

Forty-fifth Year. Daily—Tenth Year.

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NO. 307

BAR AMERICANS FROM OCCUPYING INTERIOR TOWNS

Carranza Authorities Request Troops Not to Take Possession of Mexican Centers—Would Be Regarded as Breach of Sovereignty and Break in Traditions.

EL PASO, Texas, March 18.—Francisco Villa is in the neighborhood of Las Cruces, 110 miles south of Casas Grandes, according to information received here today by General Gabriel Gavira, Carranza commander at Juarez.

EL PASO, Texas, March 18.—A new problem faced the American troops in Mexico as they entered the region where Villa's trail is scarcely three days old. This problem came, not from the Villa chase, but from the attitude of the Carranza authorities that they did not wish the Americans to occupy any Mexican city.

On the border, at least, this was regarded as the most serious development in the expedition to date. If for military reasons the army of General J. J. Pershing should feel compelled to occupy a city, the Americans would be in some danger of crossing the Mexican sense of national pride in one of its strongest attributes. Occupation of a city among Mexican soldiers, and to the masses of the Mexican people, is the sign of sovereignty. Some of the bloody battles of the last four years in Mexico have been fought over cities whose military importance was small, but possession of which, according to the ideas of the Mexican people indicated dominance of that region.

To Preserve Tradition.

Although the Carranza authorities are not giving up their sovereignty, it is a problem with them to break this tradition and permit American armed forces to occupy cities as bases. In making his announcement that he had asked the Americans not to enter or occupy Casas Grandes, the city whose possession means safety to the American Mormon colonists of that region, General Gabriel Gavira, commander at Juarez, expressed no vexation at the presence of the troops in his territory, but he was firm in his announcement that under his present instructions from General Carranza he has no power to modify the orders of his troops against permitting the occupation of cities. The general offered no comment on what he would do provided the American troops occupied a Mexican city.

Dispatches direct from Mexico, and the official announcements from Major-General Funston made it evident today that the two American columns, one from Columbus, N. M., under General Pershing, and the other from Hachita, N. M., under Colonel Dodd, had gotten into close communication with each other and probably had formed an actual junction when a little more than half way on the route to Casas Grandes.

Strategy of Advances.

Something of the strategy of the dash on Villa's trail also was apparent. The Hachita column made its actual start from San Bernardino ranch, which is in the little square of territory, about the size of a large county, where the state of New Mexico.

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DECISIVE HOUR IN WAR IS REACHED

PARIS, March 18.—"We have reached the decisive hour," said Alexandre Ribot, minister of finance, speaking in the chamber of deputies last night on the financial and military situation. "We can say without exaggeration, without illusion and without vain optimism that we now see the end of this horrible war."

LULL REPORTED IN BATTLE ALONG WESTERN FRONT

Germans Make No Attacks Against Verdun—Artillery Duels in Progress—Increasing Military Activity in the Balkans—Aeroplane Battles Between Armies—Raid on Metz.

Since the massed attacks of Thursday night against the village and fort of Vaux, north-east of Verdun, the Germans have not advanced at any point on the defenses of the fortress, Paris announced today. Last night passed without infantry activity and even the artillery action is described as intermittent.

Reports of developments of importance in the other war fields are lacking. There appears to be increasing military activity in the Balkans, however. Heavy troop movements in Bulgaria are reported from Bucharest.

An official statement from Constantinople says Enver Pash, Turkish minister of war, has returned to Constantinople from a trip of inspection to Syria, Palestine and Arabia.

No Infantry Attacks.

PARIS, March 18.—No infantry attacks were made last night in the Verdun region, the war office announced this afternoon. There was intermittent cannonading.

The text of the French official communication reads:

"In the Arzonne region there has been fighting with mines, which resulted to our advantage. To the west of the River Meuse we have directed a concentrated fire on the German trenches in the direction of Hill 265 and also on the Corbeaux wood. To this the enemy did not respond.

"To the east of the Meuse there has been a violent bombardment in the region of Vaux.

"To the northeast of St. Mihiel our long-range artillery bombarded all last night the roadway between Apremont and Vignelles, over which it had been reported that certain regiments of the enemy were marching.

Battles in the Air.

"During the day of yesterday French aviators were active in the region of Verdun. A German aeroplane of the Fokker type was seriously damaged.

"During the night of March 17-18 a group of seventeen French aeroplanes equipped for bombardment threw down fifty-four large caliber shells, forty on the railroad station at Comblans and fourteen on the station at Metz. These shells fell accurately. A number of explosions were observed on the tracks and three fires were set in the Metz railroad station.

