

The Watchman and Southerner.

THE SUMTER WATCHMAN, Established April, 1850.

"Be Just and Fear not—Do all the ends Thou Aims't at be thy Country's, thy God's and Thine's."

THE TRUE SOUTHERNER, Established June, 1850.

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ENEMIES START FIRE.

TWO NORFOLK BLOCKS DESTROYED BY FLAMES.

Flames Causing Loss of One Life, Many Injuries and Great Property Damage—Believed to Have Been Started by Incendiaries—Number of Arrests Made.

Norfolk, Va. Jan. 1.—Nearly two blocks in the heart of Norfolk's business district, including the Monticello Hotel, were destroyed, one man was killed and a score more injured in a series of explosions and fires today which both the police and naval authorities here believe were incendiary. The fire had been checked tonight, but still was burning fiercely in the ruins. The loss is roughly estimated at more than \$2,000,000.

Three distinct explosions in as many buildings, one after the fire virtually had been brought under control, led to the general belief that enemy agents were at work. Mayor Mayo practically placed the city under martial law by turning the situation over to naval officers and some 2,500 marines and bluejackets from nearby naval stations assisted the police and home guards in maintaining order and preventing vandalism.

Naval patrols rounded up suspicious persons throughout the afternoon while five men were arrested as suspects. Two of these, Hugo Schmidt and H. K. Lessing, said to be Germans, were turned over to department of justice agents. Tonight there were reports that two Germans had been shot by sailors during the day but neither the police nor naval authorities would confirm them. The fire started before dawn in the old Granby Theatre on Granby street and gained rapid headway as the flames were handicapped by frozen hydrants, low water pressure and near zero temperature. It quickly spread to the Monticello Hotel and other nearby buildings in the block. It was brought under control late in the day but broke out anew early tonight, leaped across Granby Street and leveled half of the block there before being checked.

Falling floors and walls took a toll of firemen and naval guards. One fireman, Charles McCoy, was killed, and seven others hurt in the collapse of an upper floor of the Monticello Hotel in the day and tonight two firemen and several sailors were caught in a falling wall of the Lenox building. Three were brought out badly hurt but two others were left in the debris.

Firemen of Norfolk, Portsmouth and Suffolk with organized sailor brigades fought heroically amid ice and blinding smoke, and bluejackets led the rescue work when the fighters were trapped. Several of the firemen caught in the hotel were brought out alive through the daring of a score of the jackies.

Reports as to the number of explosions vary. It was first said that the fire in the Granby Theatre had followed an explosion but Fire Chief McLoughlin and naval investigators announced tonight that this was not the case. They said there had been three separate and distinct explosions. The first was in a cloak and hat shop near the Monticello. The second was on the sixth floor of that hotel after the first fire was practically under control and the third in the Lenox building, which later was destroyed.

Guests from the Monticello, who were forced to flee in the biting cold of the dawn after they had watched the theater burn, were taken care of in nearby homes and hotels. As building after building went down, with now and then an apartment house, scores were made homeless and the National Guard armory on City Hall Avenue was thrown open.

At the armory during the late day Red Cross workers and other volunteers looked after the homeless and also supplied hot coffee and sandwiches for the naval patrols and firemen who were forced to seek rest from their gruelling work against the flames.

When the firemen responded to the alarm for the theater fire they found all hydrants in the vicinity frozen. Fires had to be built to thaw them out. In the meantime the firemen looked on helpless while the big theater building burned. When water finally came, the pressure was so low that streams would not reach to the upper stories of the burning building and the fire soon was beyond control.

Portsmouth, across the Elizabeth River, was called upon for aid and the fire was checked until falling sparks fired the Monticello, where many of the guests had gone back to

FORCES FOR SEAS.

HENRY FORD TO BUILD HUGE SHIP PLANT IN SOUTH.

Charleston Named as Possible Location of Yard Promoted by Detroit Man.

