

## NEAR EAST CRISIS.

### HOPE OF ALLIED CONCORD.

#### NEW KEMALIST CLAIMS.

### THRACE NEXT.

The centre of gravity in the Near Eastern crisis—as far as its political aspects are concerned—has now shifted from London to Paris. Lord Curzon left yesterday for Paris, where his conversations with the French Prime Minister will begin this morning. He is understood to possess wide discretionary powers in regard to the terms of the agreement which it is hoped he will be able to reach with the French Government.

Ministers yesterday were somewhat perturbed by the withdrawal of the French troops recently sent to Chanak, on the Dardanelles. It was regretted that this decision should have been taken on the eve of Lord Curzon's visit to Paris. Nevertheless, in view of the absence of tact from some recent British dealings with the French Government, it was felt that the British Government is hardly in a position to make complaint.

On the other hand, a distinctly unfavourable impression was produced among the public and in diplomatic quarters by the issue of a denial that "the Government" regard the publication of the semi-official declaration of Saturday as a mistake. This denial was taken as evidence that the Cabinet are not yet fully alive to the extreme delicacy of the position in which they have placed the country. A subsequent announcement that the British Government has officially expressed to the French Government its appreciation of the French attitude upon the question of a joint notification to Mustapha Kemal, and that it hopes that a spirit of cooperation will rule in future discussions, tended, however, to modify the untoward effect of the earlier statement.

Lord Curzon attended the meeting of Ministers at 10, Downing-street in the morning and left by the 2 p.m. train for Paris. M. Ninichich, the Serbian Foreign Minister, who had conferred with British Ministers on Monday night, left by the 10.50 a.m. train for Paris.

#### NAVAL ACTION.

The Ministers who conferred together yesterday were the same as those who met on Monday—namely, the Prime Minister, Lord Birkenhead, Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Curzon, Mr. Churchill, Sir L. Worthington-Evans, Lord Lee, and Sir Robert Horne. There were also present Lord Cavan, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Admiral Lord Beatty, the First Sea Lord, and Air-Marshal Sir Hugh Trenchard.

The Ministers resumed their consideration of the situation in the Near East, and of the measures necessary in the event of serious developments there. Their original decision was maintained that Kemalist forces shall not be allowed to cross into Europe pending the settlement of terms of peace and without prejudice to that settlement, and Ministers are satisfied that Kemalist forces can be prevented from doing so by naval action alone. Lord Beatty is following Lord Curzon to Paris obviously in connexion with this matter, since the conclusion arrived at by Ministers was the outcome of the advice of the experts present at yesterday's meeting.

There has been no official intimation from the Italian Government, but it is thought probable that the Italian force at Chanak will also be withdrawn. On the other hand, it is said that the British force will remain there.

The British Government is believed to attach very great importance to the maintenance of the inviolability of the neutral zones agreed to at the time of the Armistice and intended that their integrity shall be respected. It will be remembered that Sir Horace Rumbold was instructed to join the other Allied High Commissioners in Constantinople in a warning to Mustapha Kemal Pasha to respect the neutral zones.

The joint Allied Note was presented on

## WAILING CROWDS AT SMYRNA.

### EXPERIENCE OF AN EYE-WITNESS.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT IN THE NEAR EAST.)

CONSTANTINOPLE, SEPT. 18.

A British eye-witness of the Smyrna barbarities who has arrived here gives the following account of his experiences:

"The ghastliest feature of the fire which still haunts me was the wailing of the huge crowds of women and children on the quay, now falling, now rising, but always present. I myself had a narrow escape on the day of the Turkish occupation. A Greek soldier ran into me and asked me to hold his rifle and went off round a corner. A moment later a Turkish trooper appeared and asked, as he covered me with his rifle, 'What are you doing with that gun?' I explained. He said: 'I had the right to shoot you. Don't do so rash a thing again.' I gave him the rifle.

"I think Smyrna is ruined for many years. The villages in the hinterland and many towns are burnt, and Smyrna's business and trading quarter has perished. A large part of the population has been killed, has fled, or been reduced to beggary. Disease and famine will work terrible havoc with the hordes of homeless folk.

"According to the latest news, many thousands have been marched up country by the Turks. Their fate is unknown. Sixty thousand are still reported to be in concentration camps near the town. Most of the foreign residents are literally ruined."

"I should like to add that many British refugees speak in the highest terms of the behaviour of Mr. Thomas, the Constantinople representative of the Standard Oil Company, and other American—naval and civilian alike—who helped many British residents to escape to the ships and did not spare themselves in rendering assistance.

"One of these Americans told me that he witnessed a strange sight on the quay. Several irregulars were robbing refugees there, when they caught sight of a French Red Cross nurse. The leader attacked the girl and she fled. A French sailor in a destroyer fired on the Turk from two hundred yards. The light was bad, but the fifth shot took effect: the Turk, who had seen the danger and had turned to run, spun round, shot in the head.

#### THE MURDER OF DR. MURPHY.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

MALTA, SEPT. 18.

