



Facts about the War

A BULLETIN OF INFORMATION

PUBLISHED BY THE

PARIS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Paris, May 1916.

Angl. — N° 35.

The United States defend the Rights of Neutrals. — President Wilson assembled both of the American chambers in Congress for the purpose of formally announcing the despatch of a Note to the Government at Berlin, which would call upon Germany to decide whether she would abandon her submarine policy or incur the risk of an inevitable diplomatic break.

In his speech the President laid particular stress upon his determination to henceforth ensure that all due respect be paid to the "Sacred Rules of International Law".

"The Government of the United States has been very patient and has hoped even against hope that it would prove possible for Germany so to order and control the acts of her naval commanders as to square her policy with the principles of humanity as embodied in the Law of Nations....

"Therefore, it has become painfully evident that the position which the Imperial German Government took at the very outset is inevitable — namely, that the use of the submarine for the destruction of the enemy's commerce, of necessity because of the very character of the vessels employed and of the very methods of attack which their employment involves, *is incompatible with the principles of humanity, the long-established and incontrovertible rights of neutrals, and the sacred immunities of non-combatants.*

"I have deemed it my duty, therefore, to say to the Imperial German Government that, if it is still its purpose to prosecute relentless indiscriminate warfare against vessels of commerce by the use of submarines, notwithstanding the now demonstrated impossibility of conducting that warfare in accordance with what the Government of the United States must consider *the sacred and indisputable rules of International Law and the universally recognized dictates of humanity*, the Government of the United States is at last forced to the conclusion that there is but one course it can pursue, and unless the Imperial German Government now immediately declare and effect the abandonment of its present methods of warfare against passenger and freight carrying vessels, this Government will have no choice but to sever diplomatic relations with the Government of the German Empire altogether.

"This decision I have arrived at with the keenest regret. The possibility of the action contemplated, I am sure all thoughtful Americans look forward to with unaffected reluctance, but we cannot forget that

we are, in some sort, and by the force of circumstances, responsible spokesmen of the rights of humanity. We cannot remain silent while those rights seem in process of being swept utterly away in the maelstrom of this terrible war. We owe it to the due regard of our own rights as a nation, to our sense of duty as a representative of the rights of neutrals the world over, and to a just conception of the rights of mankind to take this stand now. With the utmost solemnity and firmness I have taken it."

The Prices of Foodstuffs in Berlin. — The *Vossische Zeitung* on April 8th ult. published the prices for articles of food in Berlin. The table given below, comparing figures for last year and this, will express far more clearly than words the economic difficulties Germany has now to contend with :

			March 29 th /15 to April 3 rd /15	March 27 th /16 to April 1 st /16	
			Marks.	Marks.	
Meat.	A) Wholesale Prices, per cwt. of meat.	{ Beef, 2 nd quality . .	80 "	245 "	
		{ Veal	67.90	225 "	
		{ Mutton, 1 st quality.	96.50	225 "	
	B) Retail Prices per lb. of meat.	{ Beef	1.06	2.77	
		{ Veal	1.05	2.40	
		{ Mutton	1.13	2.67	
		{ Pork (chops). . . .	1.21	1.80	
		{ Bacon	1.50	2.30	
	Divers articles of Food.	C) Wholesale Prices, per cwt.	{ Onions	14.50	30.80
			{ Pickling cabbages.	14.30	45 "
D) Retail Prices.		{ Butter, lb.	1.75	2.80	
		{ Eggs (each). . . .	0.12	0.22	

Russian Troops in France. — Just at the time when by the capture of Trebizond — after taking Erzerum — the Russians find themselves in possession of Turkish Armenia, and see opening up before them the route of the Euphrates, they have given another proof of the inexhaustible resources of their army, and of their entire adherence to the principle of "unity of front" amongst the Allies, for a large contingent of Russian troops have recently landed at Marseilles. General Joffre issued the following order of the day when announcing this fortunate event to the French Army :

"Russia, our faithful Ally, whose armies are already fighting so valiantly against Germany, Austria and Turkey, desires to give France another pledge of her friendship, and a still more striking proof of her devotion to the common cause.

"Russian soldiers chosen from among the bravest, and under the command of the most renowned officers, are coming to fight in our ranks.

"You will welcome them as brothers, you will show them how

warm your sympathy is for those who have left their native land to come and fight by your side.

"In the name of the French Army I welcome the officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers of the Russian troops landed in France. I salute their colours, which will soon bear the glorious names of victories won in common."

JOFFRE.

