

VILLA SURROUNDED; NOT CAPTURED

ARE WITHIN SHOOTING DISTANCE OF VILLA'S GANG OF BANDITS

Carranza Troops Engage in Running Fight With the Band, While American Soldiers Rush to Assist.

THINK HE HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO BAY

Man Hunt May Come to an End Soon Unless Villa Can Slip Through Net Spread About Him.

By E. T. Conkle, United Press Staff Correspondent.

EL PASO, Texas, March 21.—United States cavalry under Colonel George E. Dodd early today were reported on forced marches from Cruces toward Namiquipa to reinforce Carranza troops under Colonel Cano, engaged in a fierce running fight with Villa's bandits.

Encircled by Carranza and American forces, Villa was making a desperate effort to reach the Santa Clara canyon in the Guerrero mountains, twenty miles east of Namiquipa. The absence of news from the battlefield since Juarez officials late yesterday received the first word of Villa's capture at bay, led to fears that he had cut his way through the armed forces and was temporarily safe.

To trap Villa if he escapes the general column from Cruces, Brigadier General Pershing has sent cavalry squadrons southward to the Babicora ranch and to Carmen on either side of Namiquipa.

One of these three columns should be within striking distance of Villa's rear guard within twenty-four or thirty-six hours.

Several aeroplanes with the expedition spent last night on Mexican soil near Ascension. They were within a few hours flight of the Namiquipa battle field and may possibly be of assistance to the American reinforcements in locating the bandit's following.

While opposing forces were on every side of Villa today, he might have eluded the Carranzistas at Namiquipa during the night and reached the rugged Santa Clara district.

The aeroplanes would be of great value in scouting miles ahead of the pursuing forces.

General Gaviera, Carranza commandant at Juarez, early today said he had received no further details than that the defacto troops and Villa were yesterday evidently engaged in a desperate conflict and that American reinforcements were rushing to the assistance of the Carranza attacking forces.

Gaviera sent urgent requests for additional information and supplies were momentarily expected in Juarez.

Gaviera pointed to the battle at Namiquipa in denial of reports that Carranza troops are disposed to let Villa get away and give him an equal chance with the American army on the trail.

The Carranza consul intimated that the U. S. expedition has established a base near Casas Grandes. Reports that the Carranza garrison there had been withdrawn to Juarez to avoid friction, remained unconfirmed. Even if a large Carranza force has been placed between the expedition in Mexico and the border, it was pointed out that the thousands of American troops at Fort Bliss and Columbus were sufficient protection against the implied threat. There has been no sign of friction between the defacto government generals in Juarez and the expeditionary forces.

It was reported, but confirmation from Queretero was lacking, that in return for President Wilson's aid to Carranza, permission was to be given the war department to send troops and provisions by railroad to the expedition's Mexican base.

The number of soldiers of all branches who have crossed the border and taken up the chase after Villa was today believed to be upwards of 7,000.

At 8:30 a. m. today, Gaviera said he had not been advised of the result of the battle at Namiquipa. Suspense was noticeable in local military and civil circles. The belief was growing that the engagement would not prove decisive.

The dispatcher of the Mexican Northwestern railroad near which the fighting was reported to be taking place, said no word had been received since last night. It was not known whether the wires were cut or the Carranza forces were withholding information.

Gaviera was asked if Villa had been killed or captured and to both answered "no."

Carranza Consul Garcia of El Paso, visited Gaviera's Juarez headquarters to learn the outcome of the battle. Garcia said communication with Namiquipa was cut off. He did not know where Villa was, but said it was effectually preventing the arrival of news from the battlefield.

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According to the best information at army headquarters, Villa will make every effort to slip past the southwest corner of Lake Babicora and dash for the Sierra Madre mountains, in the region about Guerrero.

Anxious to Get Near Him. DOUGLAS, Ariz., March 21.—"God pity poor Villa if the Seventh and Tenth ever get within sight of him," he heartily exclaimed an officer at Camp Douglas today.

When Douglas was in danger and Villista bullets rained in the city during the bandit's attack on Agua Prieta, the two American cavalry regiments "stood by" Douglas and the warmest feeling prevails here for the squadron.

Members of the Tenth, colored, frequently expressed a desire to go after "that Villa man." The Tenth is now reported to be in the vanguard of General Pershing's column. A number of troopers in both regiments have fallen victims to Villa snipers in the fighting around Agua Prieta. The squadron is expected by officers here to give a good account of itself when it catches up with Villa's band.

Disturbing reports of the concentration of large Carranza forces among the straggling distance of the border hereabouts are believed to be exaggerations. Officials of the defacto government make the most emphatic declarations of co-operation.

Mormons Gave Welcome. WASHINGTON, March 21.—A hint of the vociferous welcome with which American troops were greeted by the Mormon colonists near Casas Grandes as they galloped into the town with colors flying, was given in a brief dispatch to the war department today from General Funston. The message also carried the first official intimation of how far American troops had penetrated the Mexican waste and tended to contradict reports from El Paso and other border towns to the effect that there is disaffection among Carranza soldiers and that natives are on the verge of an uprising against the United States soldiers.

