

# CHIEF CONCERN OF ITALY'S SITUATION IS MORAL ASPECT

Military Side of Question, Even Should Italy Be Crushed, of Less Moment Than Mental Effect.

Italian Disaster Is Direct Result of Russia's Collapse, Releasing German Troops From East Front.

By Frank H. Simonds  
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Since I closed last article in Italy have moved very rapidly. In the present article, written November 17, I shall endeavor to show the shadow what may happen, and there are three different sets of circumstances to be considered: First, a complete German victory, carrying with it a decisive defeat of Italy; which will break the moral power of the Italian people; second, the successful rallying of the Italians at some selected line covering northern Italy; third, the resumption of the offensive by the Italians after a strategic retreat, following an initial disaster which might repeat the familiar history of the Marne campaign.

Now, to take up the first consideration, namely, a complete Italian disaster, the situation is this: At the outset of the present German operation the Italians occupied a long front covering more than half the circumference of a circle, one end resting on the Adriatic, just east of the mouth of the Isonzo, and the other upon the Adige and Lago di Garda, just north of Verona. On a front of something like 300 miles less than 50 miles was active, and only in the 30 miles between the head of the Adriatic and the bend of the Isonzo north of the Bainsizza plateau was there any serious operation going forward. The Italians had concentrated all their effort on this restricted front and had been endeavoring to push ahead, with Laibach as their ultimate objective.

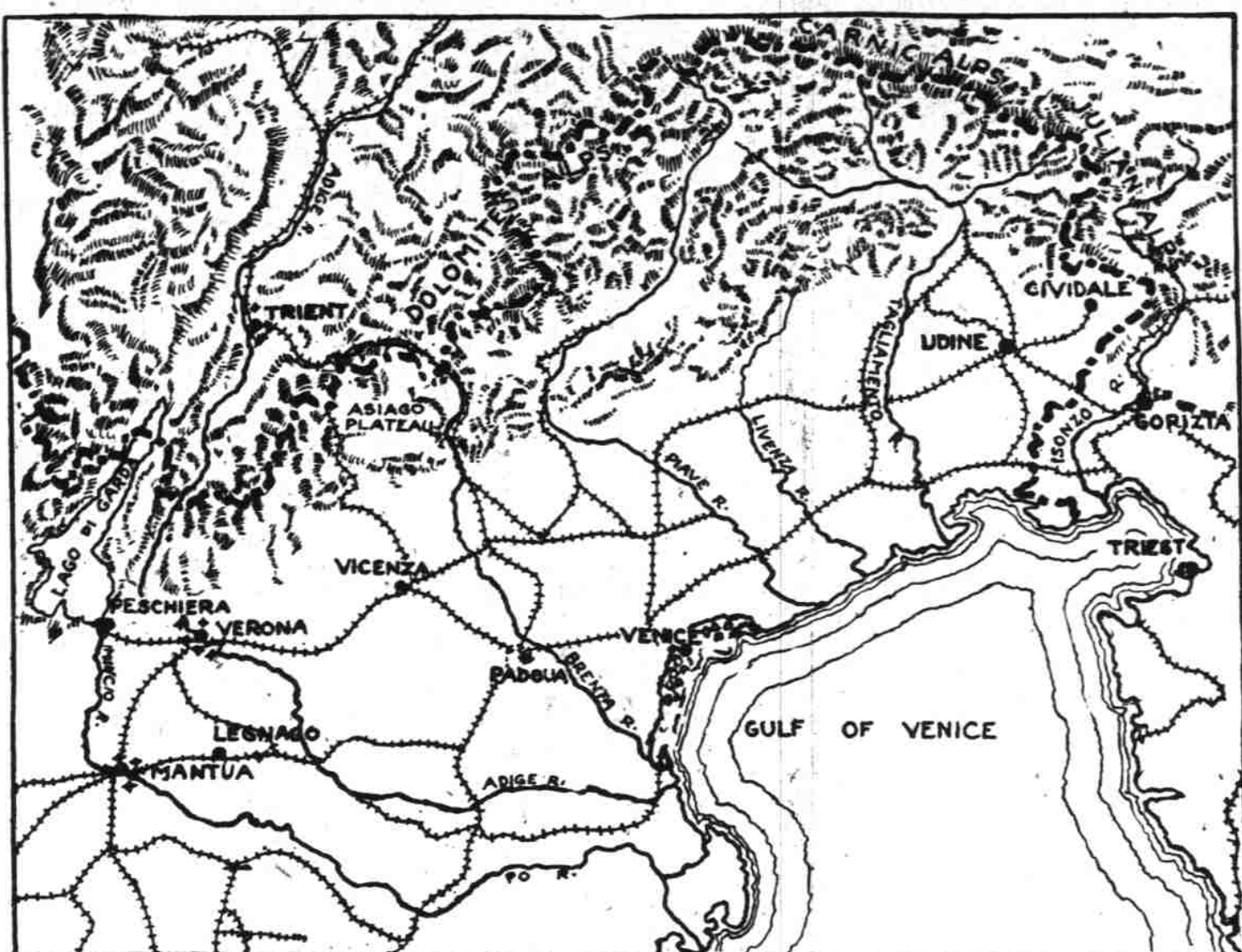
**Where Germans Broke Through**  
The German attack on the Upper Isonzo broke through the Italian lines north of the front on which they had concentrated most of their guns and all their best troops. Owing to the configuration of the front, the German troops which penetrated the Italian line were nearer to the vital lines of Italian communication than Cadorna's main force about Gorizia. The immediate problem then was whether Cadorna's main force about Gorizia could get west before the German assaulting columns came south and cut their line of retreat. Could the Italians accomplish this, the next natural rallying line was at the Tagliamento river, which comes down out of the Alps, runs straight south across the Italian Plain and enters the Adriatic west of the mouth of the Isonzo. Cadorna did not get all his troops back. He seems to have lost something like 200,000 men and an enormous number of guns. The Germans, on the other hand, did not succeed in enveloping the main Italian force, and by Saturday or Sunday at the latest—that is, by November 4—the Italians were back behind the Tagliamento river. This stream supplied a front which offered advantages for a defense, provided the Italian army could be reconcentrated and sufficient artillery could be massed to maintain it.

