

In France the cabinet was reorganized and the war services concentrated in the hands of a war council of five members. The post of Commander in Chief of the armies was abolished. General Joffre was appointed technical adviser to the government, but retired soon afterwards. General Nivelle was selected to command all the armies in France on December 12, and General Sarrail, in command of the army at Saloniki, was placed directly under the Minister of War. A law was passed offering bounties for the encouragement of wheat growing.

A conscription bill was passed by the parliament of Great Britain on January 24th, after a short debate. Ireland was excluded from the provisions of this bill. As a result three-quarters of a million of single men were added to the military forces.

The number of war workers had increased by July 1, 1916, to three and one-half millions, of whom 660,000 were women, and 4,000 factories, controlled by government, were producing munitions.

An economic conference of the Allied Governments was held at Paris in June, which framed many drastic proposals.

On Good Friday, April 21, a German submarine landed Sir Roger Casement, with a few companions and a small consignment of arms on the coast of Kerry, in Ireland. Casement was arrested shortly afterwards, and no body of men assembled to meet him or make use of these arms. On April 24, however, a serious insurrection took place in Dublin. Organized bodies of insurgents took possession of the post office, law courts, railway stations, and several adjacent houses. Fighting continued for several days before the rebels were subdued. Less important risings occurred at some small towns elsewhere in Ireland, which were soon put down. A number of prisoners were tried and executed by sentence of court martial. Casement was hanged in London on August 3.

The British Cabinet was re-organized in December, when the Right Hon. David Lloyd George became Premier. A war council of five members was then formed with him at its head.

On February 23, Portugal seized many German merchant ships which had remained in Portuguese ports since the beginning of the war. Four days later Germany protested against this action, and on March 9 declared war on Portugal. The Portuguese Government announced that its action had been taken "as a result of our long-standing alliance with England, an alliance that has stood unbroken the strain of five hundred years." A Portuguese force co-operated with British troops from Rhodesia in driving the Germans out of the southern portion of the German colony in East Africa. A division of Portuguese troops was despatched to France to act with the British Expeditionary Force.

OPERATIONS ON THE WESTERN FRONT, 1917.

The removal of large bodies of their troops to the Russian and Rumanian fronts had been one of the contributory causes which compelled the Germans to revert to a defensive attitude in the autumn of 1916. The month of January, 1917, was mild and the ground soft with rain, interfering materially with military operations on a large scale. Minor operations continued in several portions of