

MEDFORD MAIL TRIBUNE

MEDFORD OREGON, TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 1917.

NO. 22

FRENCH WIN GREATEST VICTORY OF WAR

40 MILES OF TRENCHES CAPTURED; LOSSES OF GERMANS TOTAL 100,000

TEUTONS SUFFER CRUSHING BLOW WHEN FRENCH OFFENSIVE WINS LINE FROM SOISSONS TO RHEIMS

GERMANS FIERCELY BOMBARDING LOST POSITIONS AND SACRIFICING MEN IN FUTILE COUNTER-ATTACKS—FRENCH HOLD GAINS MADE—VIEWED FROM AMOUNT OF DESTRUCTION DONE TO ENEMIES' ARMED FORCE AND TO DAMAGE TO HIS MILITARY PRESTIGE, IS GREATEST VICTORY OF WAR—NEARLY TWO MILLION MEN ENGAGED IN STRUGGLE WHICH PROMISES TO BE DECISIVE BATTLE.

GERMAN VERSION ASSERTS FRENCH DRIVE A FAILURE

STATES GREATEST BATTLE IN WORLD'S HISTORY IN PROGRESS AND ADMITS LINE PENETRATED AND FIGHTING STILL CONTINUES—ARTILLERY RENDERED DEFENSE NO LONGER POSSIBLE.

PARIS, April 17.—Germany suffered another crushing blow upon the western front when forty miles of the strongest part of her line, were wrested from her with an estimated loss of nearly 100,000 killed, wounded and prisoners as a result of the opening yesterday of the French offensive.

The attack began along a twenty-five mile front from Soissons to Rheims, extending the great western battle a distance of close to 150 miles, more than one-third of the mighty line from Switzerland to the sea.

The Germans were aware of what was coming, as they showed by a number of furious attacks made, notably at Spignon and Godat farm, with the object of finding out something definite in regard to the French preparation.

Twenty Divisions Defend.

The invaders had manned naturally formidable positions, with effectives amounting to at least twenty divisions and an enormous number of guns, well supplied with munitions. The battle opened on the left of the line where, shortly after 8 o'clock in the morning, the French infantry swept forward in irresistible waves. In spite of a stiff resistance, the Germans were driven back and inside half an hour prisoners began streaming toward the French rear by hundreds. The struggle was hottest east of Loivre, as well as in the whole sector of Berry on line and to the east of Craonne, but the French heavy shells were too much for the Germans, and before noon the whole first line was won.

On the right the action began a little later in the morning. The French met with a determined resistance and the fighting was terrible. After several hours of heroic struggle the French infantry, thanks to the support of several hundred heavy quick-firing guns, forced their way into the enemy's first line. It was a fine success, as the terrain was most difficult and the positions formidable.

Counter Attacks Repelled.

In the afternoon the Germans counter-attacked with extreme violence almost everywhere along the front. The majority of their reserves were engaged south and east of the Brimont ridge. It is from the Brimont fort, built on a crest which dominates all the plain around, that the Germans have bombarded the city of Rheims. The French troops

are now very close to this ridge, which is likely to play a prominent part in the coming fighting. In capturing Loivre they have drawn nearer to Berniercourt and have gone far beyond the famous position which they lost in the first weeks of the war and failed to win back at the battle of the Marne.

According to the latest news reaching Paris the Germans are bombarding the lost trenches furiously, counter attack after counter-attack having been delivered far into the night. The struggle is particularly fierce in the region of Craonne, but the French have so far managed to hold their gains. The French advance averages in depth from two to two and a half miles, beyond the German first position, which is composed of lines of five and six trenches, one behind another.

Great Success of War.

Measured by the amount of territory freed, the victory does not compare with the Somme offensive which opened a month ago, but viewed from the amount of destruction done to the enemy's armed forces and the damage to his military prestige, it is a far greater success. Here there can be no question either of a previously planned retreat or a surprise. The enemy expected an attack and made every preparation to defeat it.

From Soissons to Craonne the German line runs along a series of hills of an average height of 500 feet with deep valleys between. The attackers advanced on the valleys under a cross fire from each flank, but the artillery curtain, on a new plan invented by a British general, was so effective that the operation was carried out at less cost than might be expected.

The weak point of the German line is from Craonne to Rheims, where the ground is more level. Here the attack made more progress and the danger of a rupture of the line became so imminent that the Germans threw in all available reserves. The reserves were smashed by the French field artillery, which kept close on the heels of the waves of infantry.

BRITISH SECURE FURTHER GAINS IN ARRAS ADVANCE

LONDON, April 17.—The British made a further advance in the neighborhood of Epehy last night, according to an official statement issued by the war office. Rain storms are hampering operations. The British gain was effected east of the Paronne-Cambrai railroad at a point about half way between St. Quentin and Cambrai. The statement reads: "In the neighborhood of Epehy we captured during the night Le Tombers farm, on the Lempire-Vendulle road and gained ground along the spur northeast of Epehy station. We took a few prisoners. The weather continues stormy with high winds and squalls of rain."

