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PRESIDENT TAKES OVER RAILROADS FRIDAY NOON

GERMANS VIOLATE RUSS ARMISTICE; TRANSFER TROOPS GERMANS VIOLATE RUSS ARMISTICE; TRANSFER TROOPS BOLSHEVIKI POWER BEGINS TO WANE; RED TROOPS BALK; OPPOSITION IS GROWING SECRETARY M'ADOO DIRECTOR GENERAL OF GIGANTIC SYSTEM

Enemy Infantry Inactive as Hindenburg Awaits More Reinforcements Before Making Attack; Artillery Fire is Heavy; Italians Retake Lost Positions on Col Del Rosso.

(By Associated Press.)

London, Dec. 26.—The Russo-German peace negotiations which were to have been resumed on Monday after a postponement to give the Germans time to formulate their reply to the Russian terms, were again delayed for one day, an Exchange Telegraph dispatch from Petrograd reports. The dispatch also says the Germans have asked for a further postponement until January 24.

(By Associated Press.)

While their guns bombard the western front, the Germans are taking troops from the eastern front for use elsewhere, despite the provision of the Russo-German armistice prohibiting such action. The artillery activity in France has been moderate over most of the front and more violent on the right bank of the Meuse, northeast of Verdun, the scene of the German attack nearly two years ago.

WAITS REINFORCEMENTS.

German infantry has not been active and it is probable that Field Marshal von Hindenburg is waiting for more reinforcements before making his heralded attack. Russian advice telling of the German withdrawals in the east add that some of the troops are being taken to the Rumanian front. Rumania is not taking part in the peace negotiations and the Ukraine, which lies beyond Moldavia and Bessarabia, is opposed to the Bolsheviks.

FRENCH MAKE RAID.

South of Juvincourt, in the Rheims sector of Champagne, the French have carried out a raid into the German lines and brought back prisoners. On the British portion of the front there have been raids in addition to the artillery duel, but no large operations are yet indicated.

On the northern Italian front, the Austro-German tactics appear to be to strike alternately at vital points on either side of the Brenna. Checked at Monte Asolone last week, the enemy has struck toward the Franzella valley, west of the river. After two days of bitter fighting, the Italians have regained possession of lost positions on the Col Del Rosso, west of the river, and have attacked the Austro-German positions on Monte Perina, east of the river.

Huns Gain Prisoners.

Berlin, claims the capture of 9,000 prisoners, the gaining of the Col Del Rosso, which later was lost to the Italians.

Leon Trotzky, the Bolshevik foreign minister, has protested to the Germans against the transference of troops from the eastern front, but also has ordered Russian factories to stop the manufacture of munitions. He did not indicate whether his government would take any other steps against German violation of the armistice.

Germans Delay Answer.

Peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk apparently are making little progress. The Germans have delayed their answer to the Bolshevik terms and it is reported that the conference will be transferred to Stockholm shortly. In the meantime the majority party in the constituent assembly, the social revolutionists, has convoked the assembly to meet January 2 despite Bolshevik disapproval.

German savagery has been called officially to the attention of the American troops in France. An American sentry has been found with his throat cut, and an official bulletin says "he must have been so killed after capture" by a force of Germans which surprised him. Information of enemy terrorism in driving women and children from their homes in the occupied sections of France and Belgium to make room for German troops, soldiers and war material also has been given the American troops.

The Weather

Table with weather data for Omaha, including temperature, wind, and precipitation for various times of day.

Table with comparative local record for weather data from 1917 to 1914.

Dispatches From Russian Capital Indicate Influence of Ruling Party is Declining; Lack of Authority, Reluctance of Population to Work and Scarcity of Foodstuffs Are Reasons Ascribed.

(By Associated Press.)

London, Dec. 26.—There have been occasional assertions in Petrograd dispatches that the influence and power of the Bolsheviks was waning, but never with such unanimity as in special dispatches dated from the Russian capital Sunday and printed today.

DEFECTION GROWS.

Nearly all make the point in one form or other that defection from the workmen's and soldiers' organizations is growing constantly.

Among causes alleged are general lack of authority, the increase in drunkenness, the reluctance of the population to work and the scarcity of foodstuffs. The main desire of the soldier is said to be for peace.

The correspondents cite instances of Bolshevik troops refusing to march, declining to attack the Ukrainians and permitting the Cossacks to disarm them without resistance. Fighting, it is said, is the last thing they are willing or intend to do.

