secretary of State Lansing and Count Von Bernstorff, the German ambassador, recently progressed to a point where a settlement was expected at Christmas. Today, it was said, the German proposals resulting from these conversations probably would arrive soon after New Year's Day.

Information received here indicates that the Berlin foreign office is anxious to end the controversy, in spite of adverse public opinion, said to have been aroused by the American request for withdrawal of the German naval and military attaches and the demands upon Austria-Hungary as a result of the sinking of the Ancona.

The present status of the negotiations is very closely guarded. The United States has contended all along for a disavowal of the sinking of the Lusitania and reparation at American lives lost. A proposal by Germany to arbitrate the question of indemnity was rejected. It has finally suggested that Germany might make reparation with the understanding that it would involve no admission of wrongdoing. It is understood that no agreement will satisfy the United States, unless it contains something in the nature of a disavowal, but Germany contends that her instructions to submarine commanders to discontinue such attacks as that on the Lusitania is the most effective disavowal that could be given.

It is regarded here as especially significant that a settlement of the Lusitania case should become imminent at a time when Teutonic diplomatic circles are represented as being prepared for a diplomatic break between the United States and Austria-Hungary. A clearing up of the Lusitania case, officials believe, would have an important bearing on the controversy now pending with Vienna. That situation remained tonight unchanged, without word from Ambassador Penfield or any official indication of when Austria's reply to Secretary Lansing's renewed demands might be expected.

and numerous photographs useful in strategic.

Petrograd, Dec. 29, via London, Dec. 29.—The following official communication was issued tonight:

"On the left bank of the River As, a Lithuanian detachment attacked an enemy detachment with bayonet. The Germans fled, having many killed and wounded. On the rest of the front, as far as Pripet region, there have been artillery duels and fusillades in places south of Pripet, and in Galicia there have been encounters.

"There is no change on the Caucasian front."

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Four Thousand Pounds of Rubber Found on Ford's Peace Ship

London, Dec. 29.—A British official statement, issued tonight says: "It is ascertained that fifty-five bags of rubber, all consigned to a well known enemy forwarding agent in Sweden, were removed from the parcel mail on board the steamship Oscar II. The estimated weight of the rubber seized is about 4,000 pounds.

"The remainder of the mail, which consisted of 734 bags, was handed over to the post office for immediate transmission to its destination."

The Oscar II, is the vessel which carried the Henry Ford peace party to Europe. On the voyage across she was taken into Kirkwall by the British authorities and her cargo examined. The Oscar II, was detained for more than 24 hours, but was allowed to proceed on December 16. There were reports at the time that part of the cargo was contraband, and that a prize court would take the matter into consideration.

RUPTURE UNLESS LABOR PARTY AMERICAN NOTE DIVIDED OVER IS MODIFIED CONSCRIPTION

Official Circles in Vienna Strongly Opposed to Accepting Washington's Second Note on Ancona Incident.

Several Ready to Agree if Convinced Measure Absolutely Necessary and Will be Impartially Applied.

London, Dec. 29.—A conference of representatives of the Labor party is being arranged to consider the decision of the cabinet in regard to compulsory military service. The question is being canvassed eagerly at trade union centres. Advocates and opponents of conscription are equally emphatic. There are many members of the Labor party who are ready to support the doctrine of compulsory service, once they are satisfied it is necessary, and are assured it will be applied impartially to all classes. Some are still hesitating on a further opportunity for unarmisted men to offer their services without compulsion, but it is believed the cabinet has decided against further delay. In view of the expected early activities in the field, recruits are needed to take the places of the men now waiting in the home camps in readiness to fill vacancies at the front.

A meeting of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers will be held tomorrow to consider the plan of David Lloyd George, minister of munitions, for relaxing of trade union rules so as to enlarge the number of men performing certain classes of work. The engineers will discuss Mr. Lloyd George's bill amending the munitions act which will come before parliament when it re-assembles.