BARON ROSEN NEW RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR

WASHINGTON, April 17.—Baron Rosen, Russian ambassador to the United States at the time of the Russo-Japanese war, is most likely to return here as the representative of the new Russian government with which he has become identified.

Baron Rosen is supposed to know Americans better than any other Russian and would succeed the present ambassador, George Bakshmeteff.

HORSES WEAR GAS MASKS AT FRONT



Even horses wear gas masks in the European war. The horses draw shell wagons to the batteries, crossing gas zones.

FRENCH CONTINUE TO REPEL GERMAN COUNTER ATTACKS

PARIS, April 17.—German counter attacks in force in the region of Ailles and Courcy were repulsed last night by the French according to an official statement. Heavy losses were inflicted on the Germans.

The statement follows: "North and south of the Oise there was intermittent artillery fighting. Our patrols brought back prisoners."

"Between Soissons and Rheims our troops are organizing the positions captured. In the region of Ailles a strong German counter attack on our new lines was broken up by our artillery and machine gun fire which inflicted severe losses on the enemy. Other German counter attacks in the sector of Courcy also were broken up. The weather continues very bad over the whole front."

"In the Champagne the night was marked by more active artillery fighting west of Auberive. Everywhere else the night was calm."

"In the period between April 10 and April 125 our patrols accomplished numerous exploits. Captain Le court, Captain Grandmaison, Sub-Lieutenant Languedoc and Sergeant Rousseau brought down each his fifth German machine. Lieutenant Piusart accounted for three enemy airplanes, bringing up to light the number to the credit of this officer. Adjutant Vitalis destroyed his seventh adversary. Lieutenant Doullin his thirteenth and Captain Guynemer scored his thirty-sixth victory."

BRITISH TO EXPRESS GRATITUDE TO AMERICA

PLANS FOR RECEIVING ALLIED COMMITTEES

WASHINGTON, April 17.—Plans for receiving the British and French war committees went forward today surrounded by the curtain of official secrecy which has been deemed necessary by the authorities at the capital.

The indications are that the French commissioners will arrive later than the British members but inasmuch as some of the conferences are to be conducted separately, this will not retard the discussions of co-operation between the United States and the allies.

BRANCH DEAD LETTER OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO

WASHINGTON, April 17.—Establishment of a branch dead letter office on May 1 at San Francisco to dispose of undelivered mail in states west of the Rocky mountains was ordered today by Postmaster General Barleson.

AUSTRIA ANXIOUS FOR PEACE WITHOUT PAYING INDEMNITY

BERNE, Switzerland, April 17.—Peace and spring weather are what the Austrian and Hungarian people most desire. During a long stay in Vienna, whence the Associated Press correspondent has just come, he observed there is every indication that the government and the people are willing to accept any peace proposal leaving Austria-Hungarian territory intact, and making no claims for war indemnity. By the same token there appears to be no doubt that the monarchy will continue fighting unless these minimum conditions are met. While the nation is extremely weary of the war, its mind is made up to persist in the struggle to the end rather than accept humiliating terms.

The demands made on Austria-Hungary's economic resources and human reservoir by the war are beginning to reach the limit of bearableness, and the severe winter, whose after-effects are still felt, tended to increase the great burden. The sowing of crops is about three weeks behind, which causes considerable anxiety, notwithstanding the fact that the winter crops are reported as in good condition. Spring weather is awaited eagerly for the planting of potatoes and other summer crops.

BRITISH TO EXPRESS GRATITUDE TO AMERICA

LONDON, April 17.—The Earl of Crawford gave notice in the house of lords this afternoon that Earl Curzon of Kedleston, tomorrow would move the following resolution:

"This house desires to express to the government and people of the United States of America their profound appreciation of the action of their government in joining the allied powers and thus defending the high cause of freedom and rights of humanity against the gravest menace by which they ever have been faced."

PAPER WORKERS STRIKE FOR HIGHER WAGES

CAMAS, Wash., April 17.—Workmen at the Crown Willamette Paper company's plant here struck for higher wages and an eight-hour day, causing the entire plant, with the exception of the log factory, to close. Strike leaders assert 500 men are out and say the log factory will be closed before tonight. The company has announced the mill will be closed indefinitely.

WAR BOND ISSUE FOR 7 BILLIONS LIKELY TO PASS SENATE TONIGHT

DEBATE OVER SEVEN BILLION DOLLAR FINANCE BILL BEGUN—SIMMONS PREDICTS ANOTHER LOAN NECESSARY LATER—STORE TO VOTE FOR MEASURE—CONVERSION RIGHT FOR INVESTORS.

WASHINGTON, April 17.—Consideration of the \$7,000,000,000 war finance bill was begun today in the senate.

