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GEN. PERSHING TO COMMAND AMERICAN TROOPS IN FRANCE

Expedition to Leave for Europe as Early as Practicable.

PERSHING WILL GO FIRST

President Signs Army Bill and Issues Statement Saying Under Expert Advice He Cannot Avail Himself of Col. Roosevelt's Offer—National Guard Draft to Regulars Begins June 15.

Washington, May 18.—President Wilson tonight ordered that a division of regular troops, commanded by Major Gen. John J. Pershing, be sent

to France at the earliest practicable date.

This is the answer of America to France's plea that the Stars and Stripes be carried to the fighting front without delay to hearten the soldiers battling there with concrete evidence that a powerful ally has come to their support against German aggression.

Announcement of the order followed signing of the selective draft war bill by the President and the issuance of a statement that under advice of military experts on both sides of the water the President could not employ volunteers or avail himself of the "fine vigor and enthusiasm" of former President Roosevelt for the expedition.

The army law provides for an un-

mate force of approximately 2,000,000 men to back up the first troops to go to the front. When the bill had been signed the President affixed his name to a proclamation calling upon all men in the country between the ages of 21 and 30, inclusive, to register themselves for military service on June 5 next. The proclamation sets in motion immediate machinery that will enroll and ship 10,000,000 men and pave the way for the selection of the first 500,000 young efficient soldiers, without crippling the industries or commerce of the nation or bringing hardship on those at home.

National Guard.

But before the bill was signed the War Department announced that the full strength of the National Guard would be drafted into the United States army, beginning June 15 and concluding August 5. Orders to bring the regiments to full war strength immediately accompanied the notification sent to all Governors. A minimum of 329,000 fighting men will be brought to the colors under those orders, supplementing the 293,000 regulars who will be under arms by June 15.

It is from these forces that the first armies to join Gen. Pershing at the front will be drawn, to be followed within a few months by recurring waves from the selective draft armies, the first 500,000 of whom will be mobilized September 1.

Pershing's Expedition.

Following is the text of the terse announcement of the War Department as to Gen. Pershing's expedition:

"The President has directed an expeditionary force of approximately one division of regular troops, under command of Gen. John J. Pershing, to proceed to France at as early a date as practicable. Gen. Pershing and staff will precede the troops abroad.

"It is requested that no details or speculation with regard to mobilization of this command, dates of departure or other than official bulletins given out by the War Department relating thereto."

Gen. Pershing has been in Washington some days. He was personally summoned by Secretary Baker from the Southern Department, which was under his command until tonight's orders was issued.

Plans for Expedition.

The man who led the expedition into Mexico with such judgment and skill as to win for him the complete confidence of the President and his advisers, has worked hard on plans for the expedition to France. He has been in daily conference with Secretary Baker, Major Gen. Bliss, acting chief of staff, with department officials cooperating in the preparation of the forces he will lead against the Germans and also with Lieut. Gen. Bridges, head of the military section of the British mission and a veteran of battlefields of France.

Nothing that either French or British officers have been able to furnish in the way of information has been lacking and there is every indication that the regular forces which will compose the expeditionary division are being selected with greatest care.

No Inkling of Plans.

No inkling of the plans for that division have been allowed to leak out. It is known, however, that orders have already gone forward to officers of tried judgment and long experience notifying them to prepare for foreign service.

The war in Europe has developed many new phases of battle not heretofore known in military science. Artillery has decided the fate of many battles and every army has doubled and trebled its guns, both in size and number. For this reason it was thought likely the expeditionary forces would include a disproportionate number of artillery troops and be backed by a solid wall of guns when it comes to grips with the enemy.

The number of men in the expeditionary force has not been disclosed. A division at war strength, however, totals more than 25,000 men of all arms and the "approximate" division of the War Department's statement probably will exceed that figure.

Gen. Pershing, a Republican in politics, was a brigadier general when he led the forces into Mexico in pursuit of the bandit, Villa. His work at that time won for him selection by his brother general officers as a major general and the choice was heartily

NERVOUSNESS AND BLUES

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endorsed by the War Department and President Wilson himself.

In his explanation of his reasons of his not availing himself of the so-called Roosevelt amendment to the army bill, Mr. Wilson has brought sharply the points made against that amendment by army officers, regardless of their regard for Mr. Roosevelt himself. Many officers who are warm admirers of the former President have unhesitatingly condemned his proposal to raise a volunteer army corps or division on the ground it would drain the regular service of men vitally needed to train the millions that must be whipped into fighting trim in all too brief a time.

The list of officers Mr. Roosevelt desired to take with him has been the subject of much speculation and comment. Because of the old association in Spanish war days between Major Gen. Leonard Wood and Mr. Roosevelt, it has been regarded that Gen. Wood was the former President's selection for supreme command of the force.

Gen. Wood's Task.

Under the plans of the War Department, Gen. Wood, by reason of his great experience in mobilization problems, his unfailing energy and enthusiasm has been assigned the hardest task of any general officer. He will direct as commander of the Southeastern Department the mobilization and training of twelve divisions, or more than 300,000 men, among whom without question will be those who will be first selected to follow Gen. Pershing's forces to France.

Colonel's Hopes Blasted.

On signing the war army bill tonight President Wilson issued a statement saying that acting under expert advice from both sides of the water he would be unable to avail himself at the present stage of the war of the authorization to organize voluntary divisions.

There was talk in army circles tonight of the possibility that a way would be found to use the former President's services in another way, but official comment on the subject was lacking.

In his statement the President said: "I shall not avail myself, at any rate at the present stage of the war, of the authorization conferred by the act to organize volunteer divisions."

"I understand that the section of this act, which authorizes the creation of volunteer divisions in addition to the draft was added with a view to providing an independent command for Roosevelt and giving the military authorities an opportunity to use his fine vigor and enthusiasm in recruiting the forces now at the western front. It would be very agreeable to me to pay Mr. Roosevelt this com-

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