

ALLIES MOVE TO CLEAR BELGIUM

Campaign Planned for Spring is Opened Now in Hope of Striking Decisive Blow.

CHANGE IN STRATEGY KNOWN

London Aware of the Altered Plans and is Now Watching Movement of Troops that Commenced Yesterday.

(Copyright, 1914, by Press Publishing Co.) LONDON, Dec. 16.—(Special Cablegram to the New York World and Omaha Bee.)—All along the battle line from Flanders to the Vosges, the allies began today to move forward, with the immediate object of driving the Germans out of Belgium.

The present onslaught against the German intrenchments is heavier than any offensive assumed by the French, British and Belgian forces since General von Kluck was turned on the Aisne.

It is the result of a complete change of plan by Generals Joffre and French, and means that the campaign which was to have begun in the spring is now under way.

Spring Plan is Advanced.

According to information that reached the World correspondent from a highly placed personage in touch with the war offices, the kaiser's troops, if this new movement be successful, would be thrown back on their second line in Belgium from Bruges to Courtrai, a distance of twenty miles, within three weeks.

Move is Only Hinted At.

No word of this momentous hastening of the allies' advance has been spoken in official communiques and in the announcement issued this evening by the London Press Bureau there is only the barest hint of the magnitude of operations just begun. This announcement reads:

"After a period of comparative quiet, fighting in northern France has recommenced. A combined attack by the allies was made yesterday on the line from Hullebaek to Wytschaete. Several German trenches and a number of prisoners were captured and substantial progress has been made."

Result of "Sounding Out."

The authority to whom the West is indebted for its information concerning this most important development pointed out that the attack thus briefly described is probably only one of the last feeling-out movements begun by General Joffre about ten days ago. From the sea to the Swiss frontier the allied troops have been sounding out the German strength by small attacks at various points. Evidently the result of this process has been highly satisfactory.

Map Shortens the War.

The commanders in the field figure that by their present strategy either Belgium may be freed of the invaders by spring, or the Germans will be forced to withdraw so many men from the eastern theater of war that pressure on the Russians will be relieved to such an extent that their advance into Germany will be made practically certain.

They also believe, according to the World's information, that the duration of the war will be shortened by fully three months unless some unforeseen obstacle overthrows their present plan.

RAID PROBABLY STRATEGIC MOVE

(Continued from Page One.)

also have been across the North Sea against the coast of the north coast of England, although Napoleon's projected invasion was to have been from Boulogne and Calais against Folkestone and points along the southern coast.

Against such movements British sea power has been coöperated on as the chief defense.

Probably Strategic Maneuver.

In the best posted naval circles here today's bombardment is regarded as a strategic maneuver, which may have far-reaching consequences. The first purpose, as explained by one of the foremost naval strategists, is to create a "scare," which will lead to hurried concentration and change of movement of the main British battle fleet and expose those ships to attack from unexpected quarters. An examination of the latest naval data shows, the expert says, that the bombardment points are without doubt of a defensive and not therefore of a military value, for purposes of capture or occupation. For that reason he holds that the chief purpose of the bombardment was strategic—first to produce a condition of excitement and panic among the English people and second to serve as a bait by which the four German cruisers making the attack will at once draw a large force of British ships away from their established lines of defense. The four German cruisers could not themselves, this expert holds, be a serious menace to the British coast.

May Stimulate Recruiting.

Discussion of the raid among diplomatic, friendly to the allies, led to the expression of opinions that the first direct attack on British soil would in all probability develop advantages to England by bringing the English people face to face with actual war and would perhaps stimulate recruiting. Those in touch with the development of the marine situation as far as the war were of the opinion that the raid was rather a piece of naval strategy than an attempt to land troops on British soil.

At the British Embassy here today it was said that Scarborough was in no sense a fortified town, but in the absence of admirably reports of the German naval raid, embassy officials did not care to comment on the attack. Scarborough, military observers say, might logically be the objective of a landing force because of its position on the two railways leading to Edinburgh and Hull.

Towns Partly Fortified.

In anticipation of such an event Scarborough, like many other English coast towns, has been protected by barbed wire entanglements along all the roads leading from the coast inland. The famous "fore-shore roadway," which formed the promenade of the summer resort along the water's edge, has been protected by sandbag entanglements.

On the North cliff overlooking the sea,

barracks are situated, which in times of peace are used chiefly as training grounds. An excellent race course makes the site especially good for cavalry maneuvers.