The message reads in part: "We have found the natives friendly everywhere. The Carranza forces also are showing every indication of friendliness. The Mormons greeted our troops as rescuers."

Secretary Baker, who read the above portion of the dispatch, explained he could not give out the full text because some of it related to military movements which might be affected by publicity. He admitted it is entirely likely additional cavalry has entered Mexico at Columbus since the first column under Colonel Dodd started out after Villa.

Chase Getting Hot. SAN ANTONIO, Texas, March 21.—So hot has become the pursuit of Carranza troops coming north from Chihuahua, the bandit's defeat and subsequent flight north directly toward three south bound American cavalry columns. With these detachments of U. S. soldiers headed for Lake Babicora, El Valle and Carmen, any effort on Villa's part to escape to the north seems effectually spiked.

A hard night ride brought the American soldiers close to their quarry today. While army headquarters has no definite word that the commander of the Carranza column is formally co-operating with the American general, Pershing through his own scouts, evidently is being kept advised of the former's movements.

"On the map, it looks like Villa might be in hot water," remarked General Funston.

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The war office admitted Germans were forced to withdraw from salient south of Narocz lake to avoid the encircling fire of Russian artillery.

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[United Press Leased Wire Service.] PETROGRAD, March 24.—Russian forces entered the Persian city of Isfahan Sunday, according to Tehran dispatches today.

Isfahan, the former metropolis of Persia, lies 210 miles south of Tehran. In the seventeenth century, it was one of the largest and most magnificent cities in the world, having a population of nearly a million. Its population at present is less than 100,000.

Preparedness for War, Will Never be Tolerated Again in Europe

[By Wilbur S. Forrest, United Press Staff Correspondent.] LONDON, March 21.—Germany will never again "raise her helmet" in a world engaged in peaceful pursuits, President Walter Runciman of the board of trade, declared in an exclusive interview given the United Press today, officially outlining for the first time the allies' commercial plans after the war.

England does not contemplate a throttling that will leave the German people crushed in poverty, unable to rise again, he said.

"But peaceful preparations as a means to a military end will never again be tolerated by England, France, Russia and Italy," Runciman asserted. "Nor can we submit to 'most favored nations' clauses in commercial treaties being utilized to the detriment of any one of the allied countries. We object to Germany using her resources and commercial relations with us for purposes of aggression as she did in preparation for this war."

Runciman's statement is of the highest importance, in view of the forthcoming allied commerce conference in Paris which he will attend. American traders and manufacturers, he indicated, must prepare for a rigid, though friendly, British commercial competition in neutral markets after the war.

"Germany has announced that at the conclusion of this war she will attempt to establish a customs union of the central powers on aggressiveness,"

he said. "This can only mean that she intends to follow up the present conflict with an economic war."

"If this is the deliberate object, we and our allies will know how to meet an aggressive war of that nature just as we have met hostile action for the last twenty months. But we will be better prepared for this threatened economic war. We are much obliged to Germany for warning us before hand."

"The economic war which she threatens will be a permanent barrier to the peaceful development of Europe, I have myself used language hostile in character in regard to Germany's trade. I did so, believing that crushing the enemy's trade was an essential step to victory in this war."

ENGLAND

[United Press Leased Wire Service.] LONDON, March 21.—Four British destroyers on patrol in the English coast yesterday, the admiralty announced this afternoon. The enemy boats were hit by shells, the admiralty stated. Four British sailors were wounded.

The Germans escaped into the naval base at Zeebrugge, Belgium, after a running fight, the admiralty announced.

The clash between the speedy, light vessels, is the first engagement between British and German war craft in many weeks. The German destroyers are believed to have emerged either from the German base at Zeebrugge, Belgium, or to have made a dash along the Dutch coast from Heligoland, hugging the short line until they encountered the British patrol ships.

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AUSTRIA

[United Press Leased Wire Service.] BERLIN, March 21.—Austrian troops have evacuated the Uscieszko bridgehead and trenches northwest after defending the positions for six months against Russian attacks, the Austrian war office admitted in a statement telegraphed here today.

The position had been battered into a heap of ruins by heavy pounding of Russian artillery in recent fighting.

The bridgehead position lies on the south bank of the Dniester, thirty-eight miles northwest of Czernowitz and has been the scene of desperate fighting.

"The Russians, in the morning, had succeeded in blasting a breach 300 yards wide," said the Austrian war office statement. "At 5 p. m., Colonel Planck decided to evacuate. He totally destroyed the trench position. Small detachments with wounded, in boats, but soon the concentrated fire of the enemy made it impossible to cross the river. The Austrian dragoons fought their way on the north bank of the Dniester through the town of Uscieszko, which was strongly occupied by the Russians, and joined the Austrian troops established on the heights north of Zaleszycki Monday morning."

[United Press Leased Wire Service.] ROME, March 21.—Russian troops have arrived outside the Turkish Black sea port of Trebizond and are laying siege to the city, according to advices received here today. A large force of Turks is defending Trebizond.

