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Germany Ready To Discuss Proposals Of Peace

Berlin, Dec. 9.—"If our enemies make peace proposals compatible with Germany's dignity and safety, then we shall always be ready to discuss them," said Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg in addressing the Reichstag today.

The chancellor made it clear that in his opinion it would be folly for Germany to propose peace, "as long as in the countries of our enemies the guilt and ignorance of statesmen are entangled with the confusion of public opinion."

Conscious of her military successes, the Chancellor said, Germany declines responsibility for a further continuation of the war.

Germany, he declared, could not be charged with the purpose of fighting on to make further conquests.

The address of Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg, which has been awaited with extraordinary interest, was made in response to the Socialists' interpolation:

"Is the Imperial Chancellor ready to give information as to the conditions under which he would be willing to enter into peace negotiations?"

In his reply, he said:

"As long as in the countries of our enemies, the guilt and ignorance of statesmen are entangled with confusion of public opinion, it would be folly for Germany to make peace proposals, which would not shorten, but would lengthen duration of the war. First, the masks must be torn from their faces.

"At present they speak of a war of annihilation against us. We have to take this fact into account. Theoretical arguments for

peace, or proposals of peace, will not advance us, will not bring the end nearer.

"If our enemies make peace proposals compatible with Germany's dignity and safety, then we shall always be ready to discuss them. Fully conscious of our unshaken military successes, we decline responsibility for continuation of this misery which now fills Europe and the whole world. No one can say that we continue the war because we still desire to conquer this or that country as a guarantee."

In these words the Chancellor, with impassioned force, stated the position of the German government on the question of peace.

His remarks were cheered with great enthusiasm. When Dr. Bethmann-Hollweg rose to make his reply to the interpolation presented by Dr. Scheidemann, the Socialist leader, silence fell over the whole House. The silence of his auditors was soon broken, however, by manifestations of approval. Several times the deputies and the crowds in the galleries interrupted him with cheers.

Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg began his address by saying that in the countries at war with Germany there had been much discussion of socialistic interpolations, and the knowledge that peace was to be discussed in the Reichstag had been a source of satisfaction to those countries. This was comprehensible, in view of the success won in the campaign against Serbia, which opened the road to Germany's Turkish allies and threatened the most vulnerable points of the British Empire.

Although this situation would explain a desire for peace on the

part of Germany's enemies, he declared, none of them had made overtures. Instead, they were clinging to the intentions which they had announced publicly—"a native brutality" at the beginning of the war.

The Chancellor then reviewed the recent utterances concerning conditions of peace made in the countries opposed to Germany, such as the handing over of Alsace and Lorraine to France, the annihilation of

"PRUSSIAN MILITARISM"

the expulsion of the Turks, cession of the left bank of the Rhine, and the creation of a great Serbia, including Bosnia.

It is true, the Chancellor continued, that there were some persons in the countries at war with Germany which took a sensible position, but they were in the minority, and their voices, like those of certain members of the English House of Lords, were unheard. The theories advanced by Germany's enemies, he said, had lost their force. People had ceased speaking of the war of twenty years.

The pretext that the war was being waged for the protection of small nations, and lost its persuasive powers in view of recent events in Greece. "Small countries are in a serious plight since England has been fighting for them," he remarked.

He discussed the principle of nationality as applied by Germany's enemies. He asked whether the British colonial secretary knew that of the 1,900,000 inhabitants of Alsace more than 87 per cent spoke German as the mother tongue. He asked whether Poland belonged to Russia by right of nationality, whether this principle lost its power and value if applied to India or Egypt. Germany's enemies, blinded at the beginning of the war by false stories, excited to hatred, were now able, after military and diplomatic defeats, to cling only to the idea of Germany's annihilation.

For this purpose there had been invented the theory that Germany could be starved. On this point the Chancellor said, with particular emphasis:

"We all agree that our food supplies are sufficient, that the only important question is distribution. The economic unit stretching from Arras to Mesopotamia cannot be crushed."

"We do not fight in order to subjugate other nations," he said, "we fight for the protection of our life and liberty."

"For the German government the war has always been what it was at the beginning—a war of defence for the German nation, and for her future.

The war can be terminated only by a peace which will give the certainty that war will not return. We all agree about that. There lies, and there always will lie, the root of our strength."

Dr. Scheidemann's address was received with a degree of interest second only to that aroused by the Chancellor's speech. He reminded the House that at the beginning of the war, the Socialists had approved the attitude of the government. A glance at the map, he continued, would show that Germany, conscious of her strength and her successes, could now speak of peace without running the risk of being considered weak-hearted

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or dispirited.

Although Germany had won enormous successes with armies he continued, they had been gained at the price of heavy sacrifices. In view of the present situation the question of peace was important in all countries. The difficulty lay in the question of peace was important know how to begin negotiations, fearing such a step would be considered a proof of weakness.