"The French machines were subjected to a violent cannonading during this trip, but they all returned undamaged."

German Statement.

BERLIN, March 18.—The fighting activities of both the French and the German armies on the western front were less vigorous yesterday, according to the official statement issued today at the German army headquarters.

The text of the statement follows: "Western theater: Fighting activities on both sides yesterday were less vigorous.

"Eastern theater: Artillery firing on the district on both sides of Lake Narocz was very active. A weak Russian night attack north of Lake Madzil was easily repulsed.

"Balkan theater: Southwest of Lake Doiran unimportant patrol skirmishes developed."

AMERICANS REACH COAST ENROUTE HOME

WASHINGTON, March 18.—Navy department reports today from Vera Cruz say about 200 Americans of Mexico City and other interior points have arrived there, most of them acting upon advices from friends and relatives in the United States urging them to leave Mexico. Conditions at Vera Cruz, the message said, are quiet and many of the Americans, after investigation of reports as to the situation, are returning to their interior.

AMERICANS NOT TO OCCUPY CITIES DURING PURSUIT

Troops Chasing Villa Have No Intention and No Orders to Occupy Any Towns During Their March Into Mexico—Reports From Front Received at Capital Optimistic.

WASHINGTON, March 18.—American troops pursuing Villa and his bandits have no intention and no orders to occupy any cities or towns during their march into Mexico.

This was stated at the White House and war department today after the receipt of a report that General Gavira, the Carranza commander at Juarez, had given notice that General Pershing's troops would not be allowed to occupy Casa Grandes or other towns.

It was declared by administration officials that the pursuit of Villa, being entirely a punitive expedition, had none of the characteristics of an invasion and that there was no object in occupying towns or cities because the American troops will keep constantly on the move.

Officials said today that the situation at Tampico, where uneasiness is said to exist among Americans and other foreigners had no bearing on the pursuit of Villa.

Reports received at both the war and state departments today continued to be optimistic.

Secretary Baker today issued the following statement:

"The reports received directly through military channels, and those sent to this department from other departments of the government, indicate quiet along the entire border except some excitement at Tampico, which is apparently temporary and without cause.

"There are no reports of the expedition available."

The secretary said he would leave Washington today for his home in Cleveland O., and would not return here until Tuesday.

SPEAKER CLARK TAKES FLOOR TO TALK ARMY BILL

WASHINGTON, D. C., March 18.—Speaker Clark abandoned the chair and took the floor in the house today to speak for the administration's army bill. He declared it was as good as could be expected under the circumstances and predicted it would have the general support of the country.

Summing up what he believed to be the view of the American people on the present situation, he said: "They want peace, but not 'peace at any price.'"

"While peace is the normal condition of Americans, and while they love it most fondly and pray for it constantly, they believe thoroughly that there are things worth fighting for.

"They are unalterably opposed, always have been and forever will be, to a large standing army, because while we have never had a big standing army here, they know full well that in other countries huge standing armies have been the instruments of despotism.

"They have no desire or ambition to have our country pose as a great military power and they have no intention of seeing it as helpless as China.

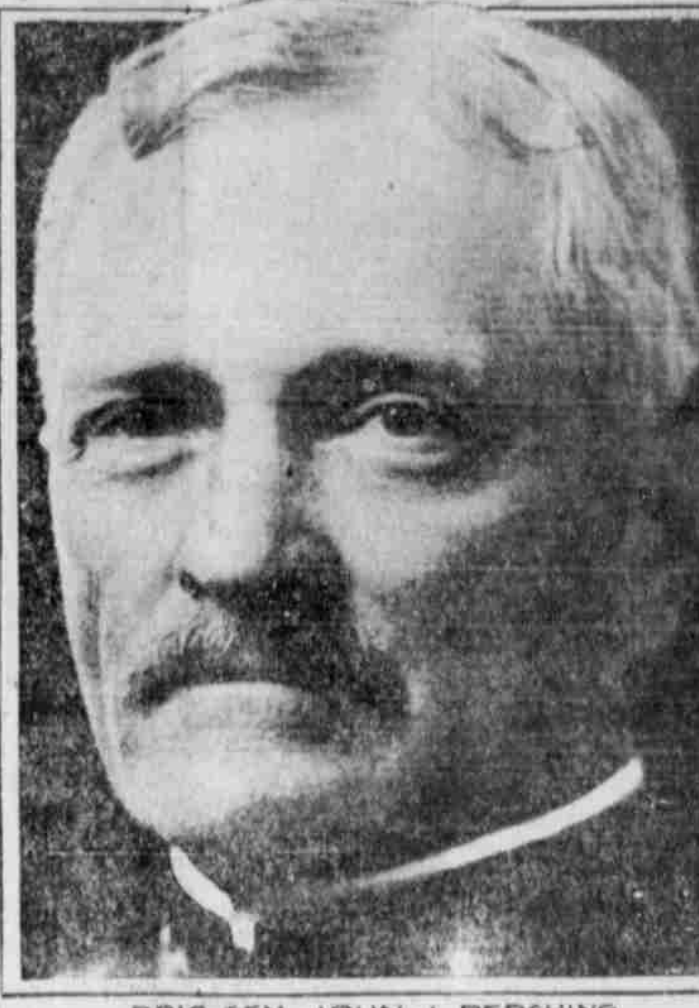
"The average American is in favor of reasonable and adequate preparation by land and sea."