A hostile spirit is reported to survive among the Baltic sailors and the Red Guard, but the former are not numerous enough to counter the Ukrainians and the Red Guard is largely untrained. It is reported, therefore, that war against the Ukrainians probably will not materialize on any serious scale.

Bolshevik leaders, the Petrograd correspondent of the Morning Post says, appear to be becoming conscious of hopeless failure, while the correspondent of the Daily News writes:

German Hirelings.

"There is a tremendous and growing opposition to the Bolsheviks among all classes. Men who formerly supported them are turning against them and 'German hirelings' is a common term of denunciation. There is much talk of meeting the present state of terror with counter measures and bomb throwing. None of the suggestions as the only method of exerting pressure on the Bolsheviks. This is not merely idle talk, as those who say it are those who already have thrown bombs."

Reports of civil war activities, however, continue to be received. The Bolshevik government declares definitely that its troops have captured Khar'kov, Nicolaiev and are threatening the Ukrainian hold on Odessa. The Cossacks report the retreat of their forces from the Donets basin. None of the reports, however, is more precise than recent reports of a similar nature. In the meantime nothing more is heard of the efforts at reconciliation between the Bolsheviks and the Ukrainians.

It appears that the Bolshevik commissioners are trying, although vainly, to shift some of the discontented military units from the capital. A Reuter dispatch from Petrograd says the Proabrazhensky regiment has declared its disbelief in the intention of the constituent assembly and has refused to relinquish guard of the Tauride palace until the assembly meets. The Semenovskiy guard regiment has resolved not to arrest members of the constituent assembly no matter what orders it receives.

Delegates Return.

In consequence of the postponement of the peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk because the Germans were not ready to reply to the Russian terms, the Russian delegates are reported to be returning to Petrograd, where apparently they are expected to await the arrival of the delegation from the enemy powers which is to participate in a conference for discussion of the political aspects of an eventual peace conference.

Various explanations are offered in Petrograd dispatches of the reports of German concentration of troops in the southwest. One suggestion is that part of these forces will be sent to Asia Minor. It is predicted a large force will be retained in the southwest to assure possession of the valuable Russian harvest.

A Reuter dispatch from Petrograd reports the arrest and imprisonment in the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul of M. Vysinegradsky and M. (Continued on Page Two, Column One.)

RED CROSS TO CALL NO HALT IN BIG DRIVE

Tired But Happy Workers Will Storm Trenches Until 80,000 Memberships Are Obtained.

No halt in the Red Cross drive until the 80,000-mark is reached is the spirit among tired but happy workers in Red Cross headquarters, jubilant over Omaha's record in piling up between 76,000 and 77,000 memberships, the campaign committee still believes it possible to double Omaha's original quota of 40,000.

The executive committee is going to resolve itself into a hustling committee to "hustle" memberships from large downtown establishments which did not make as satisfactory a showing as the campaign committee desired, owing to the Christmas rush.

Returns Are Incomplete.

A number of labor unions and many canvassers have yet to turn in their returns and reports in the county are still unrecorded.

On the basis of the government census, which places Douglas county's population as 190,000, 46 per cent of the county is enrolled in the Red Cross society.

Omaha Wins Wagers.

Henry Dooley, campaign manager, was counting the money cities who entered the friendly contest for membership owed the Omaha chapter. The wager was \$100 for the city which would better Omaha's record per population. Mr. Dooley says Denver, Dallas, Des Moines and Toledo each owe Omaha \$100. Minneapolis and Kansas City evaded pledging themselves in the contest.

The number of people in poor or moderate circumstances who came into headquarters to take out their memberships, 500 of them every day, is the big outstanding feature of the campaign, according to the chairman.

"It shows how truly the spirit of the people is with the Red Cross society," he said.

Totals on Omaha's response will be wired to national headquarters today. Tokens of appreciation to some of the workers were given Christmas day.

State Director Judson's office reports the following showing in the state: Lexington, 724 members in the first three days; Grand Island, 5,000; Pender, 1,200. Judge Curtis L. Day, chairman of Thurston county, wires he "will register the rest of the population resurrection morning."

Mrs. A. O. Carnuel of Center, Neb., reports 100 per cent for the Center chapter; L. B. Higland of Alliance, 750; H. H. Andrews of Alliance, 7,000; and Miss Mary Maxwell of Dakota county wires the town of Dakota City is 100 per cent and the entire county is clear over the quota.

U.S. MAY POOL ALL COAL TO SELL IT AT A JUST PRICE

Private Consumer to Be Served Before Government, Fuel Administrator Tells Senate Committee at Probe.

