

# What Germany May Accept

(From The Nation, London.)

Europe enters the third year of the war. None of the belligerent nations will pass the milestone without questioning the past and peering into the future. The total casualties of the whole warring continent must number by now something like fifteen millions, a figure equal to the entire manhood of a Great Power, and this total includes, perhaps, three millions killed, and a like number of men permanently broken and maimed. A pestilence would have carried off the weak, the aged, and the immature; but these men were the selected fit. We cannot doubt that the third year, if peace is delayed, will be costly, both in men and money, beyond the precedent of the two that are past. To dwell on these losses is cowardice, if the war is still waged against an obstinate and evil will, which even now refuses the conditions indispensable to the world's future peace. To ignore them is criminal, if an enduring peace could be attained to-day or tomorrow. We do not fully know the secret purposes or commitments of any of the belligerent Governments. All of them will bluff, and all of them will pretend to take the bluffing of the others for the true statement of intention until the broad lines of the settlement are actually fixed. He is blind, however, who fails to see that the enemy is eager for peace; that his dreams of conquest and annexation are fading; that the German Government now rests on the support of the Moderates and the Left. We know, too, that Americans well able to gauge the real temper of both sides believe that a healing and constructive peace is or may be attainable. Let us attempt to sketch frankly, (as only the detached and unofficial citizen may be frank) what the indispensable basis of such a peace must be; remembering that every superfluous claim may mean months of warfare and millions of casualties.

The first articles may be stated without arousing even one dissenting voice. Belgium must be restored, without reserves of conditions of any kind, to her former status, and she must receive an indemnity which will not merely make good her material losses, but compensate her for her wrongs. France must recover every yard of her occupied territory. Serbia (with some provision for the just national claims of the Bulgarian population of Macedonia) must recover her independence unimpaired. We are so accustomed to stating these claims of restoration that we hardly realize their full significance. They mean the defeat of the aggressive purposes of the enemy. Prussian militarism pursued three concrete aims, the annexation of the rich coal and iron fields of Belgium and of Northern France; the winning of a naval base on the Straits of Dover with a view to over-seas expansion; the cutting of a "corridor" through Serbia to Turkey, without which Germany can exert no physical pressure and win no military ascendancy in the Near East. To defeat these three aims is to defeat Prussian Militarism and to end its dreams of hegemony.

Beyond this negative purpose, there would probably be general agreement that our aim for Europe and ourselves is security. One school will seek to attain it by crippling the enemy. Its attitude is at once too pessimistic and too hopeful. It is too pessimistic because it assumes that the German temper is so incapable of learning restraint from the calamity of this war, that nothing less than amputation, isolation and the straight-jacket of an economic boycott will avail to hold it back from future offences. It fails to see that by these expedients it makes the motives for another outbreak. It is too hopeful and too complacent because it assumes that no other State will ever be tempted to trouble the world's security, and fails to perceive that German aggression was a fact conditioned by the anarchic absence of any international system. The security of this school means further years of fighting, and at the end of it a bankrupt and depopulated Europe, more hopelessly divided than of old.

For the other school the question of security implies an organic reconstruction. This school remembers how in the brief space of 20 years our fears thrice changed the name of the Power that alarmed us. It dreads a return to the arms, and it traces wars primarily to the absence of any stable European system by which necessary changes could be effected by conference and agreement. What was yesterday the aspiration of every progressive party in Europe is to-day a programme laid before two continents by the President of the United States. The central idea of this League of Peace, which will aim at including all civilized Powers, is a compact to submit all disputes to the appropriate process of impartial review, whether arbitration or conciliation. Its members pledge themselves to regard as the aggressor the Power which makes war without first submitting its cause to the consideration of the organs of the League, and to concert joint measures with all their resources against him. Such an idea might have been preached for generations in vain to the balanced and suspicious camps of Eur-

ope. The adhesion of America, stepping from her tranquil isolation, gives for the first time the necessary guarantee of impartiality in the council of the League, while it adds to the resources with which it would confront the lawbreaker. If we have come to see in such a League as this the supreme hope of international order, we cannot treat its creation as a detail in the settlement. It surpasses in importance every other war aim. Nay more, it must be the organic and inclusive principle of our settlement. Every detail must fit into this structure and must answer the test, whether it furthers or hinders the idea of a League of Peace.

With this organic principle in our minds, let us turn to our detailed problems, assuming that competent Americans have written for their belief that Germany would be willing, on terms, to join us in creating this League of Peace. If we may hope for this, it follows that everything must be banished from the programme of both sides which pre-supposes the continuance of a state of latent warfare. We must drop the notion of a trade war, and require from the enemy the abandonment of the aggressive side of the Central Europe idea. We must next eliminate on both sides all specifically strategic demands. One cannot say that one aims at a Europe conducting its affairs by conference, and then proceed to squander life and wealth in the effort to achieve conquests whose meaning is that they will add to the striking power of the military solidity of the State which achieves them. No more must be heard of those strategic rectifications of frontiers which the German Chancellor has spoken, nor, above all, of the German "corridor" to the East, Italy must abandon her pretensions to full control of both shores of the Adriatic, a project which would deny a maritime future to every other race of Central Europe. The great sacrifice which this principle demands is that of the Russian ambition to possess Constantinople and the Straits. This is primarily a strategic demand. It ignores nationality. It would be difficult in practice to reconcile it with any reality of independence for the Balkan peoples. We can find a middle term in a strong international control of the Straits. If Russia does not possess the shores of the Straits, she must have in a neutral police the assurance that they shall never be closed against her.