It would now appear to be definitely settled that the Smyrna fire was kindled in three different quarters and spread towards the quay where the people had gathered. It is stated by some refugees that fewer than six hundred houses were standing on Thursday last.

Among the refugees is the wife of Dr. Murphy. He had formerly been in the Indian service, and for many years had been settled in Smyrna, where he was known for his philanthropy. It is said he met his death at the hands of a Russian Jew, a soldier in the Turkish Army. This man, after receiving from the doctor all the coin there was in the house and a cheque for £2,000, struck him down with his sword, and hurled pieces of valuable crockery at him. The soldier then commanded Mrs. Murphy to play the piano. She fled, pursued by the soldier, but was succoured by an Allied patrol. The doctor was taken to hospital, where he died.

Another aged British subject, Lydia Maltass, a Bible reader, was murdered. Mr. Macleakin, the director of the American International College, who was advised to seek safety on board a ship, refused to go, and remained behind to look after the Armenian students who were members of his staff.

#### SURRENDER OF A GREEK FORCE.

##### ALLEGED INTERFERENCE BY THE FRENCH.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

ATHENS, SEPT. 18.

The report of the surrender to the Kemalists of General Kludas, with two regiments and guns, is now confirmed. These units were unable to reach Mudania, and marched southwards with the object of embarking at Panderna, but it appears that when they arrived at the outskirts of the town they were prevented from going further by the French, who maintained that Panderna was in the neutral zone. Thus General Kludas and his troops were compelled to surrender to

## DEFENCE OF THE STRAITS.

### AUSTRALIA READY TO ACT.

#### MR. HUGHES'S SPEECH.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

MELBOURNE, SEPT. 19.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Hughes, in making in the House of Representatives to-day an announcement on the policy of the Government in regard to the Near East, said, in allusion to the excitement which has been created in Australia, that there was grave danger of complete misapprehension of the situation.

The intention of Great Britain and the Allies was merely to defend the neutral zones if they were invaded by the Turks. Their object was to secure a settlement of the dispute before hostilities began by a conference, probably at Venice, possibly in Paris, according to Mr. Lloyd George. The position, therefore, had not developed beyond the point at which Australia was called upon to do more than associate herself with Great Britain in the steps which might be taken to preserve the freedom of the Straits and the neutral zones guarding them. While recognizing the importance of the freedom of the Straits to the British Empire, Australia would not support or identify herself in any way with the ambitions of King Constantine. Ninety-nine out of every hundred soldiers would with the utmost reluctance draw the sword for such a purpose.

But while willing at all times to stand side by side with Great Britain, Australia could not view with any other feeling than that of despair a great conflict arising out of the clashing rivalries of Greece and Turkey. The Government had, accordingly, asked for the fullest information in regard to the intentions and objectives of the Allies. Australia's ambition was limited to the freedom of the Dardanelles and the preservation of the inviolability of the Peninsula.

Beyond that (continued Mr. Hughes) we think we ought not to go, though we know that once we begin it is difficult to place a period to it. The information we have asked for we have a right to expect will be given. We have shown in a hundred ways our loyalty, and will show it again in defence of the Empire. We want to take part in no filibustering expedition. Indeed, we have asked that every effort shall be made to preserve peace. That is what we request. We say we are willing to do it. (Cheers from all part of the House except the Labour benches.) The dispute between Kemal and the Greeks interests us not at all. We trust that Kemal will submit this matter to the League of Nations or to the proposed Conference. We are prepared to abide by the result; but if Kemal seeks a short cut to national greatness by attacking the neutral zones, then we shall be with Great Britain.

The speech was warmly received except for a few sippant and hostile interjections from the Labour benches, and Mr. Hughes was generally and warmly complimented on the tone of his address.

Mr. Charlton, who made an excellent pronunciation of the case of the Labour Party, complained that the information received from the British Government was altogether inadequate and unsatisfactory. It was impossible for the House to judge the merits on such material. No matter how it was given why Australia should be dragged into another war. The people should first sanction it by referendum. "If," he said, "we are going to fight for the Empire, it is our thing that the Empire should take up its confidence." The House did not prolong the debate, and no motion was submitted.

#### CANADA SEEKING MORE INFORMATION.

##### MEN FLOCKING TO THE COLOURS.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

OTTAWA, SEPT. 18.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Mackenzie King, issued the following statement to-night:

"It is the view of the Government that public opinion in Canada would demand authorization on the part of Parliament as a necessary preliminary to the dispatch of any contingent to participate in a conflict in the Near East. The Government is in communication with members of the Cabinet in Europe as Canada's representation in that war."

## KEMAL'S TERMS.

### THE OCCUPATION OF THRACE.

NEW YORK, SEPT. 19.—According to a telegram from the Associated Press correspondent at Constantinople of today's date, Mustapha Kemal Pasha today requested the Allied authorities to permit his army to occupy Thrace, insisting that the Dardanelles question could be discussed later with the participation of all the countries bordering the Black Sea.

He pointed out in his communication that it was vital that the Nationalists should occupy Thrace in order to liberate the Moslem population, which is being oppressed by the Greeks.

