

# THE KNOXVILLE INDEPENDENT

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## ITALIANS STRIKE BACK ON PIAVE; FOE IS CHECKED

Teutons Sustain Huge Losses in Attempt to Pierce Lines Before Venice.

## ITALY FIGHTS OVER MILLION

Allies Launch Repeated Counter-Attacks Along the Stream—Austrians Using Their Choicest Troops Under Command of Field Marshal Borevic.

Italian Army Headquarters, June 19.—Bitter fighting is in progress along the Piave river. The Austrians have sustained large losses from the concentrated fire of Italian batteries. Repeated counter-attacks are being made by Italian infantry, inflicting heavy casualties.

### Italy Fights 1,288,000.

Paris, June 19.—Ninety-two Austrian divisions of infantry and twelve divisions of cavalry, have been hurled into the greatest battle that Italy has yet fought, according to an official announcement at Rome, received here through the Havas agency. Seventy-one of the divisions have already been identified.

(Estimating 14,000 men to an Austrian division, the employment of ninety-two divisions means that the Teutons have thrown an army of 1,288,000 against Italy.)

### Austria's Choicest Troops.

The forces engaged comprise three-fourths of the whole Austrian army and the choicest troops under the command of Field Marshal Borevic. The number of men in an Austrian division is not exactly known, but the number of divisions engaged would indicate that approximately 1,000,000 Austrian troops have been thrown into the

Papers found on officers show that after forcing the passage of the Piave, the first day's objective was the Treviso-Montebelluna railroad. In two days of fighting the enemy columns had succeeded only in realizing the minimum assigned for the first day, according to the official note issued at Rome.

But one single allied aviator has been lost during the Austrian offensive, while forty-four enemy machines have been brought down.

### Corpses Strew Battle Line.

"In artillery and airplanes Austria is using all her available resources," says the official note. "Not less than 7,500 cannon of all calibers have been brought into action. Three Austro-Hungarian armies under the command of Field Marshal Borevic are engaged in fighting desperately with enormous military means. Ordered to advance at any cost, without thought of blood sacrifices, the Austro-Hungarian regiments readily obey. Thousands of corpses strew the battlefield overlooking the mountainous Italian sector and accumulate along the Piave, but the objectives which the enemy was to reach are yet far away."

### Drive Failure, Says Paris.

That the Austrians, after three days of furious fighting, have not gained any really important success, confirms the newspapers in their opinion that the offensive has failed.

L'Homme Libre says that the Italian resistance to every attack encourages the best hopes, and it is convinced that an Italian victory is assured owing to the excellent spirits of the Italian troops.

### Austrian Check Complete.

Rome, June 19.—In their attacks between Zenson and Fossalta, along the Piave, the Austrians have been stopped everywhere, says an official statement issued by the Italian war office. In the mountain region and around Montello there have been no infantry attacks by the enemy.

The allied troops have taken several hundred additional prisoners and some machine guns.

### Americans to Battle Front.

Colonels Elbert E. Persons and Clarence P. Franklin and Lieut. Adolfo Caruso of the American army ambulance service have left for the Italian front, where they will be received by the king. Afterward the officers will lead their commands into the fighting zone.

### Force Foe to Reorganize.

London, June 19.—The war office issued the following report in regard to fighting on the Italian front:

"There is little change on the British front. The artillery battle has died down and the enemy is reorganizing after his severe defeat.

"Captured maps show that his objectives were very ambitious; they included the capture of Mount Pau and Cima de Fonte. The number of prisoners has increased to 716, including 12 officers. The total amount of captured material actually brought in was four mountain guns, 43 machine guns and some ammunition."

# A CALL TO PATRIOTS

THE PATRIOTIC LEAGUE OF THE SECOND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT CALLS UPON ALL PATRIOTIC CITIZENS TO JOIN THEM IN THEIR EFFORTS TO RETURN HON. R. W. AUSTIN TO CONGRESS:

MR. AUSTIN REMAINS AT HIS POST OF DUTY IN CONGRESS WHILE HIS OPPONENT ATTACKS HIM IN EVERY COUNTY IN THIS DISTRICT. THE REPUBLICAN PATRIOTS ARE ORGANIZING FOR HIM IN EVERY CIVIL DISTRICT AND HE IS CERTAIN TO BE RENOMINATED.



-----The Patriotic League of the Second Congressional District has been organized to promote the candidacy of Hon. R. W. Austin for renomination to Congress at the Republican Primaries on August 1, 1918. In view of the fact that the President of the United States, the commander in chief of our Army and Navy, has called upon every member of Congress to remain at his post of duty in Washington and assist him in winning the war, Mr. Austin will not return to the District to engage in a political campaign. He considers his duty to the country more important than his campaign.

The Patriotic League has issued through its president, Hon. W. L. Trent, of Knoxville, a statement calling upon all true loyal Republicans to rally to Mr. Austin's standard and help in protecting his interests while he remains in Washington attending to the Nation's interests. The League's appeal is as follows:

W. L. Trent, President.

## A CALL TO PATRIOTS THE PATRIOTIC LEAGUE

John M. Ross, Secretary

—of the—

Second Congressional District of Tennessee

Organized for the Purpose of Aiding in the Return of Hon. Richard W. Austin to the Next Congress

Headquarters: Room 601, St. James Hotel

Knoxville, Tenn., June 17, 1918.