It has been pointed out that the shallow harbor there, which makes the entrance of large ships impossible at low tide, would, however, be no obstacle against small draft barges or transports, such as it is believed the Germans might use. From information in possession of the Navy department it also would seem that Scarborough is not fortified or defended. The port of Hartlepool, however, is among the list of defended harbors and consequently is subject to attack by a hostile force without notice of bombardment and without violation of the Hague convention.

Harbors Under Martial Law.

The British privy council last August issued, in the form of an army order for the benefit of merchant vessels, a list of all the harbors on the British coast that had been placed under martial law and which consequently were to be regarded as in a state of defense. The list follows: "Cromarty, Aberdeen, Tay, Forth, Tyne, Tees and Hartlepool, Humber, Thames, Medway, Harwich, Dover, New Haven, Portsmouth, Portland, Plymouth, Falmouth, Milfordhaven, Swansea, Cardiff and Barry, Mersey, Barrow, Clyde, Lough Swilly, Belfast, Queenstown, Derry, Haven, Dublin, the Orkneys and the Shetlands."

Naval officers here were little surprised to hear of the appearance of German warships on the English coast.

They had not only expected some such demonstration, but have been puzzled to know why some such attempt had not been made before. Notwithstanding the strength of the British fleet which has been blockading the German coast, naval officers here have thought the line of investment could not be made absolutely tight because of the stormy weather at this season, with dense fogs. The British ships also have been obliged to lie many miles off the German coast to escape the fire of shore batteries, and particularly to avoid the mine fields, which lie thickly sown within soundings. They have considered it a hazardous but possible undertaking for a daring commander to run his vessels through the line by night. It might be possible, though more difficult, for him to bring his ships back to port.

Russia Denies Report Austria is Seeking a Separate Peace

PETROGRAD, Dec. 16.—(Via London)—Rumors which have been in circulation for some time to the effect that Austria was seeking to conclude a separate peace agreement with Russia, without the consent of Germany, met with emphatic denial in official circles here. A person in a position to speak authoritatively on this subject gave two basic reasons why in his opinion such an arrangement would be impossible.

The dual monarchy is bound to Germany by indissoluble ties, and has assumed such obligations that it is helpless until released by Germany, said this authority. "Furthermore the Russian attitude as announced at the beginning of the war was that all Slavs must be freed from the German yoke. Therefore, Russia's demands are such that if the dual monarchy should accede to them its action would be suicidal. Austro-Hungary's consent to separate peace is not at all likely until it reaches the point of utter exhaustion."

Inhabitants Flee from Cracow.

WARSAW, Russian Poland, Dec. 16.—Arrivals here from Cracow report that the civil authorities of the Austrian fortress have gone to Vienna and that the middle class population is fleeing into Hungary.

Gangs of workmen and soldiers are said to be busy preparing entrenchments and barricades of all descriptions. Art treasures have been taken to places of safety and the museums and schools have been converted into hospitals.

The newspapers of Cracow have suspended publication and the absence of news is expected to be increasing the alarm of the inhabitants.

RUSSIA EXPLAINS TWO MOVEMENTS

Retirement from Vicinity of Lodz and Cracow Part of Its Strategic Plan.

DEFENSE LINE STRENGTHENED

Scheme is to Conserve Army to Offset the German Plan of Fling Movement to Wear Out the Russians.

PETROGRAD (Via London), Dec. 16.—An ex-minister of the Russian cabinet, explaining the military situation, in an interview stated that public opinion solidly endorsed the decision of the Russian general staff recently announced regarding the discontinuance of the Russian attacks in the region of the Austrian fortress of Cracow and the yielding of Lodz to the Germans. The ex-minister said: "It is now apparent that the Austro-German aim is not the taking or holding of certain towns, but by a continuous harassing of the Russian flanks and by means of their extensive railroad system, to throw troops at various points here and there in an attempt to weaken and tire out our army."

Plan to Conserve Army.

"Hence the Russians decided to straighten the line, abandoning all places outside of that line, no matter how important or how populous. The Russian plan is to conserve the Russian forces, rather than to hold geographical points. This explains why, despite the new Austrian offensive from the Carpathians and the German attempt between the Vistula river and Lodz, great life-sacrificing battles were not reported." The Army Messenger publishes a series of communications from the front as follows: "On the front of Lodz and low violent German attacks have had no success. Our troops have repulsed the Germans, causing them to suffer great losses. "South of Cracow the enemy attempted between the 12th and 14th of December to oppose our offensive by strengthening his positions. On the 15th the enemy debouched in large numbers from the pass of Dukla and attempted to descend the slopes on the north side of the Carpathians. Our troops, after a strong resistance, repulsed the enemy."