Washington, Jan. 1.—A big New Year's surprise for the South was announced here today when it became known that within the next ten days in all probability the site for one of the largest shipbuilding plants in the world will be selected by Henry Ford, the plant's chief promoter, with the assistance of Chairman Hurley of the United States shipping board and a score of expert steel men and shipbuilders.

A brief announcement of a few days ago makes it almost certain that one of the following localities will be chosen: Charleston, Savannah, Brunswick, Jacksonville, Fernandina, Tampa or Pensacola. Inspection of sites will begin immediately and although Ford's friends here today were not prepared to make public their itinerary of Southern cities to be visited, it was stated that practically all plans had been agreed upon at a conference between Mr. Ford and the government authorities and that all that is lacking is an available site.

It was explained, however, that there would be no further delay in the matter and no red tape. Ford is ready to begin building the steel ships as soon as he can get the land. He says he can turn out a dozen ships a day and the payroll would be the largest any one in any section of the United States has ever seen. His head man alone receives a salary of \$45,000 a year and having already perfected all plans down to the smallest details for rushing the ships there will be absolutely no delay.

Although these ships will be of steel there must be millions of feet of Georgia, Florida and South Carolina lumber for use in their construction, and this feature alone will mean that much money will be spent in these States for material alone.

FIVE MORE SENTENCED TO DEATH.

Such is Verdict of the Court in the Houston Riot Trial.

San Antonio, Jan. 2.—Five of the negroes tried by the last court-martial for connection with the Houston riots have been sentenced to be hanged, according to the verdict of the court, as announced by Major General Ruckman this morning.

bed in the belief that the fire was controlled. They were soon forced to turn out again.

The combined departments apparently were making good headway against the flames, when the explosion occurred in the cloak shop and another blaze started. Suffolk then was asked for aid and rushed apparatus to the city by train. In the meantime the naval authorities at the navy yard and naval base offered aid and fire brigades were soon on the scene.

When the second explosion occurred, this time in the Monticello, Mayor Mayo put the naval authorities in charge. They placed patrols throughout the business district, threw a cordon of marines and bluejackets around the fire district.

Department of justice agents joined with the city detective force in seeking to unravel the mystery of the explosions. Three of the men arrested were placed in the city jail and federal agents took charge of the other two, Schmidt and Lessing. The latter, officers said, first represented himself as a department of justice official.

Fire tugs from the navy yard early in the day took up positions on the water front three blocks away and assisted the fire engines and pumped tons of water into the burning buildings, but the block on Granby Street from City Hall Avenue to Tazewell Street, virtually was destroyed.

Just at dusk the fire in the Monticello broke out afresh and, despite the heroic work of the firemen and sailors, the Lenox, Carpenter and Tazewell buildings, six story structures across the street were wrecked. For a time the naval Y. M. C. A. was threatened.

Although the fire still was burning in the ruins late tonight, the fire chief announced that the danger was over if the naval patrols could "check the work of incendiaries."

The fire swept district is but three blocks from the Elizabeth River water front on the north and five on the west. It is more than a mile from the Norfolk navy yard, which is located on the Elizabeth River in the western section of Portsmouth.

BOLSHEVIKI HOLDS AMERICANS

SAID TO HAVE ARRESTED MEMBERS OF RAILWAY MISSION.

Dispatch to London Newspaper From Petrograd Announces Action by Lenin-Trotsky Clan.

London, Jan. 1.—It is reported the Bolsheviki have arrested the members of the American railway mission at Irkutsk, Siberia, says a dispatch to the Exchange Telegraph from Petrograd.

The United States railroad commission to the Russian government arrived in Petrograd last June and until the recent Bolsheviki disturbances had been busily engaged in assisting the Russian railways out of their operating difficulties.

The personnel of the commission, which was not officially announced follows:

John F. Stevens of New York, former chief engineer of the Panama Canal, chairman; W. L. Darling of St. Paul, chief engineer of the Northern Pacific Railway; Henry Miller of St. Louis, former operating vice president of the Wabash Railroad; Geo. Gibbs of Philadelphia, former chief mechanical engineer of the Pennsylvania Railroad and J. P. Griner of Baltimore, chief consulting engineer of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad.