Seeing from the Announcement of Hon. R. W. Austin, recently published in the press of this District, that he is a candidate for renomination to Congress, Subject to the will of the Republican voters at the approaching Primary, August 1, 1918, a large number of loyal citizens decided to organize themselves into a Patriotic League to promote his candidacy, and openly advocate his re-election.

Mr. Austin will not leave Congress and his public duty at Washington to come to look after his candidacy. In this he is right. He represents us, and as such is our contribution to councils of the Nation at this time of storm and stress. Therefore, we feel it is a patriotic duty to represent him in his absence and to solicit the co-operation of every man in the District who appreciates his ability and past services.

The Second District has never been represented in Congress by any but a mature, well-seasoned and experienced man. This District does not look upon Congress as a training camp, or a cantonment to prepare ambitious and aspiring young men for future usefulness, or for the sake of "rotation" to displace a well-proven and able representative with a new man, especially now, when civilization is at stake, and none but our ablest and best are adequate to the task.

We feel that to displace Mr. Austin now would be unpatriotic. Mr. Austin's personal claims are strong. His party claims are stronger, but we are not thinking of any of these things. What moves us for Mr. Austin's return are the wider and better reasons of the country's welfare and of our desire to help at this time toward the task of winning the war by sending our best equipped man to again represent this District in the Congress.

We cannot afford to spare Mr. Austin at this time, even if he were disposed to decline renomination. In his announcement he has covered the grounds for his return. It is a fine record, deserving of endorsement by the people. His renomination is as sure as the day of the Primary, but that is not quite what the League would like to see these war times. We want to see a big, enthusiastic and hearty endorsement that will make him glad through and through. His services have been cheerful, hearty, unstained and able. Let us be honest and appreciate and make our endorsement equally so.

THE PATRIOTIC LEAGUE,

W. L. Trent, President.

## RAIDS SHOW GREAT ARMY CONTRACT PLOT

Men Claiming to Be Able to "Fix" Department Employees Taken by U. S.

## FOUR MEN ARE INDICTED

Charged With Having Offered to Obtain Contracts Provided Concerns Split Profits—Department of Justice Reveals Deals.

Washington, June 19.—Sensational disclosures of alleged graft conspiracy in connection with government contracts were made by the department of justice in announcing the indictment in Philadelphia of John Fleming, John T. Cavanaugh, Eugene Sullivan and Joseph Kohn.

These men are charged with having offered to obtain for the Quaker City Rain Coat company, Philadelphia, a contract for 100,000 army rain coats, provided the concern split profits for the use of their "influence."

The department severely scored the practices of "contingent fee contractors" and promised to round up numbers of these men in Washington, New York and other cities.

Late yesterday agents of the department and officers of the military and naval intelligence spread a net over all sections of the country. Private papers of hundreds of corporations having contractual relations with the government were examined.

They were all indicted by the grand jury for conspiracy to commit an offense against the United States.

### Practice Brazen, Says U. S.

Referring to the department of justice's warning of April 5 against the system of contingent fee contracts the department, in a statement issued this afternoon said:

"Instead of taking notice of this warning, the system has continued its practices. There are today a number of brokerage and contingent fee corporations who boldly circularize the manufacturers of the country, stating they have close relationship with some or all of the departments of the government and in some instances influence with individuals in these departments, sinister in character, which gives them power to obtain favorable contracts for their clients in consideration of a commission.

"In a number of cases the contingent fee man has informed the manufacturer that the latter could not deal with the government except through him, and that unless the manufacturer paid the contingent fee he could not get the contract.

"As government contracts run into hundreds of millions, the amount of these commissions can be imagined."

### To Stop Brokerage.

In addition to the announcement that search is being made today of the records of all manufacturers with contractual relations with the government, the statement adds:

"A search also has been made of the papers of certain corporations which act in the capacity of contingent fee operators. The government has been aided through loyal manufacturers who have volunteered information.

"There is no intention to interfere with legitimate relationship between manufacturers and various departments of the government over contracts, but the manufacturer must deal directly with the department and not through a middle man or agents employed on a contingent fee basis.

"The government through all its agencies is determined that money shall not be expended on contingent fees for brokerage contractors."

### Sentenced for Sabotage.

Elias Maaki of Biwabik, Minn., indicted for criminal syndicalism, who appealed his case to the state supreme court, where he lost, was sentenced recently to serve six months in the county jail or pay a fine of \$1,000.

Henry Huliska and Matt Mollanen, L. W. W., arrested with Maaki in connection with posting sabotage stickers, were sentenced to three months' terms or \$500 fines. This is the first time anywhere in the United States where sentences have been imposed in criminal syndicalism cases, according to court officers.

### Women on Labor Commission.

Agnes Nestor, first vice president of the International Glove Workers' union, and Elizabeth Maloney of the Waitresses' union, both of Chicago, have been appointed members of the Illinois Industrial Survey commission created by the last legislature. The commission will devote much attention to conditions under which women of the state work. Legislation will then be recommended.