

OFFICIALS PROBING CAMPAIGN TO RAID COMMERCE AT SEA

Filibustering Move Against
Mexico Also Is Being
Investigated

WASHINGTON BUSY
WORKING ON MYSTERY

Departure of Sea-Going Motor
Boats, Escape of German
Officers, and American
Yachts in Gulf of Mexico
Looked On With Suspicion
By Government Authorities

(By the Associated Press.)

Washington, Oct. 23.—A tangled skein of circumstances is perplexing officials here, pointing either to the institution of a new commerce raiding campaign by Germans in the Caribbean sea, or the beginning of a series of filibustering expeditions against Mexico. The justice, navy and state departments have worked on the mystery several weeks, without success.

The departure of several sea going motor boats, the escape of German warrant officers interned at Norfolk, and the mysterious movements of several American yachts in the Gulf of Mexico, have baffled not only officials of the Washington government who are anxious to prevent violations of neutrality through use of American territory as a base of naval operations, but also agents of the British government, who fear a commerce raiding campaign is about to be begun against the tank steamers which carry oil from Mexican ports for use of the British navy. The circumstances, which officials believe are all connected in a general way, follows:

1. The sudden departure of six interned German warrant officers from Norfolk in the motor yacht Eclipse, provision for several days voyage.

2. The arrival at Buena Ventura, Colombia, of an American ship "Academy" from San Francisco, heavily provisioned. One of the owners of the Academy telegraphed the government here that the vessel had no instructions to go to Colombia. The captain of the vessel claimed that he put into the Colombian port for repairs. Some doubt exists as to the real identity of the vessel and officials have sent to the American consul at Callao the registry number of the Academy and have asked for a complete description.

3. Two yachts, the Alameda and the Ventura—have been lying at Key West, Florida, for several weeks. Louis Van Horn, of New York city, who owned them originally is understood to have sold the Alameda to a General Pasquero. The Ventura was recently stolen, it is claimed, from Key West, by "Mexican pirates" and recovered by an American coast patrol.

4. An American sailing vessel called the Two Sisters went aground on an island off the coast of Louisiana recently claiming to have come from Mexico for repairs. Her status is under investigation.

5. The American ship Zealandia left Pensacola, Florida, suddenly at night with a large stock of provisions on board for Tampico, Mexico, and with a number of Germans in her crew. The arrival of the vessel at Tampico has been reported, where an investigation will be made. An American flag painted on the side of the vessel originally had been painted out. It is claimed the vessel flew the German flag at sea, but this has been denied by the owners.

6. An American yacht Ethel disappeared from Jacksonville, Fla., within the last few weeks, and has not been found.

Officials have two theories as to the meaning of this series of happenings. One is that wealthy Mexicans in the United States are financing filibustering expeditions that have some connection with the raids in the vicinity of Brownsville, Texas, and the other is small boats putting out from the United States are being met at sea and armed with guns of medium caliber for raiding purposes.

The latter theory originated when a British tank steamer arriving in a South American port reported that on her way from Tampico, Mexico, she had been fired upon at sea by a small boat. The belief exists in some quarters here that a base of operations has been established on an island near the coast of Haiti where guns have been accumulated for use on small boats that are brought there from the United States.

OFFICE BOY ADMITS STEALING \$1,000 IN JEWELS FROM BOSS

Asheville Youth Returns Valuables After Making Confession To
Detectives; Asked \$30 For Giving Up Loot; Arrested By
Clever Ruse On Part of Police

(Special to The News and Observer.)

Asheville, Oct. 23.—Garland Benjamin, office boy employed by O. D. Revell, trusted with a number of tasks of minor importance is said to have confessed to plain clothes men following his arrest at an early hour this morning, that he stole from Mrs. Revell's bed room jewelry valued at more than \$1,000, all of which has been returned.

The youngster said that he went to the Revell home when he knew Mr. and Mrs. Revell had an appointment at the home of a friend, and he was confident that the servants would be

away. He found the jewelry on the dresser and hid it in his room in the Revell building.

