

RUSS-GERMAN NEGOTIATIONS

Conflicting Rumors Are Still the Main News.

London Cable says—Berlin advises received at Amsterdam say that the commission provided for in the Russian-German armistice agreement proposed to Petrograd to-day. It is headed by Count von Wirsach, former German minister to Greece, and will undertake to reach a settlement with the Russian authorities for the exchange of prisoners and incapacitated war prisoners, and also devise measures to restore relations between Germany and Russia.

The commission includes a number of officials of the Foreign and War Ministries. A Petrograd despatch reads: "It is reported that the German delegation that was expected in Petrograd Thursday is proceeding to Dvinsk instead, fearing that a visit to Petrograd would be misinterpreted."

There is an unofficial report, which cannot be confirmed, that the Russians have given the Germans 48 hours in which to accept or reject the Russian peace proposals.

Other despatches differ from the above. The peace negotiations have been suspended until January 24 pending consultation by the German delegates with their Government on a Russian despatch printed by the Times to-day. The Russian delegates, it was stated, are returning from Brast-Litovsk to Petrograd.

Two commissions to negotiate peace will be formed, the Times correspondent asserted, one to meet at Petrograd, and the other at Odessa. Both will consider purely military aspects of the situation. A third will shortly be appointed to prepare for a prospective European peace conference.

The peasant delegation which went to Kiev to effect a compromise between the Bolshevik authorities and the Ukraine Rada report that they had no success.

The Central Executive Committee of the Workers and Soldiers' Delegates yesterday approved the appointment of seven Social revolutionists as members of the Council of National Commissioners to replace Bolshevik members. Four of the new appointees will have portfolios, among them those of Justice and Agriculture. Three of them will be without portfolios. The number of Bolshevik members of the Council is ten, including one woman, Alexandra Kollontai, Minister of Public Welfare.

Efforts made by Social Democrats members of the Central Executive to point out the significance of the changes failed. Their request that the president of the Council explain the reason for the changes was voted down by the Bolshevik members.

ATTITUDE OF AMERICA. Washington Despatch—Great forbearance and patience will be exerted by the American Government in dealing with the chaotic Russian situation because it is realized that German intrigue, working through thin disguised agents within the ranks of the Bolsheviks, is doing its utmost to bring about a breach between the United States and Russia.

It was authoritatively stated to-day that American representatives in Russia, diplomatic, economic and others, will carefully avoid any interference with the internal politics of the country and will be guided in their conduct by the strictest rules of neutrality as between the Russian factions. It is the purpose to permit the Russian people themselves to work out their own salvation, free from any American interference.

There still is a deep-seated conviction in administration circles that within a reasonable period of time a satisfactory and probably permanent Government of democratic form will be developed from the present turmoil.

Despatches to the State Department show that every opportunity is being seized upon by the German agencies to misrepresent the attitude of America towards the Bolshevik movement, and particularly to inflame the excitable Russian public against the personnel of the American Embassy and its head, Ambassador Francis.

RATHER KAISER THAN REPUBLIC

H. G. Wells Charges High Groups in England

With Opposition to Allies' War Aims.

London Cable—H. G. Wells in a long and interesting article in the Daily Mail discusses in characteristic fashion the question of the Allies' war aims. He says: "We want Germany to become a democratically controlled state, such as is the United States to-day, with open methods and pacific intentions, instead of remaining the belated fist. If we can bring that about we have achieved our aim; if we cannot, then this struggle has been for us only such a loss and failure as humanity never has known before."

The Great Britain there are groups and classes of people, not numerous and not representative, but who are placed in high and influential positions and capable of free and public utterance who are secretly and bit-

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The translation of Sir John R. Jellicoe to the honorable eclipse of a seat in the House of Lords and the promotion of the Second Sea Lord to an official communication to-night, will convey but one interpretation to the mind of the general public in view of the strong criticisms for a long time passed upon the Admiralty, which culminated in deep disappointment and even hostility.

The official announcement says nothing of Admiral Jellicoe's having for any reason desired to resign his appointment, but merely announced his retirement by Vice-Admiral Wemyss and the bestowal of a peerage "in recognition of his very distinguished service."

The announcement proceeds: "During the war Admiral Jellicoe was for two years and four months in command of the Grand Fleet before he came to the Admiralty to take up the position of First Sea Lord, which he has held with distinction for the past thirteen months. It is hoped that his services and experience may be made use of at a later date in another important appointment."

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U. S. RAILWAYS TAKEN OVER BY THE STATE

President Assumes Control and Operation of Every Road in Country.

BRITISH SYSTEM

To Be Followed, With W. G. McAdoo, Director-General.

Washington, D.C., Despatch—Government possession and operation of the nation's railroads for the war was proclaimed by President Wilson to-night, to become effective at noon next Friday, Dec. 28. William G. McAdoo, retaining his place in the Cabinet as secretary of the treasury, is placed in charge as Director-General of railroads.

Every railroad engaged in general transportation, with its appurtenances, including steamship lines, is taken over, and all systems will be operated as one under the Director-General.

A statement accompanying his proclamation the President announced that as soon as Congress reassembles he will recommend legislation guaranteeing pre-war earnings and maintenance of railroad properties in good repair.

Government backing will be given to new issues of railroad securities that a ready market may be found. The President's move, although forecasted for weeks, came at this time as a great surprise to nearly everybody in Washington, including railroad officials. It had been generally believed he would await the reassembling of Congress before taking any steps. He acted through Secretary of War Baker under authority conferred in the Army Appropriation Act.

Direct management of the roads will remain in the hands of railroad officials, and the railroad war board, comprised of five railroad heads, will continue to direct actual operation under Secretary McAdoo's general supervision.

TO UNIFY ALL SYSTEMS. The chief practical effect of Government operation will be to permit a complete unification of all rail systems, impossible under private operation by reason of statutes prohibiting pooling of rail traffic and earnings. The roads themselves had none so far as they dared in this direction, and it became known only to-day

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