The speaker made no attempt to discuss the bill in detail.

ANOTHER DROP IN PRICE OF FLOUR

PORTLAND, March 18.—Portland millers today announced a drop of 20 cents per barrel on all grades of flour, patents being quoted at \$5.20. Since January 20, the price has fallen forty cents and is attributed to the weakness in wheat prices.

LEADS HUNT FOR MEXICAN BANDIT VILLA



BRIG. GEN. JOHN J. PERSHING

Brigadier-General Pershing is in active charge of the United States soldiers in pursuit of Villa across the border. He is regarded well fitted to lead the man-hunt. He spent several years in action in the Philippines.

VILLA REPORTED VISITING CACHE NEAR NAMIQUIPA

DOUGLAS, Ariz., March 18.—Francisco Villa and a large number of his bandits have been located near San Geronimo, Chihuahua, and are making their way to Namiquipa, in western Chihuahua, near the town of Madera, according to a telegram received here today by Ives Lelevier, consul of the de facto Mexican government. The message was from General Luis Gutierrez, commander of one of the Carranza columns operating near Chihuahua City.

General Gutierrez said that Villa was on route to Namiquipa, ten miles south of Las Cruces, where Villa was located in earlier advices to General Gavira at Juarez, to recover a quantity of ammunition which he left there several months ago.

It was said by local Mexicans that Villa has not less than ten million rounds of ammunition cached in various parts of Chihuahua. These shells and powder were made by Villa, they said, in his Chihuahua munitions factory during last year.

The message from General Gutierrez did not contain any information as to the size of the cache at Namiquipa nor was there any local information concerning the amount of ammunition hidden there.

Lieutenant-Colonel Ince Campbell, in command of the Carranza troops guarding the mountain passes along the Sonora-Chihuahua state line, arrived in Agua Prieta last night and held a conference today with General P. Elias Calles, military governor of Sonora.

STEAMER PALEMBANG REPORTED TORPEDOED

LONDON, March 18.—The steamship Palembang has been torpedoed. All the members of the crew were saved.

There are two steamers of the name Palembang, both Dutch. The one vessel, of 9674 tons gross, was last reported as having passed Gibraltar February 15 from Batavia for Rotterdam.

The other vessel, of 1580 tons gross, was last reported March 10 at Kirkwall from Philadelphia by petroleum for Alesund, Norway.

AUSTRIANS CAPTURE ITALIAN POSITION

BERLIN, March 18.—The capture of an Italian position north of the Tolmino bridge head on the Isonza front is reported in today's Austrian-Hungarian headquarters statement received here from Vienna. The Austrians took prisoner 449 Italians, among whom were sixteen officers, besides capturing three machine guns and a mine-thrower.

FRENCH STILL OCCUPY DEAD MAN'S HILL

WASHINGTON, March 18.—The French embassy, upon instructions from Paris today, emphatically denied that German forces were holding any portion of Dead Man's Hill.

CENSORSHIP TO BE ENFORCED ALONG BORDER

Correspondents to Be Held Accountable for Dispatches—Movements of Army Betrayed to Enemy—The More Publicly the More Danger to American Lives.

COLUMBUS, N. M., March 18.—New orders were issued here today holding every correspondent accountable for his dispatches under the national defense act.

"American soldiers' lives already have been possibly endangered by violation of the censorship," said Major Sample.

The major took measures today to make correspondents strictly accountable to the national defense law which, he says, he is going to see is observed. He received an order to this effect from General Funston.

"These betrayals of our movements have, of course, reached Villa, who naturally has taken means to make himself more elusive," he said. "This means the extension of our lines, and extensions mean death to American soldiers from disease and other causes, and American soldiers are American citizens the same as civilians. The American people should realize this and above all, the American papers should know the more publicity the more deaths of American soldiers.