Chairman Stevens had the rank of minister plenipotentiary to the Russian government but his appointment did not infringe on the status of Ambassador David R. Francis.

A dispatch from Toyko dated December 27, said Mr. Stevens had arrived at Nagasaki, Japan, from Vladivostok and that he had reserved the accommodations of an entire hotel in Nagasaki for 320 members of his staff, who accompanied him. The dispatch also carried a statement from Mr. Stevens in which he declared it was his intention to return to Russia with his staff.

NO OFFICIAL NEWS.

Washington Would Not Be Surprised to Hear of Arrests.

Washington, Jan. 1.—No word from official sources had reached the State department tonight regarding the reported arrest of members of the American railway mission at Irkutsk. The department's communication with Russia has been very irregular, however, and officials would not be surprised if the report were true.

Although several railway units each comprising several hundred men are in Siberia to assist in improving conditions on the Trans-Siberian Railway, it is thought that only a few could have been at Irkutsk. They probably are scattered in small detachments along the entire route.

There have been frequent rumors that the railway mission was about to withdraw and return to this country, but the State department has indicated that the men would be kept at their posts and that although recognition of the Bolsheviki regime is withheld, there is no disposition to curtail the work.

PEACE CONFERENCE ENDS.

Bolsheviki Break Off Negotiation With Germans.

London, Jan. 2.—Peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk have been broken off by the Bolsheviki government owing to the German attitude in regard to Poland, Lithuania and Ennys.

Proposal that garrisons be retained at Libau, Riga and elsewhere, according to a telegram from the Petrograd correspondent of The Daily News today, were objected to.

GERMAN RAIDS REPULSED.

British Win in Skirmish on Belgian Front.

London, Jan. 2.—Several raids by German forces on British positions on the Belgian and Arras fronts, were repulsed, the war office statement today says.

NEW PEACE PROPOSALS.

Germans Said to Be Preparing New Statement of Conditions.

London, Jan. 2.—The Central powers within the next ten days will make new declarations regarding Germany's peace conditions, a dispatch from Geneva to The Daily Express quotes the Munich Nachrichten as saying. It is added that modifications may be introduced owing to the attitude of the entente powers.

PEOPLE FIGHT FOR COAL.

DISORDERS IN NEW YORK STREET.

Director General of Railway Issues Order Calculated to Furnish Much Fuel.

New York, Jan. 1.—With another day of bitter cold and intense suffering from the general fuel shortage, New York had today its first real coal riot. The disorders began when several hundred men, women and children who had lined up outside a large coal yard at One Hundred and Nineteenth Street and the East River, discovered several loaded trucks leaving the yard after announcement had been made that there was no coal for sale.

Some of those who had been waiting patiently with pails, bags, small wagons and baby carriages at once began to stone the office windows. Others followed the trucks, unhooked the rear chutes and seized the coal that streamed into the street. Police reserves were called and succeeded in restoring order when a representative of the coal company announced that coal would be sold in small lots after certain hospitals had been served.

Early relief from the fuel shortage is expected to result from an order issued late today by William G. McAdoo, director general of railroads, permitting the Pennsylvania Railroad Company's tunnels under the Hudson River, heretofore devoted to passenger traffic, to be used by incoming coal trains.

Reeve Schley, New York County fuel administrator, stated tonight that during the last 48 hours 64,000 tons of coal had been brought to the city and that 4,500 carloads were now at tidewater.

Navigation from New Jersey terminals across the Hudson to Manhattan Island is greatly impeded by ice floes and the Harlem River and Brooklyn's water approaches are in the same condition.

GERMAN DELEGATES IN RUSSIA.

Spend Much Time in Petrograd in Discussion of Trade Relations With Russia.