**Tagliamento Position Forced**  
But by Monday, November 5, it was plain that the Tagliamento position could not be held, and within 24 hours Rome and Berlin agreed that German troops were across this river and the Italian armies were retreating. Now, the German strategy must consist in a rapid pursuit of the armies which were defeated and have retired across the Italian plain. Having won his victories at Jena and Auerstadt, Napoleon transformed these victories into one of the most complete routs in military history by his pursuit of the beaten Prussians. Within a few days after these battles all Prussian military power ceased to exist. Germany, with her own history in mind, is likely to make a determined effort to prevent an Italian stand and to transform the defeat into a rout.

So much for the first consideration. Now as to the second: The Italians have lost the line of the Isonzo in their first disaster and either through weakness or in accordance with Cadorna's plans have surrendered the Tagliamento. They may now retire behind the Livorno river, about a dozen miles west of the Tagliamento, or behind the Piave, a similar distance west of the Livorno, or behind the Brenta, an equal distance from the Piave, or behind the Adige. But it is to be recognized that if they retire behind the Piave they will have to surrender Venice, and that if they retire behind the Brenta, Vicenza and Padua would come under the range of Austro-German guns, while if they go back as far as Adige, then Verona will be equally exposed to bombardment and destruction.

The Piave river is larger than the Tagliamento and comes down from

## MAP OF THE ITALIAN BATTLE FRONT



Before the Teuton attack came Italians occupied a 300 mile front from the Adriatic to Lago di Garda, north of Verona, of which less than 50 miles was active.

the Carnic Alps, receiving many streams from the Dolomites.

If one may hazard a guess, my judgment is that the Italian army will make a desperate effort to stand at the Piave river. We come finally to the possibility that the Italians will endeavor to repeat the exploit of Joffre, retreating until their armies are concentrated and reinforced by their French and British allies, and then, when the Austrians and the Germans have been drawn a long way from their lines of communication and supplies, strike back in the hope of transforming a disaster into a victory. The chances of this seem slight. The Italian army has suffered a disaster far in excess of that which the French army suffered in the various battles during the third week of August, 1914.

**Significance Interpreted**  
No one should attempt to disguise the gravity of the military situation so far as it affects Italy. We shall have for many days now to face the possibility that Italy will be put out of the war. It is unlikely, it is improbable. But it will remain a possibility until the situation has reached an equilibrium again. But once more it is essential to recognize that even the total collapse of Italy would not, on the military side, greatly endanger the allied prospects, because no considerable portion of Austrian troops could be brought to the western field owing to the exhaustion of Austria.

**Result of Russian Collapse**  
The Italian disaster is the direct result of the Russian military situation. The Russian armies have quit fighting and quit working. They have "walked out," and the result has been that the Germans have been able to take troops from the Eastern front and throw them against Italy. The war henceforth is a war between the western allies and Germany. It will be won by the western allies if they are not now conquered morally by German successes in Italy. These successes have a limited value on the military side, but on the moral side they may have a fatal effect, unless the American, French and British peoples now display their spirit—the spirit the north in 1864, the spirit of the French at the Marne fifty years later.

## Penrose No Longer Regular Republican, Asserts Vare

Opposition to Vare Faction in Pennsylvania Brings Wrath Upon Head of Senator—Policy of Shipping Board to Remain Unchanged.

