

February 7, 1917

Will there be war?

President Wilson acknowledged last Saturday for the Congress that he, as a consequence of earlier given promises to now fight a complete submarine campaign, has terminated all diplomatic relationships with the imperial government. If an American ship would get sunk because of German actions, or if American lives would be lost, the president intends to as the Congress to use all possible ways within international law to defend our country's rights. Other neutral countries have been officially notified about this U.S. decision and, if their rights have been challenged, they have been offered to make a similar decision. Although this decision may not necessarily lead to war modern history shows that almost always war is a result when a big country makes such a decision. All armories and army bases and the harbors in New York are now being guarded. The government is also considering taking over all manufacturers of ammunition. Clouds of war is threatening and preparations for war have begun.

Germany has one time formally promised Wilson that they will not sink any trade ships without a warning. Last Wednesday Germany threw the dice by in notes to the United States and other neutral countries admitting that earlier promises now have been withdrawn. It is like an answer to the questions because England and France now are adding canons to their trade ships both in the bow and stern and on the sides to fight German submarines. Germany has delayed an answer. The trade ships of the allies are considered assistant ships and are sunk without warning. Americans riding with these ships will have to blame themselves and accept the result. They cannot expect any assistance from the captains on the submarines. The submarine war will be fought without limitations and in a larger area than before. Germany will block the British Isles, France, Italy, Egypt and the Suez Canal plus the area in Greece which the allies have control over. As far as possible Germany will not allow the above mentioned countries to transport necessities or materials and ships discovered in the blocked zones will be sunk without warning. An exception to this rule is made for American passenger ships which are not carrying xxxxx, but these ships between American and England must be limited to one journey per week. The only allowed British harbor for the ships is Falmouth. The new rules entered into force on February 1, but neutral ships that were in the zones on that day would be allowed to leave.

Ambassador von Bernsdorff has, as mentioned, received xxxxx and ambassador Gerard in Berlin has been called home. We have broken our relationship with Germany but hope that we can keep the peace.