Car Leaves Caucasus.

Official announcement is made that Emperor Nicholas, having finished his tour of inspection of the Russian army fronts in the Caucasus, left that region on December 15.

A communication from the staff of the army in the Caucasus, dated December 15, says that recent engagements of the Russian forces have been insignificant.

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Ammons Wants Constabulary to Put Down Strife

DENVER, Colo., Dec. 16.—Governor E. M. Ammons, on the stand before the federal commission on industrial relations in the Colorado coal miners' strike investigation today, said he favored the establishment of a state constabulary to put down civil strife. He declared he intended to fight for the introduction of such a system in Colorado.

The governor said he did not believe he could have handled the strike situation otherwise than he did. He said that because the strike agitation had come from outside the state he had no apologies to make for calling upon the federal government to aid in keeping order.

Governor Ammons was followed on the stand by Attorney General Fred Furber, John R. Lawson, Colorado member of the executive board of the United Mine Workers of America, was excused from testifying because he is under indictments charging nineteen criminal charges. He read a statement in which he said he had desired to testify, but that his attorney had advised against that course.

Lawson's statement contained a plea to President Wilson that he send Seth Low of the conciliation board, recently appointed by the president, to John D. Rockefeller, sr., to urge that the coal operators accept the federal mediation plan endorsed by the president and already accepted by the miners.

German Warships Attack the Forts Along Tees Bay

REDCAR, York, England, Dec. 16.—(Via London)—Heavy firing was heard off the coast here between 8 and 8:20 a. m. today. The forms of three cruisers could be discerned looming out of the haze and the flashes of artillery fire could be easily observed from the Redcar promenade.

The people of Redcar sought the water front, but they were driven back from the promenade by the military authorities to a point beyond the zone of danger.

It appeared from here as if the hostile warships were attacking the forts on Tees bay. The cannonading was kept up for more than half an hour, when the booming of guns gradually grew less.

During the height of the bombardment as many as half a dozen flashes of guns were counted within the space of two minutes.

Redcar is a seaside resort in the North Riding of Yorkshire, ten miles to the south of Hartlepool. It has a population of about 8,000.

Americans in Turkey Are Not in Danger

BOSTON, Mass., Dec. 16.—The following telegram from Secretary Bryan was received today by the American board of commissioners for foreign missions, in reply to an inquiry regarding the safety of American missionaries in Turkey:

"The latest reports from Constantinople indicate that American institutions and American citizens are not in danger. At present conditions are somewhat disturbed in the interior. So far no report has been received of violence toward American citizens."

OVER 100 MEXICANS ARE PUT TO DEATH

Scores Upon Scores Secretly Executed in Capital, Many Victims Being Officials.

WASHINGTON IS DISAPPOINTED

United States Will Do Nothing to Protest Against Wholesale Butchery, but High Officials Are Very Much Grieved.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16.—Between 100 and 150 Mexicans, many of them once prominent officials, have been secretly executed in Mexico City within the last few days, according to an official report which reached the United States government today from one of its agents there. Just who ordered the executions has not been disclosed, nor are any of the names of those put to death known.

Except for the executions, which are understood, according to the report, to be happening daily, conditions in the city itself are quiet and Provisional President Gutierrez with the allied Villa and Zapata forces is maintaining order. No foreigners have been injured or intimidated and business conditions are described as improving in the capital.

As the American government has taken the position that it will not interfere in the disputes among the Mexicans themselves, it was not believed here that there will be any remonstrance from Washington about the wholesale execution of political prisoners unless foreigners are annoyed. The reports, however, were said to have deeply disappointed high officials, who had expected that general confiscation and arrests would cease with the entry of the Gutierrez government.

Further demonstration was made by the government today of its determination not to tolerate continued firing by the Mexican factions at Naco, Sonora, into American territory.

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Austrians Lose Two Entire Army Corps in Servian Battles

ROME, Dec. 16.—Particulars received here from Nish regarding the fighting in Servia, emphasize what is termed the enormous defeat inflicted by the Servians on the Austrian army. More than two entire army corps are said to have been lost in dead, wounded and prisoners.

The soldiers captured include 5,000 Austrian soldiers of Italian nationality, whom Servia is reported to be ready to send to Italy if the latter wishes. Almost all these prisoners belong to infantry regiments recruited from the district of Pola.

Descriptions of the hardships suffered by the Austrians now in the hands of the Servians are heartrending. When taken prisoners most of them, it is said, had been without food for from forty-eight to seventy-two hours. They say that several of their comrades died of exhaustion and cold.

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