Washington, Nov. 17.—(WASHINGTON BUREAU OF THE JOURNAL)—Senator Boies Penrose, standpatter unmatched and boss incomparable, now stands accused of being a reformer and a traitor to the Republican party. The indictment has been framed by the regulars of Pennsylvania, and was formally stated in Washington a few days ago by Congressman William S. Vare of Philadelphia, who announced that Penrose no longer can be considered a Republican.

The Pennsylvania pot is boiling fast but it remains to be seen whether Penrose will suffer seriously from the support he gave in the recent local campaign to the rebellion against the regular party organization. A new precedent was set, however, when Penrose joined with leading Democrats of Philadelphia in fighting the Republican organization ticket.

**Vare Faction Heads Penrose Out**  
The Vare faction, which was in the majority, asserts that Penrose has forfeited his right to appear in Republican councils. Penrose has talked the same way in the past concerning others who supported reform tickets, so why should not the same measure be applied to him? The friends of the big boss, however, point out that the November election was local, and no penalty can be inflicted for refusal to support the regular nominees.

The latest reorganization of forces in the shipping board is in the direction of more centralized control with the shipping board itself given closer supervision over the construction of ships. Admiral Capps remains in the

position of general manager of the emergency fleet corporation, but he is short of much of the responsibility.

**Capps Relieved of Worry**  
As a matter of fact Admiral Capps was not in condition to bear the strain thrown upon him in looking after the affairs of the fleet corporation. He is well along in years, and his health is not robust. His navy training as a construction officer did not help in cutting red tape. Differences with the shipping board developed and became a source of worry.

**Policy Remains Unchanged**  
The changes just made do not forecast any particular change of policy in the construction of ships. There is the same attitude toward wooden ships—they are not wanted. The shipping board officials have reached the conclusion that construction of wooden ships merely draws labor away from the steel ship yards, where the need is greater, because steel ships are more speedy and of greater capacity.

The effort in the new organization has been to subdivide the construction work under engineers who are specially qualified and of business men who are accustomed to having things done in the most direct way. This

family team not to be overlooked is composed of J. P. Tumulty, secretary to the president and Mrs. Tumulty.

**Lack of Hotel Accommodations**  
Lack of hotel accommodations is interfering with some of the plans for conventions in Washington during the winter, although this is not apparently bothering the suffragists. Officers of the national rivers and harbors congress which was also to meet here during the first week of congress, are considering postponement until a later date when one or two large new hotels will be ready to receive guests.

**Fletcher Is Restive**  
Senator Duncan W. Fletcher of Florida, who has been interested in the problem of direct marketing between producer and consumer, is of the opinion that the department of agriculture, as represented by the bureau of markets, is not disposed to take hold of the subjects as he might.

Some time ago Senator Fletcher secured the adoption of an item in one of the supply bills for experiments to be conducted at three selected places for extensions of the parcel post to determine what could be done by operation of special trucks for the collection of garden and orchard products and quick delivery to the consumer. Arrangements were practically completed, he says, for making these experiments at Philadelphia, St. Louis and Jacksonville, Fla. Then the matter was referred to the bureau of mar-

kets, and nothing has since been heard of it. The experiments were intended to demonstrate the best methods in the use of containers, the rates that would have to be charged, and the machinery necessary to bring the producer and consumer into closer communication.

**Bureau of Markets Criticized**  
"For some reason," says the Florida senator, "the department seems hostile to efforts along these lines." The tendency of government bureaus is to frown upon innovations which may decrease their control. While the bureau of markets has no doubt done good work it has failed to come down to brass tacks on the solution of the most practical problems."

Senator Fletcher believes the next session of congress should give serious consideration to the marketing plan proposed by David Lubin, the noted economist and publicist, who favors the organization of a national chamber of agriculture, whereby the farmers could organize themselves in small units, with county, state and national organizations above, believing this would lead to complete information as to market conditions and better distribution of foodstuffs.

French electricians have built a dynamo that also can be used as a motor that weighs scarcely one fifth of an ounce.

## Meat Prices Will Decrease, Promise

Head of Special Committee of Food Administration Declares Regulation Will Have Effect.

Chicago, Nov. 17.—(U. P.)—Meat prices will come down, Joseph P. Cotton, head of the meat committee of the food administration, today declared, as the result of federal regulation of the profits of the packing industry.

After weeks of conferences the regulations for profits have been determined, he said. They are now awaiting the approval of Food Administrator Hoover and probably will be made early next week.

"Prices of meats will be slightly cheaper," Cotton said. "I think it will be accepted in two ways: By putting the market on a stable basis, where we will know what the price to the producer is, and by limiting the packers so we know what margins they make."

"We do not intend to destroy competition but eliminate those who sell at less than cost to secure profits at further date by keeping the trade."



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