At a meeting of the joint labor reforming committee in London this afternoon the calling of a national conference of trades unions to consider the conscription situation was urgently demanded, but it was decided to await an explanation of this position from Arthur Henderson, chairman of the Labor party.

Some of the committee-men contended that out of 600,000 men unarmisted, sixty per cent. were unfit, twenty per cent. "starved," being necessary work at home, and that the bulk of the remainder hold conscientious objections to military service.

MONCTON MAN IS KILLED IN AUTO ACCIDENT

Moncton, Dec. 29.—Jaduce N. Boudreau, ex-alderman, of Moncton, was instantly killed near Dorchester, N. B., shortly before midnight as the result of his automobile skidding and turning over.

No particulars of the fatality have been received but it is understood while going down a hill west of Dorchester the car skidded into the ditch and turned over backwards being pinned underneath and crushed to death. Several others were in the car but escaped serious injury.

NORWEGIAN STEAMER SUNK

London, Dec. 29.—A despatch to Lloyds from Bergen, dated Tuesday, says the Norwegian fjord steamer Homelen has been sunk at Svanoeen, north of Bergen, with the loss of one man drowned.

ment has prohibited the export of raw zinc. Goods manufactured in Sweden of imported raw zinc may still be exported, however.

Opposition to Asquith's Proposals Growing Less

RUSSIANS PUT ENEMY TO FLIGHT WITH GOLD STEEL

Germans Leave Many Dead and Wounded when Czar's Troops Attacked with Bayonet.

BRITISH NIGHT ATTACK NEAR ARMENTIERE

Enemy's Casualties 2,000 at Lapanatz in Battle with Montenegrins on Dec. 21st.

London, Dec. 29.—In order to give time for a possible reconciliation of conflicting opinions on the recruiting question the cabinet council which was called for today has been further postponed until Friday, and there is very great hope that it will then be found that the cabinet is in practical agreement on the acceptance of Premier Asquith's proposals.

It has become known that the prime minister found much greater support than had been supposed, some of the anti-conscriptionist ministers having realized that a peculiar situation calls for exceptional treatment.

Among these are A. J. Balfour, first lord of the admiralty, whose influence is very great, and Arthur Henderson, who, however, will be guided by the views of the Labor party.

Earl Kitchener, the war minister, also has last defended his opinion that the time is ripe for compulsion. Much depends now on the attitude of Reginald McKenna, chancellor of the exchequer, and Walter Runciman, president of the Board of Trade, both important members of the cabinet. But there is tonight a hopeful feeling that they may yet be induced to support the premier in the interests of ministerial unity.

Sir Edward Grey, the foreign secretary, looks with great apprehension upon any signs of disagreement, and having a bad effect upon the attitude of conciliation, and if it turns out that the line the government has chosen is not for compulsory direct enlistment, but for compulsory attestation along the lines of the Derby scheme, it is very probable that most of the doubtful ministers may be found supporting the premier, and that the resignations will be confined to two or three ministers of lesser importance, such as Lewis Harcourt, first commissioner of works, and Sir John Simon, home secretary, whose departure would not involve a serious crisis.

King Exerting Influence.

A strong point making for unity on the new government policy is that it has met with much less opposition from the Liberal press than might have been expected. The royal influence is also being exerted, the king having publicly intimated his special desire that all the men who attested under Earl Derby should wear the symbolic armet issued in connection with the scheme.

Much will depend upon the attitude

of the Labor party, which, although strongly opposed to compulsion, may possibly be swayed by Mr. Henderson's view that the exceptional circumstances justify exceptional means.

Reginald McKenna and Runciman Holding Out.

According to the Daily Chronicle the new bill will be a short measure calling upon unmarried men, between the ages of 19 and 40 years, to attest in their own groups within a specified period of time, and under the same privileges as the Derby recruits, with serious penalties for non-compliance.

According to the Times Mr. McKenna bases his opposition to the scheme partly on personal doubt regarding the size of the military forces required of Great Britain to win the war, and partly on Great Britain's financial commitments, both at home and by way of loans to her allies. Mr. Runciman, the newspaper adds, is concerned to maintain the volume of trade, which he regards as an indispensable factor in the British war equipment.