Petrograd, Dec. 31.—The German political delegates who are visiting Petrograd, headed by Count von Mirbach are devoting much of their time to preliminary discussions of the question of trade relations. Baron Admiral Keyserling declared today that no time was more suitable than the present for making peace, as he considered that it probably would be difficult to reach terms with the constituent assembly.

The Germans and also the Austrians who are in Petrograd, are making themselves thoroughly at home, visiting theaters, among them the French theater, and also the cafes and taking possession of the reading and lounge rooms in two adjoining hotels in which some entente allied officers are quartered. The delegates expect to return to Brest-Litovsk within two weeks.

GENS. HOYLE AND DUVAL RE-TIRED.

Generals Sibert and Mann Brought Home From France to Relieve Them.

Washington, Jan. 2.—Maj. General William L. Sibert, who returned yesterday from France, will be assigned to the command of the Southeastern Department. It is understood here today, relieving Major General William P. Duval, retired. Major General William A. Mann, who also returned yesterday from France, was assigned today to the command of the Eastern Department, relieving Major General E. H. Hoyle, retired. It is understood that Generals Hoyle and Duval will return to the retired list.

SNOW OVER STATE.

White Blanket Covers all South Carolina.

Columbia, Jan. 2.—A rise in temperature, accompanied by snow fall was reported to be general throughout the State this morning. The fuel situation is reported still acute, although some supplies are now being received.

INTERN ALL ALIENS.

Italy Will Round up All Alien Enemies at Once.

Rome, Jan. 2.—The Italian government has taken measures to intern all enemy subjects in Italy within the next four or five days, Laepaco says. No exceptions will be made.

GOAL TRAINS MOVE FAST.

NEW GOVERNMENT ORDERS SPEED FREIGHT.

Prompt Action Taken—All Existing Priority Orders for Whole Country Suspended in Favor of Fuel.

Washington, Jan. 1.—Coal trains went forward today under new government orders based on the belief of director General McAdoo that railway congestion rather than actual shortage is responsible for the fuel famine in many districts.

Upon receipt of reports that hundreds of loaded coal cars were stalled on sidings behind long strings of cars containing shipments of higher preferential rating than coal, all existing priority orders for the entire country were suspended by Robert S. Lovett, priority director of the war industrial board, on recommendation of the director general. This is expected to result in quicker movement of the entire mass of congested freight whose sluggishness has been caused largely by a multiplicity of priority orders.

President Wilson, it was learned tonight, will go before congress Friday to present his recommendations for legislation to make government operation fully effective and to provide for compensation of the carriers and legislation which has already been drawn will be introduced immediately after his address. Some officials think there will be a vigorous fight over the question of whether the legislation should be effective only for the period of the war and a limited time thereafter, or should remain in force until specifically repealed or modified by congress.

Representatives of the railroads were to have appeared tomorrow before the senate interstate commerce committee but when word came that the president desired to address congress Friday, it was announced that they would ask permission to withhold their statements for the present. The committee instead will hear Commissioner Atchison of the interstate commerce commission.

Director General McAdoo spent a busy New Year's day. He broke railway precedents by ordering that the Pennsylvania Company's tunnel under the Hudson river, heretofore restricted to passenger trains, be used to hasten coal supplies into the heart of New York city. The orders are to be followed, even if they interfere with passenger schedules.

The action was considered significant by railroad men not only because of the direct results, but because it indicated how determined the government is to use all facilities to their utmost regardless of previous practices, to relieve congestion and promote efficiency.

At the first conference of Mr. McAdoo in the New Year with his advisers and executives, it was decided to put additional ships now controlled by the shipping board into service carrying coal from Hampton Roads to New England.

Hundreds of telegrams pouring into railroad administration told of coal trains or individual cars apparently lost in yard confusion. These reports, most of which submitted to interstate commerce commission inspection, were referred to railway executives with instructions to clear out the stalled freight as fast as physically possible.

Early action to divide the country into operating districts with a government supervisor over each and possibly a federal railroad agent for each State has been urged strongly upon Director General McAdoo and he is said to be considering this policy.