He was trapped when he returned a portion of the jewelry with a note stating that the remainder would be turned over to the owner if \$30 were left in the mail box in Mr. Revell's office. His crude ruse worked poorly, detectives who were stationed in the building, nabbing him when he went to get the money.

Benjamin has been put in jail here and will be tried at the next session of the juvenile court, being but seventeen years of age.

RUSSIANS CLAIM SUCCESSES

German Drive at Riga Checked ALONG FRONT OF 675 MILES

FOR almost the first time since the great Austro-German offensive began last May, Russian military officers now describe the situation along the whole 65 mile front as satisfactory. They assert that the German drive at the Baltic port of Riga has been halted and that the Russians are gaining along the northern end of the line.

In the center of the eastern line there is little activity. In the south the Russians are represented by Petrograd as following up their recent successes. The official report from Berlin, however, says that the Russians have been defeated in several of their assaults and that the Germans have gained ground in one district.

On the Austro-Italian front one of the greatest battles of that war is in progress. The Italians are on the offensive from Switzerland to the Adriatic. This movement is described in Italian press despatches as the beginning of the second phase of the war, the Italians having accomplished their first task of penetrating Austria and securing Italy against invasion. The Italian war office re-

ports several victories but the Austro-Hungarian authorities record the failure of Italian attacks.

The Serbians continue to give ground to both the Austro-Germans and Bulgarians. The German war office announced that a crossing of the Drina had been effected near Visegrad, the Serbians being driven back. The Bulgarians have made further advances, although Sofia reports that the movement is being delayed in places by bad weather.

The bombardment of the Aegean coast of Bulgaria by an allied fleet is said by the British admiralty to have done extensive damage to harbor works and shipping. Italian men-of-war are reported from Brindisi to have participated in the attack which, according to Sofia, was "without military significance."

In France and Belgium another lull has set in. The only activities reported are three small German attacks, said by the French to have been repulsed and an action in Lorraine, which, Paris announces, resulted in the capture of a trench by the French.

PRESIDENT TO WIN KITCHIN FOR DEFENSE

By H. E. C. BRYANT
(Washington Staff Correspondent.)
(Special to The News and Observer.)

Washington, Oct. 23.—The News and Observer correspondent learned tonight from a reliable source that the President is going to try to get Representative Claude Kitchin, majority leader of the House, in line for the administration's national defense program.

Representative Hay, chairman of the House committee on military affairs, will confer with the President Monday. It is understood that Mr. Hay will support the President in his recommendations for a larger army and navy. The administration appears to be perfectly satisfied with the position assumed by Representative Hay, and it has now turned its attention to Claude Kitchin.

RUSSIANS EXPECTED IN BALKANS IN 2 WEEKS

(By the Associated Press.)

London, Oct. 23.—Rumanian newspapers as quoted in a dispatch to the Exchange Telegraph Company from Zurich say that the Russian general Visnolko asserted "in a fortnight at the latest Russian troops will land on the Bulgarian coast."

General Visnolko, who is Emperor Nicholas' adjutant, is now on his way to Serbian headquarters.

147 KILLED IN YEAR ON SOUTHERN R. R. TRACKS

(Special to The News and Observer.)

Washington, Oct. 23.—Making a plea for the conservation of human life, President Fairfax Harrison, of Southern Railway Company, states that during the fiscal year, ended June 30, 147 trespassers were killed on the tracks of Southern Railway. Mr. Harrison urges the development of a public sentiment that will put an end to the hazardous practice of trespassing on railway property.

OPPORTUNITY FOR BOYS TO PRACTICE AVIATION

By H. E. C. BRYANT,
Washington Staff Correspondent.
(Special to The News and Observer.)

Washington, Oct. 23.—When Secretary Daniels puts into effect his plan to employ civilians for the Aviation Corps of the Navy, ambitious North Carolina boys with a turn for mechanics and aircraft will have an opportunity to secure good positions with the government.

Mr. Daniels thinks that the best men for the aviation will come in as 18 and 19 years old boys with a genius for flying.

Congress will be asked to adopt the suggestion of Mr. Daniels, and if favorable action is taken every civilian aviator in the nation can get in the naval corps, provided he is a man of character.