Colonial help with the war. — The participation — daily becoming more effective — of the French and English colonies in the present conflict, constitutes a fact of the most far-reaching influence for good and weighty with consequences for the future. Far from being, as the enemy had calculated, the signal for a splitting up of the vast over-seas Empires of France and England, the declaration of war brought into full light the latent patriotic unity of the colonies with their respective mother-lands. From the very beginning of hostilities, large contingents of troops from Algeria and Tunis were fighting in France, and greatly distinguished themselves at the battle of the Marne, and in Flanders. Later on, riflemen from Morocco were particularly remarked for their bravery in Artois (May 1915) and at the Battle of Champagne (October 1915). The troops from Congo and Senegal carried on the victorious campaign in the Cameroons; the corps from Madagascar has been sent into France while fresh native contingents have been raised in this colony. In French Indo-China our troops struggled against gangs in the pay of Germany; whereas the inhabitants of the Antilles, who are French citizens and, as such, subject to military obligations, have been sent to France. We may be permitted to see, in the loyalty shown by the French colonies, the effects of numerous political and economic advantages granted to them prior the war either municipally or in civil administration.

The British colonies too have shown quite as much eagerness in coming forward to help their mother-country. According to the official statement made in London by the Premier of the Australian Federation, Australia, whose population does not exceed 5 millions, had sent up to the beginning of March, 150,000 men to the English front. She had enrolled 268,000 recruits at that time, and by June these will number 300,000 men. New-Zealand shipped 25,000 men to the Orient, and is to supply 30,000 more before the end of this year. She holds 100,000 volunteers in reserve. Two months after the declaration of war, the Dominion of Canada had already equipped and sent to Europe her first Expeditionary Force of 35,000 men. At present there are 120,000 Canadians, either in action or in reserve at the front. The increasing of the national army of the Dominion has been sanctioned by the government to as many as 500,000 men; this number will be easily obtainable according to the figures of the recruiting offices. The troops of the South African Republic have conquered German West Africa and are now engaged in occupying German East Africa. Several Indian Army Corps are in Egypt and Mesopotamia. One instance will suffice to show the value of the aid given to Britain by

her colonies, viz. : Australia alone supplied the mother-country with forces nearly double the strength of the original English Expeditionary Force, disdainfully called " French's despicable little army " by the *Kaiser*. Moreover, one of the most striking effects of the Austro-German aggression will doubtless be the close and fraternal cooperation, in the defence of the Liberty of nations, amongst men belonging to the most distinct and varied races. This aggression will have still more " closely cemented ", as Mr. Bonar Low, the British Colonial Secretary, said, all the elements scattered throughout the world, forming the vast colonial Empires of France and England.

The King of Saxony's brother condemns Germany. — In 1915, Mr. Emil Prum, the head of the Roman Catholic party in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, and formerly a deputy, published an open letter under the title of *German Hostilities in Belgium and the Instructions of Benedict XV*, addressed to the leader of the German Roman Catholic centre, Erzberger. Amongst other important documents this pamphlet, which was seized, and its author prosecuted, by the German authorities, contained a special letter to Baron von Mathies, from Prince Max of Saxony, a priest, and brother to the King of Saxony, in which he condemns (see page 195) the acts of the German army in Belgium : "*The treatment that has been inflicted upon the Country of Belgium cries to Heaven for vengeance.... Had I been duly aware of this march through Belgium, and of all we were about to witness there, I should have gone as a chaplain to the army.*" History will approve this overwhelming testimony from a German prince.

A Swedish opinion upon the War. — Mr. Hjalmar Branting, the leader of the Social-democrat Party in Sweden, gave his opinion upon the causes of the War, to a correspondent of *Le Temps* at Stockholm, in the following words :

" Amongst the causes of the war, the first, as I have always said, is German Imperialism, that passion for overlordship and conquest with which the minds of the upper classes in Germany are imbued, and which has unfortunately tainted too large a portion of the working classes as well. No government bears such a heavy responsibility as those of Berlin and of Vienna. As regards France and England, no impartial minds, fully acquainted with the various diplomatic documents that have been published, could deny that they desired peace, and did every thing, up to the very last, to secure it. I am no advocate of a patched-up peace, but of one that will be stable, that is to say, just. This morning in the *Social-Demokraten* I pointed out that Swedish democracy wished for a lasting peace, and not a premature and short-lived one. Peace should bring to each nation the right to live according to its own aspirations. It should sanction no fresh injustice whatever, but rather abolish all former wrongs and existing hitherto. Only such a solution can assuage, in the long run, the national hatreds and allow of the normal development of Europe ".