CANADA MOBILIZES DRAFT ARMY

Men Will Join Colors Thursday For Preliminary Training to Be Completed Overseas.

Ottawa, Jan. 1.—The first draft under the military service act will join the colors Thursday. Commissioned and non-commissioned officers with actual war experience will give preliminary training to the men who will thus be familiarized from the outset with warfare under modern conditions. It is expected, however, that the greater part of the training will be given overseas.

GERMAN AIRPLANES DESTROYED

No Other Fighting, Except With Artillery, on Western Front.

Paris, Jan. 2.—Six German airplanes were put out of action yesterday by the French, it is announced officially. Artillery fighting continues at various points on the front, but no large infantry actions are reported.

NEW GERMAN SCHEME.

INSIDIOUS EFFORT TO INVOLVE ALLIES IN PEACE TALK.

If the British and French Premiers Meet in Paris They Will Consult Washington.

Washington, Dec. 31.—Insidious efforts of the Germans to involve the United States and the entente allies in the peace negotiations proceeding with the Russian Bolsheviki have developed to such a stage that, in the opinion of some officials here, notice of the propaganda must be taken and an attempt made to neutralize it.

If the British and French premiers are to meet in Paris soon with the purpose of discussing advisability of receiving and arguing the proposals of the Bolsheviki to participate in the negotiations as have been reported by a leading conservative British newspaper, they will act in accordance with the agreement rigidly adhered to by all the entente allies until the defeat of Russia not to entertain any peace proposals from the enemy without consultation with each other. In diplomatic circles here today it was said that any decision from such a meeting, would be promptly laid before the American state department.

Germany is believed to be prepared to offer a most any conceivable bait to an individual enemy in order to drive a wedge into the allies and cause its disruption and, having succeeded measurably with Russia, is trying to get that nation to menace her late allies.

Rumors that have existed for past fortnight to the effect that another peace proposal was about to be launched by the central powers, either through the vatican or some neutral state, are believed to have their foundation in the adroit attempt of the German negotiators to use the Russian delegates for that purpose. But in either case, if there is to be another peace proposal through those channels or if the Russian negotiations are to be made the vehicle to carry forward the German designs, it is believed in some quarters here that the time is ripe for a strong and well considered declaration by the entente powers and America that will effectively anticipate and counter this attack. It has been pointed out by state department officials that President Wilson already has twice announced America's war aims in unequivocal terms. Therefore it is assumed that if Lloyd George and Georges Clemenceau, after consulting the spokesmen of the allies, decide that a reply shall be made to the German proposals, that reply must take some other form than an address by the American chief executive.

Since none of the entente countries has recognized the Lenin-Trotsky regime in Russia it will be difficult for the Bolsheviki to convey the invitation for a peace discussion, but it is regarded as entirely possible that the German government might request the swiss foreign office to transmit an invitation to America and to her co-belligerents.

General staff officers here are understood to attach great significance to the present attempt of the central powers to force the entente powers to peace negotiations. To their mind it is a clear indication that the German military leaders have accomplished all that they feel capable of doing in the field. They can "hold on" for a long time yet, it is suggested, but they can not extend fields of occupation without an enormous loss of men and time at the risk of a terrible defeat. Therefore the Teutonic diplomats seek to realize everything possible from what the German armies have done and the Brest-Litovsk negotiations are the first steps towards that end.

Peace Delegation Returns to Petrograd.

Petrograd, Tuesday, Jan. 1.—The Russian peace delegation returned today. It is reported, from the joint session of soldiers' and workmen's bodies engaged in negotiations for peace at Brest-Litovsk.

Fighting in Russia. Petrograd, Dec. 31.—The battle between the Kaledines Cossacks and Bolsheviki troops has been resumed at Kursk, midway between Moscow and Rostov on Don. It is reported that there have been heavy casualties in the three days' fighting. The Bolsheviki are reported to have occupied Poltava, the scene of the historic battle between Peter the Great and Charles of Sweden. There is a famine in the government of Moscow.