WINSTON YOUTH KILLED BY FALLING TREE

(Special to The News and Observer.)

Winston-Salem, Oct. 23.—Mat Ziglar, aged 20, was killed by a falling tree while out 'possum hunting with two friends near Rural Hall at two o'clock this morning.

In felling the tree, on which the opossum was located, it fell against another one. Ziglar went under it when it dislodged, crushing him to death.

CLINTON MAN SHOT IN BREAST IN ROW WITH WIFE

(Special to The News and Observer.)

Clinton, Oct. 23.—In a quarrel with his wife tonight Ben Sparrow was shot through the right breast. The bullet passed through his body, but he is expected to live. Mrs. Sparrow was arrested and held in \$500 bond for her appearance in court on Monday.

The woman declared at a hearing before the mayor tonight that she saw her husband put his hand to his breast as if to draw a weapon and fired first.

ALLIES ATTEMPT TO DRAW TEUTONS OFF TO AID SERBIA

Attacks Widely Diverted On
Land and Sea To Rush Help
To Little Slav Ally

ITALY LAUNCHES
MOVE ON AUSTRIA

British, French and Russian
Warships Shell Bulgar Ports
While Moscovites Start New
Menace at Rear of German
Force at Riga, Berlin Officially Admits

(By the Associated Press.)

London, Oct. 23.—Widely separated though synchronous, diversions by the entente forces on land and sea, designed evidently to relieve the strain on Serbia pending the time allied troops of sufficient weight can reach the Balkan front, have marked the developments of the last 36 hours.

Italy, having confined herself for weeks to local actions, has launched a general offensive along the Tyrol and Trentino frontiers of Austria, allied warships, including Russian vessels, have battered the Bulgarian ports in the Aegean, and Russia has increased the pressure on the eastern front army by a coup of combined land and sea operations has flung men and guns to the coast of Courland, 90 miles north-east of Riga, thus menacing the rear of General Von Below's army, which for so long has been trying to take the Baltic port.

News of this surprise landing is disclosed in the Berlin official communication, which describes the forces landed as of small strength.

The fact that a Russian vessel participated in the bombardment of the Bulgarian coast is attested by a British official statement, and is welcomed in England as an incident which will dispel the idea supposed to be held by many Bulgarians that they are not fighting for their former ally. The Russian southern fleet, of course, is locked in behind the Dardanelles and the only Russian warship in Aegean waters, so far as known, is the cruiser Askold.

The admiralty statement speaks collectively of "British, French and Russian ships," so it is impossible to state the make-up of the squadron. If Italian craft took part, it has not been made known in England.

Russian participation has given stronger color to the recent rumors that she plans the landing of troops on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast.

What progress the British and French troops are making in their advance to the relief of Serbia is still withheld, and there are misgivings in many quarters that Serbia never will be saved in this way.

Greece's apparently authentic demand that allied soldiers, to insure her safety rather than allied concessions to expand her dominions constituted her price for aligning herself against the central powers and Turkey carries the implication that she regards the forces landed at Salonika as far from adequate for the purpose.

Rumania's stipulation governing her entry into the war in behalf of the entente powers, has, according to report, narrowed to a similar, though more specific demand for 400,000 allied troops to insure her against invasion. France, it is argued, in some quarters here, could hardly spare the men and so the burden would necessarily fall on Russia and Great Britain, primarily Great Britain.

The King's appeal for recruits in England has had a marked effect on today's enlistments, according to the London papers, and its ultimate effect, with a fair trial of the Earl of Derby's plan may decide the moot question of conscription.

That the Serbians position is grave is the opinion of the British press. With this admission there is developing daily an increasing rancor over Greece's attitude, coupled with demands that the allies do not allow her policy to drift while there is a possibility of her turning against the entente.

A Serbian official communication refers to the presence of French troops co-operating with the Serbian forces in the neighborhood of Strumitsa, but in none of the communications since the beginning of the new Balkan campaign has the English been mentioned.

The Bulgarians though harried by weather are driving further into the interior of Serbia, while the Austro-German forces on the north and east frontiers are maintaining terrific pressure and moving slowly forward. They have gained another passage across the Dvina river near Visegrad.