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REPORT OF SMASHING RUSSIAN VICTORY HAS BEEN CONFIRMED; BULGARIA'S DECLARATION OF WAR AGAINST SERBIA

RUSSIA WILL ENTER BALKAN CONFLICT

Has Decided to Take Joint-Action With Great Britain--Grand Duke Nicholas Will be in Command--Greece Remains in a Position of Armed Neutrality--The Situation in Serbia is Serious--Allies Continue Offensive in the West.

London, Oct. 12--Serbia is now being attacked from the north and the east. The Austro-Germans, after their capture of Belgrade and Semendria, are advancing southward, while the Bulgarians have sent forces to endeavor to interrupt communications north and south of Nish, the war time capital of Serbia, and attack the Serbs on the flank, if they are driven back by the German Field Marshal von Mackensen.

The situation is admitted to be a very serious one, not only for Serbia but for the whole allied cause. It is asserted that the Serbians are inflicting very heavy losses both on the Austro-Germans and Bulgarians, but with their army of about a quarter of a million men they are believed to have little chance of making any prolonged resistance against three or four hundred thousand Austro-Germans and probably two hundred thousand Bulgarians. They already are arranging for their transfer to the extreme southwestern corner of the kingdom.

Greece, apparently, has decided to ignore the treaty under which she is supposed to go to the assistance of her Serbian ally in case of an attack, Premier Zeimis having said, when officially notified of the Bulgarian attack, that Greece "remains in a position of armed neutrality."

The followers of the Quadruple Entente, however, have decided to take energetic action. As soon as the news of the Bulgarian attack on Serbia was received in London, the Bulgarian minister was handed his passports and M. Viviani, the French premier, in the Chamber of Deputies today, declared that France, Great Britain and Russia had decided to take joint action and that tomorrow "Russian troops will be fighting by the side of ours."

An Anglo-French force is known to be landing in Saloniki, but there is considerable speculation as to where Russia will enter the Balkan conflict. It is reported the Grand Duke Nicholas is to command the Russian Balkan army, which, it is believed in military circles here, would make the Bulgarian people less willing to fight against Russia, there being a deep veneration among the Bulgarian peasants for the Emperor of Russia and his family.

TROOPS NEEDED AT HOME.

It is understood that Italy has decided not to co-operate with the Allies in the Balkans, the Italian government being of the opinion that troops cannot be spared for any campaign other than in Trentino and Trieste.

Now that Austria and Germany have entered on their Balkan enterprise, which is interpreted as the first step toward an endeavor to secure a German empire in the near east, there can be no drawing back, but the Allies hope that with a vigorous offensive both on the east and the west, they will be able, at least, to prevent the sending of any large reinforcements to Field Marshal von Mackensen.

The French in both the Champagne and Artois regions of France are continuing their offensive, but not on the scale of the recent attacks. The British, after their success in repelling the German attack, are preparing for another move, but at what point only the commanding generals know. Now that they have started, it is believed here that the British and French on the western line will give the Germans no rest.

It is much the same on the eastern

front. The Austro-Germans have kept in the region of Dvinsk. The brought their offensive to an end, ex-Russians have recuperated wonderfully and are striking back in their familiar way. The Germans claim another success west of Dvinsk but they are still fighting to the west of Iloukset. They also announce that Russian counter attacks have been repulsed south of the Pripiet river, in Volhynia and in Galicia.

RUSSIANS "REGAIN INITIATIVE"

The Russians seemingly have entirely regained the initiative, especially in Galicia. Here it is reported from Petrograd that the Russians have won a victory on the River Strypa. The territory on which this battle was fought marks the extreme left of the Russian battle line. The Russian offensive on this point started several weeks ago, when successes were won at Tarnopol and Trembowla.

Austro-German reinforcements were rushed up and hard and incessant fighting has taken place since. General Count Bothmer commands the Austro-Germans in this sector and the German official report of today says that the position of the "German troops" with him is unchanged.

Geneva, Oct. 12, via Paris--The Austrian city of Gorizia, twenty-two miles northwest of Trieste, is about to fall, according to a telegram received here today from Brescia.

The Italians, the despatch says, have brought up a large number of heavy guns and are bombarding the town from five different points. At the same time the Italians are attacking the inner defences of Tolmino, while on the Carso the Austrians are said to have been forced to abandon several miles of trenches.

Heavy snows in the Carnic Alps are reported to have buried the Austrian gun positions in deep drifts.

MENACE TO GERMANS.

Petrograd, Oct. 12--Although little stress is laid upon it in the official report, the success obtained by the Russians in a counter-attack on a front twelve miles long, from Garbounovka to Lautzessghey, was nevertheless a decided one. Garbounovka is in the mines west of Dvinsk, on the railroad from Dvinsk to Poniewesch. Lautzessghey is on the river Laukes, eight miles southwest of Dvinsk, close to Alexandriev, which lies northeastward. The Germans were compelled to evacuate the territory around the highway from Dvinsk to Novo Alexandriev. The General staff regards the blow delivered to the Germans in this district as a serious menace to the disposition of their forces between Novo Alexandriev and the railroad from Dvinsk to Poniewesch.