Washington, Dec. 26.—Fuel Administrator Garfield told the senate investigating committee today that if the war continued very long, the government would be compelled to pool coal and sell it at reasonable prices.

Some coal operators, he said, were making the greatest profits in their history, but he considered high prices a stimulus to the great production the war demands.

The fuel administrator said he saw little relief in prospect for the railroads until their operation was centralized.

Garfield Testifies.

Questioned by Senator Kenyon, Dr. Garfield said his organization is composed of about 200 persons, chief of whom are engineering experts, lawyers, coal producers and John P. White, president of the United Mine Workers of America. He proceeded to give at length details of how complaints against prices are handled. Forty such complaints of operators had been investigated, he said, and each one had required services of engineers, expert accountants and lawyers. Dr. Garfield said his chief advisers were volunteers and worked without salaries or expense accounts.

Private consumers have felt the shortage because the government has come first in its demand, but that rule has been changed in the last few days, Dr. Garfield said.

People First.

"We are giving it to the people first now," he said. "With a discontented people we could not make much progress in the war."

Conditions are much better now that the severe cold wave has passed and preparations are being made for the future, he said.

"I can guarantee that we have the situation well in hand," Dr. Garfield declared.

Dr. Garfield said he did not want to place blame for lack of transportation on anyone, but did he want to try to shift blame that might be attached to his administration. He added that it was impossible for the railroads to cope with the situation.

Traffic Responsible.

"Coal is responsible for one-half the congested traffic and thousands of cars are being backed up at bottle-neck points through which the railroads have endeavored to move large amounts," he said. "The only thing (Continued on Page Two, Column One.)"

Glum Looks Change to Smiles In Ranks of Seventh Regiment

Men of the Seventh regiment are congratulating themselves. The former "unlucky" guards are happy once more. Luck of the Seventh has changed, and once again it is to be known as the "Lucky Seventh." For the powers that be at Washington have corrected certain little defects and the regiment is about to receive federal recognition.

Dodge Troops Denied Rails on Xmas Leave

Des Moines, Ia., Dec. 26.—Several hundred soldiers from Camp Dodge returned today from Christmas leaves spent at home, many having been compelled to make the entire trip, in some cases several hundred miles, by automobile.

Christmas leaves permitting use of steam transportation were granted only 5 per cent of the men in camp, and others who went home were required to sign affidavits that they would not use the steam railroads on their journey.

More than 200 men motored to Minneapolis, and other parties went to Moline, Quincy, Ill.; Peoria, Ia.; St. Paul, Minn., and other points.



WILLIAM G. McADOO. Photo by Egan, N.Y.

SENATE ORDERS HEAVY WOOLENS FOR U.S. TROOPS

Major General O'Ryan Gives Investigating Committee First Hand Information of Conditions at Front.

Washington, Dec. 26.—First hand information about the equipment and training of America's fighting men in France and in training camps at home was given the senate military committee today by Major General John E. O'Ryan, commanding the New York National Guard division at Camp Wadsworth, Spartanburg, S. C., recently returned from an observation tour abroad.

Before the general took the stand the committee, on resuming its investigation of war preparations after a short Christmas recess, sent to the War department a resolution urging that immediate steps be taken without regard to departmental routine to supply deficiencies of winter clothing to men in the camps.

The action was based upon late reports reaching the committee as well as upon evidence heard last week.

Most of General O'Ryan's testimony, particularly that referring to conditions at the front was heard in executive session. He was questioned for three hours with the door closed, but the public was given an opportunity to hear him for an hour during which he discussed chiefly the situation at home.

Not Equipped for Fighting.

General O'Ryan said his men were adequately equipped for training, though not for fighting and that he would like to see them have two more months of training before they went to the front. He did the committee that the great need of the war was artillery and recommended that troops abroad be supplied with winter clothing of heavier quality.

The resolution offered by Senator McKellar of Tennessee, declares that upon "unquestioned proof" there is a shortage of at least 20,000 overcoats and 47,000 woolen blouses in nine national army cantonments.

Its adoption followed the testimony last week of Quartermaster General Sharpe, who admitted shortage of winter equipment in some camps, but said all necessary supplies have been shipped and would be soon received. The resolution says:

Cites Lack of Woolens.

"It appearing to the committee from unimpeached proof adduced here that many enlisted men in Camp Wheeler, Shelby, Kearney, Div. Jackson, Grant, Custer, Beauregard and in the camp at Fort Worth, (Continued on Page Five, Column Five.)"

