January 20, 1915.

Dear General,

The Ambassador is ill in bed & has asked me to send you this most secret message for communication to the Grand Duke.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]
The following message has been sent from
the First Lord of the Admiralty through His
Majesty's Embassy for His Imperial Highness the
Grand Duke Commanding in Chief.

"Your Imperial Highness' message was con-
veyed to the Board of Admiralty through Lord
Kitchener. The request contained in that message
for naval action against Turkey in order to re-
lieve Russia in the Caucasus has been subjected to
the deep and careful consideration of the Admiralty.
They have now come to the conclusion that, in ad-
dition to the minor demonstration of which Lord
Kitchener is telegraphing to Your Imperial Highness,
the
the common interests of the allied cause require
that some serious effort should be made to crush
Turkish opposition. The Admiralty have accordingly
determined to attempt, by naval operations, to force
the passage of the Dardanelles. It is thought that
these operations - which will, the Admiralty hope,
resemble the methods by which the Germans destroyed
one after another the outer ring of forts at Ant-
werp - will take 3 or 4 weeks to complete.

In order to put this plan into execution,
the Admiralty are assembling in the Mediterranean.
a fleet which is to be composed as follows: --

12 Battleships, (2 of which are to be
Dreadnoughts,)
3 Light Cruisers,
16 Destroyers,
4 Submarines
1 Seaplane Ship
a large number of mine-sweepers and other auxiliaries.

"It is expected that the attack will begin
soon after the middle of February when the concentra-
tion of this Fleet will be ready.

"The Admiralty have also invited the co-operation
of a French Flotilla and a French squadron of Battle-
ships.

"It is most undesirable that any information as
"to the full scope of the operations should leak out,
"as it is not possible to predict the degree of re-
sistance which will be offered by the Turkish forts;
"and it is of the most vital importance that absol-
"ute secrecy should be maintained.

"A sufficient margin for casualties and for
"the
the destruction of the Turko-German fleet if and when the attacking fleet reaches the Sea of Marmora has been allowed in the force available for these operations.

In conclusion, the Admiralty express the hope that the Russian Government will, by naval operations undertaken at the proper moment at the mouth of the Bosphorus and by holding troops in readiness to seize any advantage that may be gained, cooperate powerfully in the proposed attack. The Admiralty are of opinion that it would probably be more advisable for the action of the Russian forces to be deferred until after the destruction of the outer Dardanelles forts. By this means, any initial failure in the attack would not assume the appearance of a serious check to the allied forces.

It is, however, the intention of the Admiralty to push the matter to a definite conclusion; and it will be most desirable for them to have the cooperation of the Russian fleet at the right moment."

January 7/20, 1915.