Simultaneously a strong movement of the Russians southeast of Dvinsk, between the Dvina and Lake Bogensky has pressed the Germans to the natural defences formed by the line of lakes. Pressing them west from Bidzy, Russian cavalry occupied the Village of Ostie, on the west bank of Lake Bogensky. Thus the Germans have been driven further from Dvinsk group of highways and the roads leading to them.

The new positions occupied by the Russians around Dvinsk fully cover the city and its environs and the taking up of the new lines has neutralized previous German successes.

Lieut. Governor Wood is a guest at the Queen.

LIBERALS MAY HOLD CONVENTION

Ottawa, Oct. 12--A national convention, along the lines of the great convention of 1893, twenty-two years which presaged the return of Liberalism to administrative and legislative responsibility in Canada for a decade and a half is being mooted by some of the prominent Liberals in various parts of the dominion.

It is realized that the next few years, especially following the conclusion of the war, will see Canada confronted with many great problems of statesmanship. There is little doubt but that after the next election the Liberal party will be called upon to solve those problems. The present administration during its four years of power, has met the great problems of transportation, fiscal policy, technical education, civil service reform, national economy, the cost of living, wider markets, political purity, rural development, the employment situation and nearly every other problem of a great and growing country by the expedient of either referring them to a royal commission, or in no definite action, or else by shelving them altogether. On practically all of these problems the Liberal leaders in parliament have announced a progressive stand.

To further solidify, organize, and define party action and to place the party in a position both to assure victory at the next election, and to be in the best possible position to cope with the problems which will have to be met, when the reins of office are again assumed, the convention is suggested as a means both of strengthening the hands of the present leaders, and of securing an authoritative expression of opinion from all parts of the dominion.

It is not a question so much of the immediate necessities of party policy with regard to the war, or the issues of the coming session of parliament, as it is a question of preparing for the issues which will have to be met a little later on, when the era of development and expansion is again ushered in, at the end of the war.

The organization of such a convention will require much preliminary preparation, and it could hardly be called in much less than a year. That is one reason why the suggestion is now being made that preliminary preparations should be discussed and the holding of the convention considered at the present time. Liberal leaders are recognizing that there is perhaps an even greater necessity of preparing for peace in time of war, than of preparing for war in time of peace.

The suggested convention, if held a year or so hence, would take place at a time when the triumph of the Allies was pretty well assured, and peace was in sight. It would synchronize with the time of general reconstruction both in Canada and in the continent of Europe, when problems of employment, immigration, etc., would be becoming acute.

It is not proposed that the convention, though a party one, should be of a partizan character. It is not the achievement of office, but the enunciation and clarifying of principles which the promoters of the convention have primarily in mind. It is twenty-two years since the last great Liberal convention was held, and since then new problems have arisen, largely through the development of the country during the years that followed 1896 up to 1911. It is felt that it would only be fair to the present Liberal party leaders and an undoubted assistance to them if they would have an opportunity of meeting the Liberal party in convention, giving an account of their stewardship and taking counsel with them as to the plans and problems of the next era of Liberal rule in Canada.

SERIOUSLY ILL.

Frederick, only son of Rev. and Mrs. A. F. Newcomb, is seriously ill from an attack of pneumonia. Owing to his illness, Mr. and Mrs. Newcomb were not able to leave for Truro to attend the Maritime Baptist Convention.

London, Oct. 13--It is unofficially reported that Bulgaria has declared war against Serbia. Little is known here of the progress of hostilities between these combatants beyond the fact that Bulgaria has invaded Serbia and is said to have suffered reverses in the opening engagements. In northern Serbia the Austro-German invaders are meeting with stubborn resistance.

RUSSIA'S GREAT VICTORY

(SPECIAL CABLE TO THE MAIL.)

London, Oct. 13--A Report from Petrograd yesterday of an important Russian success in Galicia has been confirmed officially. General Ivanoff has broken the Austro-German front along the Strypa taking 2000 prisoners and a number of guns. If the Russian victory is as decisive as is indicated by the official reports the Austrians may be compelled to fall back on Lemberg. Such a retreat would be certain to have a considerable moral effect in the Balkans where the continued neutrality of several states is believed to be due largely to several reverses suffered by Russia during the summer campaign.

BIG FIGHT GOING ON

(SPECIAL TO THE MAIL.)

Paris, Oct. 13--It is reported that a great fight is now progressing in Champagne which is regarded as an indication that the French intend to resume the offensive.

FRENCH ON THE OFFENSIVE

London, Oct. 13--From the western front come reports bearing evidence that the French are resuming offensive in Champagne. Paris claims slow but steady progress accompanied by the capture of a few prisoners and heavy losses for the Germans.

BREAKS WITH BULGARIA

London, Oct. 13--The following official announcement of the dismissal of the Bulgarian minister to Great Britain was issued tonight:

"His Majesty's government announces that the Bulgarian minister has been handed his passports, and that diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Bulgaria have been broken off."

WILL ROUMANIA INTERFERE?

Paris, Oct. 11--A Havas despatch from Bucharest, filed Oct. 5, but delayed by the censor, says:

"Reports from Dobrudja tell of the concentration of Bulgarian troops in cantonments about three miles from the Roumanian frontier. These troops are engaged in constructing trenches and at one place the presence of artillery is reported."