Senator Stone, opponent of most of the administration war measures, announced that he would vote for its passage, but thought it should have been framed along different lines and reserved the right to state his views later.

Senator Simmons predicted that after the present issue another issue probably will be necessary, possibly at a higher rate. For this reason, he said, it was desirable to give subscribers to the present issue the conversion right to exchange their bonds for those having higher rate.

Senator Simmons said it would be "long, weary months before we can render much assistance in the field."

Do It Quickly—Simmons.

"This bill represents all we can do now," he said, "all they are asking us to do. In the name of America, of patriotism, of liberty and democracy, let us do it now, quickly, without carping or hesitation, in the spirit of men inspired by the cause for which we are fighting. Let's give to the German kniser and his people and to all their innuendoes that we are obsessed with wealth and that the canker of riches has taken possession of the American people, this answer."

"The conversion privilege has been found absolutely necessary by all the European governments. Probably we will have to pay more for money within a very short time."

Senator Penrose, senior republican of the committee, also said the conversion privilege was necessary.

Seek Aid of All.

"It is very evident that the loan could not be floated otherwise," he said, adding that the finance committee was practically unanimous in approving the issue.

Senator Stone said he approved the proposed allied loan.

"It will not be a burden upon the American people or government," he said, "provided we lose nothing on the bonds we secure. Having cast our fortunes with the allies, we must work with them and aid them. This bond issue is a very great and important service."

Reading from a Wall street newspaper articles saying that to be successful the loan must be made attractive and that the government cannot commandeer public subscriptions, Senator Stone declared:

"There is a fine exhibit of Wall street patriotism."

Pay As You Go.

Senator Stone said he believed the present generation should largely pay for the war's expenses.

"It is wiser, better and cheaper to pay as we go," he said. "Taxes should be levied on the wealth of the country and widely distributed over the whole field of industry."

The first vote was taken late this

(Continued on Page Six.)

SUBMARINE FIRES AT U.S. DESTROYER

GERMAN U-BOAT DISCHARGES TORPEDO AGAINST DESTROYER SMITH 100 MILES SOUTH OF NEW YORK, BUT MISSES AND SUBMERGES—IS FIRST ACT OF WAR BY GERMANY—INDICATES RAID UPON UNPROTECTED AMERICAN TOWNS AND SHIPPING.

WASHINGTON, April 17.—A German submarine today fired on the destroyer Smith about 100 miles south of New York.

The presence of enemy submarines in American waters indicates that the threatened German blockade of American Atlantic ports has begun.

This announcement was made at the navy department:

"Reported from Fire Island lightship to the naval stations at Boston and New York at 3:30 a. m. on the 17th an enemy submarine was sighted by the United States ship Smith running apparently submerged. Submarine fired a torpedo at the U. S. S. Smith, which missed her by thirty yards. The wake of the torpedo was plainly seen crossing the bow. Submarine disappeared."

Attack Confirmed.

First information of the encounter came to the navy department in a roundabout way from the Boston navy yard, which picked up the Smith's report saying she had been fired upon by a German U-boat.

The navy department, after communicating with Fire Island, Boston, New York and some other points on the Atlantic coast, announced that the report of the Smith's encounter had been substantiated by official investigation.

Whether the presence of the German submarine merely foreshadows a sporadic raid such as the U-53 conducted off the New England coast, or whether it is the signal for the beginning of a general submarine blockade of the Atlantic coast is not known.

First Act of War.

The attack by the U-boat is Germany's first recognition of the state of war declared by the United States. It was stated in Germany soon after the action of congress that no aggressive steps would be taken against the United States.

Practically no American officials believed this statement, however, and steps to meet aggressive action were taken at once. The probability of submarine attack on unprotected seaboard cities and towns, raids on shipping within sight of American shores and a submarine blockade of the principal Atlantic ports with the purpose of terrorizing shipping and people were expected.

Prohibited Zone.

Last week word came to Washington in a roundabout way that Germany was about to declare a prohibited submarine zone about the harbors at Boston, New York, the Delaware Capes, Chesapeake bay, Savannah and Charleston. This would have included all the important ports on the Atlantic seaboard. It was said then that an official warning to neu-

(Continued on Page Four)

EMERGENCY FLEET BOARD INCORPORATED

WASHINGTON, April 17.—The United States shipping board emergency fleet corporation was incorporated here today with a capital of \$50,000,000. All of its officers and directors are members or employees of the federal shipping board and Major General G. W. Goethals will be general manager. The corporation's first work will be the building of the great fleet of wooden ships to carry American supplies to the allies.

UNIVERSAL SERVICE FAVORED BY S. A. R.

WASHINGTON, April 17.—Universal military training and selective conscription was approved as the best means of national defense today by a unanimous vote of the national advisory committee of the Sons of the American Revolution in session here.