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BULGARIA PLUNGED INTO THE WAR THREE YEARS AGO

The Most War Like of the Balkan Kingdoms Hearkened to the Siren Voice of the Huns --- Sold Out to the Highest Bidder--- Declaration of War Against Serbia a Base Act of Treachery

(Montreal Star)

Nearly three years have passed since Bulgaria hearkened to the siren voice of Germany and plunged into the world conflict on the side of the Central Powers and as an ally of her inveterate enemy the Turk.

While the German armies were winning victories in Western Russia in the summer of 1915, and while the Allies were smashing against the trench positions of the enemy on the western front, German diplomats secretly scored a notable victory in the Balkans. Bulgaria, the most warlike of the small kingdoms—Serbia and Rumania—which separated the Teutons from the Turks, was quietly won over to the German side and a treaty between Turkey and Bulgaria was signed on September 20, 1915. At the same time Field Marshal Von Mackensen, regarded by many of his countrymen as Germany's ablest soldier appeared at the head of a new Austro-German army opposite Belgrade. The Serbs were anxious to attack Bulgaria without waiting for a declaration of war but Great Britain persuaded her to wait, believing that Bulgaria could still be kept neutral if not won to the Allies side. It was not until October 15 that Great Britain finally declared war against King Ferdinand and whatever advantage Serbia might have gained by the initiative was by that time forfeited.

The Highest Bidder

The day after hostilities actually commenced a proclamation was posted in every town and village in Bulgaria. It was obviously German propaganda but it is not without interest. This pamphlet was supposed to state the case against the Allies and set forth that Russia was in the war to get Constantinople and the Dardanelles; France for Alsace-Lorraine; England to ruin Germany; Italy, Serbia and Montenegro for plunder. The meat of the proclamation was contained in the last paragraph, which naively declared that the Allies had offered too little for Bulgarian help on their side. Inferentially the German price was much higher.

Many factors finally decided the scale in favor of the Central Powers. Teuton successes in Poland and the

British reverse at the Dardanelles were two influential factors in influencing Bulgaria and to these were added their own ambition to attain the abortive terms of the Treaty of San Stefano. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that King Ferdinand is a son of Prince Augustus of Saxe-Cobourg, and that for years he has been on the closest terms of intimacy with the court of Berlin and Vienna.

The entry of Bulgaria into the war shocked the world because it was rightly regarded as the supreme act of national treachery in modern history. Before the opening of the first Balkan war the Bulgarians in their over-weening self-confidence promised to support the Serbians with a force of at least 50,000 men, but it was not long before the boot proved to be very much on the other foot and Serbia received a touching appeal to hasten to the aid of Bulgaria.

To this appeal she made a generous and immediate response and when Adrianople fell it was to the Serbian army that Shukri Pasha surrendered his keys and his person. At the close of the war Bulgaria proved but a tool in the hands of Vienna and they supported the Austrian machinations which prevented the Serbians from acquiring a port on the Adriatic.

The Basest Treachery

The declaration of war against Serbia was not King Ferdinand's only act of treachery against his neighbor for documents, which bear the official seals of Germany and Bulgaria have been lately unearthed to show that when the great Austrian invasion of Serbia took place in 1914 at a time when Serbia was in desperate straits the Bulgarians blew up the Strumitza bridge on the Salonika and for eight days the only line of supply was cut.

It was on December 13, 1914 that the Crown Prince of Serbia reentered Belgrade after taking 40,000 Austrian prisoners in the marvellous recovery that astonished the world. For nine months after this the Serbians recuperated from the blows which some of the bloodiest fighting of the great war had inflicted on them and then, like a thunderbolt, came the word of the new German plan to invade Serbia and unite with a new ally Bulgaria in order to open the route from Berlin and Vienna to Constantinople.

Bulgaria had mobilized every man down to the youngest class, leaving the women and old men to work the farms. She thought that the war would soon be over. It was essential to her success that the war be brief because only about 35,000 of her youths mature every year and she had no other reserves. Austria lent them plenty of heavy artillery and their attack against the Serbian rear was well designed and executed. The need for fighting men was so great in other areas that Great Britain and France could not send any considerable reinforcements against the Bulgarians in aid of the sorely pressed Serbs. In the fighting which followed the declaration of war the Bulgarian army under General Bojadieff crossed the Timok, near Prahovo, and joined hands with the German army under von Gallwitz. The campaign was conducted by General Mackensen and the Serbians slowly but steadily gave way.

Rail to Constantinople

The only assistance which Great Britain and France were able to offer was the limited force whose headquarters were at Salonika. A Bulgarian army was formed in the south to check the advance of the Anglo-French expedition which was operating under General Sarrail and quickly captured Veles, Kumanovo and Uskub. Early in November Nish fell into the hands of the Bulgarians after a defence of three days and with it the Orient Express Railway became available for the transport of munitions of war into Turkey who in return sent raw materials of which until that time the effective blockade of the Allies had deprived the Central Powers. In November, 1915, two British battalions moved into Bulgaria and prolonged the French front eastward. But a larger Bulgarian-German concentration in the Strumitza compelled the withdrawal of these units to Greek territory. On December 2 the Bulgarians captured Monastir and the conquest of Serbia was complete.

(Continued on page 3)

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DEMANDING A WAR BONUS

Ottawa, Oct. 1.—The memorial asking for a war bonus of \$350 for all the civil servants of Canada will be presented to members of the government on Tuesday evening of next week at a time and a place to be decided upon in a few days.

Last night the executive committee of the Ottawa civil service association



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held a meeting in the library of the Marine Department to receive the representatives of the special committee which has been handling the question of the war bonus. No details of the report were made public.

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