"Mr. McKenna thinks," the Times says, "that the financial commitments already are as heavy as Great Britain is able to bear. Mr. Runciman's objection is based on the necessity of maintaining our exports, regardless of these objections."

The Times argues that had the Earl of Derby's enlistment scheme been completely successful its results would have been the same as will be obtained by compulsion, and that the question how the men are obtained cannot affect the economic position.

Various opinions are advanced concerning Mr. McKenna and Mr. Runciman. While the Times appears to think their opposition is irreconcilable, the Morning Post believes they will be won over. The Times says it thinks the Labor party will come into line.

Both the Times and the Daily Mail anticipate that when the matter comes before parliament much of the opposition will be found to have evaporated, in deference to the strong public opinion in favor of Premier Asquith's view.

The Daily Mail as an indication of the trend of Labor in the situation, quotes G. H. Roberts, member of parliament, a life-long enemy of compulsion, as saying:

"There is something worse than conscription, and that is national defeat."

Several Anti-Conscriptionist Members of Cabinet Showing Signs of Conversion—Meeting Postponed Until Friday—King Exerting His Influence—Single Men of 18 to 40 Years Likely Called.

London, Dec. 29.—The following official communication was issued today:

"Russian theatre: On the Bersarabia front there have been renewed local hostile attacks which failed, with great losses to the Russians.

"East of Pulkavov our reconnoitering detachments retired on our chief division before superior Russian forces.

"Italian theatre: The Italian artillery has displayed activity on the south and southeast Tyrol front. Attacks on Monte Barbonile and in the region of Col Di Lana were repulsed. There have been gun, hand-grenade, and mining duels on this front.

"Balkan theatre: Nothing important has been reported."

British Lose an Aeroplane.

London, Dec. 29.—The British official statement on the progress of the campaign, issued tonight, reads as follows:

"The enemy made an unsuccessful attack on one of our aerodromes. Of four machines only two reached their objective. No damage was done. One of our aeroplanes was shot down.

"Last night there was a successful enterprise near Armentieres. The enemy's trenches were entered and bombarded with good effect. The casualties were numerous. After ten minutes the party withdrew. Our casualties were light.

"Today our artillery was effective against the trenches and billets in many places between Mametz and Monchy. The enemy exploded two small mines near Givency. There was no damage to either troops or trenches.

"The day was quiet south of La Bassée Canal. About Ypres a heavy reciprocal bombardment occurred."

RANKS OF 132ND ARE RAPIDLY FILLING UP

North Shore Men are Coming Forward in Fine Style—Father and Three Sons in Same Battalion.

Newcastle, Dec. 29.—The following have been added to "C" Co., 132nd Battalion here since last report:

Second Lieutenant F. T. Mowatt, Campbellton; and the following privates: Archie Matheson, James Fallon, Sr.; Clarence Russell, Clayton Morris, Chas. M. Johnston, Hubert Johnston, Daniel Foran, of Newcastle; Geo. Royal, Grand Downs; Frank Richards, Charlton Hill and Road; Thos. Coughlan, Nelson; Clarence Henderson, Rosebank; Vincent Holland, Redbank.

A very successful recruiting meeting was held at Trout Brook school house Monday night.

The following young men joined the 132nd: James Allison, Wayerton; Harry Johnston, Denmark, and Weldon Dunneil, Trout Brook.

Chas. Johnston's enlistment makes four out of one family for the front.

Opposition to Asquith's Proposals Growing Less

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"The Swedish Admiralty," said the despatch, "has ordered a strict inquiry into the incident, which is regarded as a repetition of the recent violation of territoriality when the Germans captured the steamer Argo. In the present case the quarry escaped, the Germans abandoning the pursuit when they were fired at."

Geo. N. Johnston and his three oldest sons.

SWEDISH FORTS FIRE ON GERMAN TORPEDO BOATS

Germans Pursued Swedish Steamer Inside Territorial Waters and Guns of Forts Prevented Capture.

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