TURKEY

[United Press Leased Wire Service.] SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., March 21.—Mrs. "Art" Smith of Port Wayne, Ind., wife of the famous aviator, will not oppose his recently filed suit for divorce, according to reports current here today. She was expected to demand a satisfactory monetary settlement from the man whose remarkable success flying aeroplanes, she said, turned his head. Smith, bound for Japan to fill a long flying contract, was reported to be entertaining passengers on the liner Teoyo Maru with raucous around the deck in a miniature automobile.

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Stout Falls Press: Are you interested to know what Mr. Bryan would do in the circumstances?

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Army Reorganization and Government Armor Plate Plant Propositions.

[United Press Leased Wire Service.] WASHINGTON, March 21.—Passage before adjournment today of two preparedness bills, the Hay army reorganization measure in the house and the Tillman, \$11,000,000 government armor plate project, in the senate, was the hope of congress leaders.

A final vote on the armor plate bill late this afternoon was certain. Voting on amendments, by agreement, will begin at four o'clock.

There was more doubt about final passage of the Hay bill coming today. There was a bare chance that the bill could be completed, but it was more probable that the vote would go over until Thursday, as the house will lay aside the bill temporarily tomorrow.

Ultimate passage of both bills was a foregone conclusion. A final stand against the Tillman measure was expected from Senators Penrose, Oliver and others.

The house debate today centered upon the field artillery. Representative Gardner and other extreme preparedness advocates had amendments ready practically to double the Hay bill's authorization for both light and heavy artillery. Gardner asserts this is the chief deficiency of U. S. forces. Chairman Hay's plans to federalize the national guard also promised to be analyzed in lengthy debate today. Inside revelations regarding the repudiation of the continental army plan were threatened.

Amendment Made. WASHINGTON, March 21.—An amendment giving the president a free hand to call out regular army reserves in case of war or threatened hostilities was made by the house today to the Hay army reorganization bill. Its effect would be to increase the army by sixty thousand at a stroke of the president's pen, without awaiting action by congress.

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FURIOUS RUSSIAN ATTACK THREATENS KAISER'S PLANS

Rout of the Germans at Both Ends of Eastern Battle Line Overshadows Fighting at Verdun.

MAY CAUSE WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS

While French Hold Them Back From Verdun, Russians Make Gains on the Dniester.

[By Charles P. Stewart, United Press Staff Correspondent.]

LONDON, March 21.—Distinct Russian victories at both ends of the 800 mile eastern battle front this afternoon overshadowed the fighting around Verdun, where the Germans have made further advances.

The battering of heavy Russian guns against Von Hindenburg's front in the north has forced the Germans to withdraw from a salient south of Narocz lake. The German war office admitted the retirement in an official statement this afternoon, declaring a retreat was necessary to avoid annihilation of German troops by the encircling fire of the Slavs.

General Kuropatkin, Russian commander in chief in the Japanese war, commanded the army that forced the German retreat.

A few hours earlier came admission from the Austrian war office of an important Russian victory in southeastern Galicia, thirty-eight miles northeast of Czernowitz.

This victory renders precarious the position of remaining Austrian forces on the north bank of the Dniester, and forecasts the beginnings of a new Russian campaign against Bukovina. In view of the rumored entrance of Roumania into the war, this development is regarded as highly significant.

The Russian war office admitted that the Russians are making heavy attacks on a wide front in the Riga-Dvinsk sector, despite heavy losses. It is considered certain here that the power of the new Russian offensive will force the withdrawal of German troops from the western front and possibly end the Verdun offensive.

On the Verdun front the Germans last night renewed their attempt to squeeze the French out of the strongly fortified positions west of the Meuse. The attack was partly successful, though the Germans suffered heavy losses.

The German war office in announcing the advance in the Malancourt region, claimed the capture of 2,532 French prisoners and the repulse of all French counter attacks.

For a Greater Entente. [By Wm. Philip Simms, United Press Staff Correspondent.]

PARIS, March 21.—A greater entente bringing not only France, England and Russia, but the smaller of the allies into complete accord, will result from the conference to be held here late this week or early next.

Military and political leaders of the allies were assembling here today in advance of the meeting. They plan to organize for concerted action, both in a military and political way to short-cut the war.

Such a union has long been demanded by leading statesmen of all the allied countries.

Since Aristide Briand became prime minister of France, he has worked ceaselessly toward this end and is now called the artisan of the greater entente. Briand will preside over the deliberations.

Prince Regent Alexander and Premier Pachitch of Serbia are due to arrive in Paris today. General Cadorna, Italian commander in chief, is already in Paris and will be joined shortly by General Porro, second in command. England will be represented by General Douglas Haig, Premier Asquith and others. Premier Briand, General Joffre and one or two French cabinet members will represent France. General Glimsky will be Russia's representative and Premier De Broqueville and General Wielmans will represent Belgium.

General Cadorna visited the French front today. The Serbian prince recently received an enthusiastic reception when he arrived at two o'clock this afternoon.

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