President to Ask Guarantees of Congress Promising Railroads Will Be Maintained in Good Repair and Complete Equipment; Fixed Net Operating Income Also to be Assured.

(By Associated Press.)

Washington, Dec. 26.—President Wilson announced tonight that he will assume possession and operation of every railroad in the continental United States at noon Friday, December 28, and that he had appointed Secretary McAdoo director general of railroads.

Secretary McAdoo, whose appointment is made by formal proclamation, is expected to direct the unification and operation of the roads through their present managements. He will retain his place in the cabinet as secretary of the treasury.

ASK GUARANTEES.

In a statement accompanying his proclamation the president announced that when congress re-assembled he would ask that definite guarantees be given that the railroad properties will be maintained in as good repair and as complete equipment as when taken over, and that the net operating income in each case shall equal the average net operating income of the three years preceding June 30, 1917.

The railroads will be taken over under war authority already granted by congress, through the secretary of war.

MATTER OF NECESSITY.

The president's statement follows: "I have exercised the powers over the transportation systems of the country which were granted me by the act of congress of August, 1916, because it has become imperatively necessary for me to do so.

"This is a war of resources no less than of men, perhaps even more than of men, and it is necessary for the complete mobilization of our resources that the transportation systems of the country should be organized and employed under a single authority and a simplified method of coordination which has not proved possible under private management and control.

"The committee of railway executives who have been co-operating with the government in this all-important matter have done the utmost that it was possible for them to do; have done it with patriotic zeal and with great ability; but there were difficulties that they could neither escape nor neutralize.

"Complete unity of administration in the present circumstances involves upon us a grave responsibility, and the committee was of course without power or authority to re-arrange charges or effect proper compensations or adjustments of earnings.

"Several roads which were willingly and with admirable public spirit accepting the orders of the committee have already suffered from these circumstances and should not be required to suffer further. In mere fairness to them the full authority of the government must be submitted. The government itself will thereby gain an immense increase of efficiency in the conduct of the war and of the innumerable activities upon which its successful conduct depends.

"The public interest must be first served, and, in addition, the financial interests of the government and the financial interests of the railways must be brought under a common direction.

"The financial operations of the railways need not then interfere with the borrowings of the government and they themselves can be conducted at a greater advantage. Investors in railway securities may rest assured that their rights and interests will be as scrupulously looked after by the government as they could be by the directors of the several railway systems. I immediately upon reassembly of congress I shall recommend that these definite guarantees be given."

"Kept in Perfect Repair. "First, of course, that the railway properties will be maintained during the period of federal control in as good repair and as complete equipment as when taken over by the government, and, second, that the roads shall receive a net operating income equal in each case to the average net income of the three years preceding June 30, 1917, and I am entirely confident that the congress will be disposed in this case, as in others, to see (Continued on Page Two, Column Three.)"

When the leading officials of the railroads operating in and out of Omaha were informed that President Wilson will assume control of and operate the railroads of the United States, Friday noon with Secretary McAdoo, as director general, they were as numb as oysters.

Not one of them would express an opinion relative to what this means, so far as the transportation lines are concerned.

"I am not saying a word," was the universal response of railroad presidents, general managers and superintendents.

One official high up in railroad circles, mumbled a little, however, and went so far as to say:

"I am not fool enough to talk on this subject," and then apparently forgetting himself, added:

"I am not saying a word; there is nothing to say at this time."

Cleveland, O., Dec. 26.—A plot to poison Red Cross bandages and spread wholesale death among the soldiers of America and its allies has been exposed and frustrated here.

Revelations of the conspiracy were made today when it became known that Department of Justice agents were hunting the perpetrators of the deed.

Three thousand four hundred surgical dressings rolled by patriotic women in Toledo were infected with a mysterious greenish poison while in transit between Toledo and Cleveland. Immediately every one of the 3,400 bandages was burned.

The poisoned bandages were part of the periodical shipments received at the local headquarters of the lake division of the Red Cross headquarters in other cities in the division, which comprises Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky.

Blame Labor Troubles for Delay in Ship Building (By Associated Press.) Washington, Dec. 26.—Labor troubles were blamed for much of the delay in the government's ship building program by Raymond B. Stevens, vice chairman of the shipping board, testifying today in the senate committee's investigation.

Since the United States went to war, Mr. Stevens said, ship yards have lost a total of 536,992 working days by strike and other disputes. This, he figured, represents the work of 20,000 men for a month. Happily, said Mr. Stevens, the situation is improving by reason of measures taken by the board to adjust differences wherever they arise.