At the same time, the Nationalist representative in Constantinople informed the British High Commissioner that the Ankara Government, by virtue of a treaty concluded with Soviet Russia and the Ukraine, could not accept an invitation from the Powers to a Conference limited to the discussion of the Dardanelles question only, unless delegates from Soviet Russia and the Ukraine also took part in the proceedings.—Reuter.

PARIS, SEPT. 19.—The Turkish Press Bureau issued the following statement to-night:

The statement made by Ferid Bey, the representative in Paris of the Ankara Government, to a representative of an American newspaper on the question of the Straits having been misinterpreted, the Turkish Press Bureau is authorized to make the following explanation of it:

"Turkey is ready to negotiate with the Powers on the question of the freedom of the Straits and she will take into consideration their wishes with a view to ensuring the opening of the Straits to international communications."—Reuter.

#### SOVIET HELP FOR ANGORA.

##### GERMAN OFFICERS JOIN KEMALISTS.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

According to news from a well-informed source, the Bolsheviks have for a long time past been transferring considerable quantities of gold and precious stones to help equip the Turkish army under Mustapha Kemal Pasha. Some of these treasures have been taken from the churches.

Formerly the Soviet Government sent gold abroad through the Baltic ports, but the last consignment to go to Western Europe passed through Rostal last May, and since then it has sent so much over the eastern frontiers that there is now a real shortage in Russia even for purchasing the most necessary articles. Some of the treasure from the churches still remains, however, but this is being rapidly converted into marketable form.

This traffic with the East is supported from Germany, and most of the war materials which, as reported in *The Times*, have been received at Petrograd and Kronstadt have been passed on to the Turks. Considerable numbers of German officer specialists have reached Angora through Soviet Russia, and their experience has done much to raise the efficiency of the Nationalist Army.

#### GENERAL PELLÉ TO MEET KEMAL.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT IN THE NEAR EAST.)

CONSTANTINOPLE, SEPT. 18.

I have reason to believe that Mustapha Kemal Pasha has requested an interview with General Pellé, the French High Commissioner, who arrives in Smyrna to-day.

#### NEW ZEALAND'S ANSWER.

##### APPEAL FOR ALLIED UNITY.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

WELLINGTON, SEPT. 19.

The House of Representatives to-day approved the Cabinet's response to Great Britain's Near East call. Mr. Massey, the Prime Minister, emphasized the need of prompt action in checking ominous developments.

"I have not the slightest hesitation in saying (he remarked) that in this instance the right thing is being done by the British Government. If this war is allowed to go on, if the Turkish troops are not checked, we may be faced with a war greater than the last." He warmly approved the Australian response, and believed that the other Dominions would act similarly. He trusted that the recent friction with France, the natural Ally, would be removed, since the prevention of war was dependent on a united Empire and united Allies.

## LORD CURZON'S INTERVIEW WITH M. P. FRENCH EXPLAINS.

### INTERVIEW WITH M. P. FRENCH EXPLAINS.

#### FRENCH EXPLAINS.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

Lord Curzon arrived in Paris last evening, but his interview with M. Poincaré on the Near East is understood to be to-morrow.

The presence of the British Minister in the French capital, ever, already produced a prevalent feeling of approval which will approach the Allied policy in the Near East in a statesmanlike and sincere desire to reconquer French points of view.

M. Poincaré, who is in a position to be of great support of his Ministry, the policy he will propose to the British Government, he was informed yesterday by the British High Commissioner in Paris by telephone with the President of the Council of Ministers, and it was meeting of the French Government was fixed for Thursday immediately summoned to the meeting was this morning under the leadership of M. Millerand. The Prime Minister has had a long conversation with M. Poincaré, who has expressed his approval of the French troops in the Near East, and the possibility of Turkish forces moving towards the East.

The meeting was held in the afternoon, and the Prime Minister has had a long conversation with M. Poincaré, who has expressed his approval of the French troops in the Near East, and the possibility of Turkish forces moving towards the East.

#### THE KEMAL

Ferid Bey, who is in a position to be of great support of his Ministry, the policy he will propose to the British Government, he was informed yesterday by the British High Commissioner in Paris by telephone with the President of the Council of Ministers, and it was meeting of the French Government was fixed for Thursday immediately summoned to the meeting was this morning under the leadership of M. Millerand. The Prime Minister has had a long conversation with M. Poincaré, who has expressed his approval of the French troops in the Near East, and the possibility of Turkish forces moving towards the East.

The meeting was held in the afternoon, and the Prime Minister has had a long conversation with M. Poincaré, who has expressed his approval of the French troops in the Near East, and the possibility of Turkish forces moving towards the East.

The meeting was held in the afternoon, and the Prime Minister has had a long conversation with M. Poincaré, who has expressed his approval of the French troops in the Near East, and the possibility of Turkish forces moving towards the East.

#### ITALIAN

As for Italy, I understand that the French Government has received support from the French people, and that the French Government will probably be able to carry out its policy of military cooperation with France, since the prevention of war was dependent on a united Empire and united Allies.