Dr. Scheidemann insisted that his remarks could not be interpreted as a sign of lessening strength but were made in view of the fact that the war was bringing Europe to the verge of ruin.

The idea that it was possible to starve Germany, he continued, should be abandoned. According to the recent census there were 20,000,000 swine and 55,000,000 kilograms of potatoes in Germany, which proved there was sufficient food for all.

The present moment, he declared, might become an historic one, since possibly Germany might gain the glory of having been the first to dare to speak of peace.

London, Dec. 9.—A despatch from Rome says:—

"According to indirect news from Constantinople, Germany has abandoned her idea of an expedition against Egypt in favor of a great Turco-German expedition against India. The German project is to organize an army of 400,000 Turks with 100,000 Germans commanded by Field Marshal von Der Goltz, and an immense number of guns, for an expedition in the spring, which will be preceded by a large Turkish advance guard which already is on the march to Bagdad. The Bulgarian army would undertake the care of the Balkan lines of communication to insure supplies to the Germans in Asia."

"We Are Certain To Win The War"

New York, Dec. 11.—A cable from London, this morning to the New York Herald says:

"I am now absolutely certain we will win this war," was the naively neutral declaration of Col. George Harvey, editor of the North American Review, when I saw him at Claridge's last evening, as he was preparing to leave London for America on board the steamer Rotterdam, Monday. He is going after a sojourn, during which he saw not only cabinet ministers, and heard at first hand their opinions on the outcome of the struggle, but personally inspected the reserves—an immense army of 4,000,000, which still is in the making—and the wonderful development of the great munitions, which contrast more than 2,500 factories, employing more than 1,000,000 men and women, and has transformed, as if by magic, the balance of shell power which a year ago, was three to one in favor of the Germans, to a ratio of five to one in favor of the Allies.

"Why are you so confident that victory will be with the Allies?" I asked and Col. Harvey replied: "Before I left the United States, I agreed with a Columbia professor, who said that the preponderant power in men and money was bound to tell in the end, but now I have a stronger argument—one which fell from the

lips of the recruiting sergeant in the Strand yesterday.

"Don't you want to be on the winning side, said the soldier to a group of civilians, whom he was suggesting should join the khaki."

"How do you know ours will be the winning side?" asked a prospective recruit.

"Well, my lad," said the sergeant, "you know the Germans have been trying for more than a year and a half to win, and have failed, don't you?"

"Yes," replied the questioner.

"Well, then, we've been trying to lose during the same period, and we could not."

"Knowing what I do now, of the improved situation in men, money and munitions," said Colonel Harvey.

"I consider the sergeant's logic unanswerable. Don't make any mistake. With shells to burn, and the finest body of soldiers in the world to do the burning, there is no chance of a German victory. The Allies may be forced to fight for two years more. Really, I think they will fight perhaps longer. But they surely will triumph."

"It has been intimated that what Britain needs to insure victory," I ventured, "is a strong dominating personality to dictate the conduct of the war."

"That is absurd," replied the Colonel. "There is no such personages in the world to-day. No Cromwells, no Napoleons. What applies to war, also applies to science, literature, and politics. There is no such outstanding personality alive. Therefore, the military, economic, and governmental affairs must continue to be administered by groups of able men."

"The Kaiser is the nearest approach to a dominating personality in this war. Not because he is a superman. He is not. But simply because he is practically an absolute monarch, the head of the House of Hohenzollern and he has achieved only pyrrhic victories."

"What do you think of Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg's speech?" I asked.

"Bluff," was the sententious reply. "But, mark you, I have no sympathy with the absurd doctrine that Germany can be starved into surrender. If that is the hope of any of the allied powers it should be dismissed at once. Germany would be able to live on her own resources for ten years. She must be whipped thoroughly but whipped from the outside, and it is because I know the Entente Powers are inflexibly determined to give to her the thrashing which she has earned by her inhuman methods of warfare that I am certain the Allies will win."

Col. Harvey closed with a tribute to David Lloyd-George, who, he said, is showing a marvellous grasp of affairs and has developed into a statesman of the first magnitude.

The Story of a Long Name

A northern man who was visiting in Baltimore stopped on the street one day to have his shoes polished. A bright eyed little black boy stepped forward to give the desired shine. Becoming interested in the little chap, the northerner asked his name, to which the boy promptly replied: "Gee, sah."

After a few moments of silence the northerner continued, "I suppose that is an abbreviation for General?"

The word "abbreviation" gave the little fellow pause. However, he was equal to the occasion and recovered himself. "No, sah," he said; "tain't exactly dis. Ma shore 'nough name am Genesis xxx, 33. So Shall My Righteousness Answer for me in Times to Come Washington Carter, but dey jast calls me Gee for short."—Youth's Companion.