"Furthermore, this expedition is a test of preparations. We also have a chance to test the power of censorship. If we ever get into a big war the efficiency of censorship would be a life and death matter to the nation. I regret to say that some men connected with the papers have carried matter censored here to other points to telegraph. This must and will stop, by power of the federal laws."

As a result of the new order, Columbus ceased to be a favorable place for journalistic enterprise.

REICHSTAG TO VOTE UPON CONTINUANCE OF SUBMARINE WAR

BERLIN, March 18.—The National Liberal group on the reichstag has introduced its measure calling for the carrying on of submarine war. It is as follows:

"Considering that Great Britain not only makes war on the armed forces of Germany, but has taken measures in order to impede the providing of Germany with food supplies and raw material, so as to compel Germany to submit through hunger for which purpose Great Britain brutally violates international law and employs force against neutral countries; considering further that Germany is through unrestrained submarine warfare to increase the British lack of tonnage so that it can be made extraordinarily difficult and perhaps impossible for the British nation to obtain sufficient supplies of food and raw materials, considering that such warfare would bring more speedily a victorious end of the war, the imperial chancellor is required to enter into no arrangements with other countries which would hinder us in the unlimited use of the submarine weapon and to permit in the war zone, against the enemy's traders, with the exception of passenger ships, such use of submarines as arises from the peculiarity of such weapons."

Similar bills were brought forward by the conservative and center parties.

BATTLESHIP KENTUCKY SAILS FOR MEXICO

NEW ORLEANS, March 18.—The battleship Kentucky sailed for Vera Cruz early today. Officers declined to state why the Kentucky returned yesterday after starting. Late last night thirty additional marines were taken aboard.

MILITARY BILL IS PRESIDENT'S DECLARES HAY

"This is Woodrow Wilson's Measure," Says Chairman of House Military Committee—Doubtful if Vote Is Reached Before Monday—Two Days' Debate on Bill Continues.

WASHINGTON, March 18.—The house military bill is President Wilson's own bill. Chairman Hay of the military committee so informed the house today when debate on the measure was resumed on the ten-hour rule.

"I may say," he said in reply to a question, "in broad language that this is the president's bill; that he thoroughly approves of it."

Chairman Hay said the bill "carries out the recommendations of the president's message and goes a little farther." He added that while the bill did not contain the continental army provision, the president was satisfied that the proposed federalization of the national guard would accomplish the same purpose.

"Then," said Representative Moore, republican of Pennsylvania, "gentlemen voting for this bill will be voting for the president's convictions?" "They will," Mr. Hay responded.

Mann Says Inadequate. Representative Mann, minority leader, attacked the bill as being inadequate to meet the demands of the present time, he said:

"We are having a little trouble on the border of Mexico and are sending a few soldiers into that country. The time for this came after we had had troops on the border for four years in contemplation of trouble. Yet when this trouble occurred these troops were not actually sent across the border until the house had passed a resolution ordering an increase to 120,000 men to the place of the few soldiers who might perish.

"Never was there a more pat illustration than that of the fact that the present army and the proposed increase in it while sufficient in times of actual peace, would not be sufficient in time of war, or when any occasion arises for even a miniature war, and today we have the greatest war of the ages going on."

Representative Mann said the United States must take a prominent place in defending its own rights and those of smaller neutrals, and in upholding international law.

Wants Larger Army.

"I believe," he said, "that it is the duty of the United States to prepare now an army which will add to the weight of the suggestions we made.

"The time has come when it is wise for us to consider the possibility and even the probability of the future and prepare now for what may come to us. If we do not prepare now we may regret it to the end of our lives."

Representative Kahn, ranking minority member of the military committee, said war came suddenly in modern times and wisdom and patriotism demanded a reasonable measure of preparedness for war. With adequate preparation in peace times, he said, thousands of lives might have been saved in the country's wars.

"Great Britain was compelled finally to adopt conscription," he said. "I believe that if we ever become involved in any great war it will become necessary to resort to the draft."

BALFOUR GUTHRIES BUY SAILING VESSELS

PORTLAND, March 18.—With the local announcement today that Balfour, Guthrie and company had purchased the American schooner Genova from W. H. Ferguson, of San Francisco, it became known that the firm has acquired recently a fleet of nine lumber carriers for coastwise and offshore trade.

The vessels purchased have an aggregate of 8,900,000 feet of lumber. They include the power schooner Columbia River, which is being built at Aberdeen, Wash. The other vessels of the fleet are the American schooners Sophie Christiansen, Okanagan, Gambia, Camano and Spokane; the British ship Yeoman; and the British schooner David Evans.