The problem of nationality in Europe has been confused in all the war-time debates on both sides with the irrelevant aim of weakening the enemy. It would be easy to adopt the Socialist and pacifist formula—the territorial "status quo ante bellum." But with some of these problems of nationality unsolved, it is not easy to imagine a Europe tranquil and secure. Not for one generation or for two can we imagine a League of Peace so strong that it would dare bid Germany surrender Alsace, or issue its fiat for the reconstruction of Poland. It will work for many a decade only by compromises and adjustments. The big radical changes, if any are necessary, must be made to-day. The more or less in all such cases depends partly on the prolongation of the war until the resistance to large changes is broken down, and partly on the possibility of offering economic advantages in return for concessions to nationality. Some settlement of the French problem by plebiscite is indispensable to European peace. The creation of a neutral buffer State is a possible, but very doubtful solution. It is, perhaps, a mistake to regard this as a single and simple problem. The purely French region of Metz has the prior claim. The western region of Alsace, German by race, but still mainly French by sympathy, comes next. The eastern region, more clerical and conservative, is also more reconciled to German rule. Each area, if a plebiscite were taken, might vote separately. The act of reparation involved in the surrender of Metz might suffice to end the historic feud, if the rest of the Reichsland enjoyed equal rights with the rest of the Empire, and liberty to retain its bi-lingual habits and its French culture.

In the case of Poland, the easier solution, in the sense that it requires less fighting, is also ideally the better solution. The idea of a genuinely independent Poland, which ought to include, with the Duchy of Warsaw, part of Posen and Galicia, with the use of Dantzig as a free port, appeals to European Liberalism as that of an autonomous Poland under Russian rule does not. It is no demerit of such a buffer State would remove one of the fears that helped to make Prussian militarism. There remains the tangled problem of Austria-Hungary. To break it up means war to the bitter end. Each of its national problems involves a problem within a problem. There is a German "Ulster" within Czech Bohemia, and a Magyar "Ulster" within Roumanian Transylvania. To these add the economic puzzles—how to secure markets and exits for land-locked Bohemia and Hungary—or, indeed, for any Central European people if Italy acquires Trieste and Fiume. Two considerations may well check the impetus to a destructive solution. Our own painful experience in Ireland should give us charity. Nor can we forget that there are acuter problems of nationality in Russia than in Austria-Hungary. The moderate conception of a solution is to require from Austria-Hungary guarantees that she will give to all her races, and especially to the Czechs and South Slavs, the liberties which her Poles enjoyed in fairly generous measure—preferably, by some federal reconstruction. The League

# The Importance of Salonica

(By Austin Harrison, in The Daily Mail, London.)

After the failures of our secondary military expeditions, it is intelligible that we should be loath to embark upon yet another, particularly as it is another great overseas war with all the attendant difficulties of transport and the constant danger of submarines. None the less, the Salonica base has been established; the armies are there, and, what is more important still, the hour, the place, and the objective are strategically of almost decisive military importance.

The weak point in the Germanic defence to-day is Austria, who, thanks to the unexpectedly formidable onslaught by the Russians on the Eastern front, now finds herself in the predicament which faced her at the end of 1914—with this difference, that whereas then her reserves had not been raised, they are this summer, potentially at least, pretty well exhausted. Linked up, economically and militarily, with Austria-Hungary, dependent in fact, upon her power of resistance, the secondary German arm, which may be called the Balkan Alliance of Bulgaria and Turkey, stands or falls; constitutes absolutely the heel of Achilles, or the vulnerable spot in the enemy lines of defence, to which must be added the unpleasant propinquity of a doubtful Roumania.

Now the Pan-Germanic scheme aims primarily at which the Germans call the "economic hegemony of the East." In Turkey it is this economic power, not land, which is the German purpose, and it may truthfully be said that so long as the Germans hold the railway line through Serbia to Constantinople not only is the goal of Pan-Germanism attained, but the military conditions are established which ensure the faithful attachment to Berlin of the Austrian-Balkan group. Incidentally it is the reason why the Germans are ready for peace. Not the West, but the East, is their objective. Not Belgium, but the German way to Constantinople is their coveted prize, whence they hope to pursue their aims eastward and southwards to the Persian Gulf.

It was with this object in view that the Anatolian railway system was initiated, as well as the Kaiser's policy of infiltration, which dated from 1898 (when he entered the Holy City on a white charger and addressed the Mahomedans as 'his friends' over the grave of Saladin.)

Turkey to Germany is a "healthy selfish" interest. Cotton, wool, naptha—these are the things that Germany wants—and the fertility of Mesopotamia. And

should aim, not at a partizan application of the doctrine of nationality by conquest and partition, but at the inclusion in its constitution of some general charter of national rights. This would bring hope to the Finns, Letts, Ukrainians, and Jews, as well as to the Austrian Slavs, and it would be within the duties of the League to see that the charter was observed. Some minor national problems may best be solved (after a plebiscite) by annexation. Italy should have the Trentino, and Russia the Ruthenian part of Eastern Galicia.

All this, it may be said, though a relatively moderate programme, involves big and unwelcome changes for the Central Powers. Assume their goodwill, and it is easy to suggest compensations which would fit into the scheme of a harmonious League. It cannot rest on economic monopoly; it will not hold together if it denies to the great energies and advanced industries of Germany a share in the world's work of developing the backward regions of the earth. France might ease the restoration of part, at least, of the lost provinces, if she would open her closed colonies to German (and other foreign) trade. An equivalent for Germany's African colonies, if not the colonies themselves, may be given back as a counter against concessions in Europe. Finally, there is Turkey to consider. Russia must secure unhampered use of the Straits, and humanity requires that Armenia (which she is in a fair way to occupy) shall remain under her flag. But Germany, on her side, if Berlin-Baghdad becomes by the consolidation of Serbia across it, a commercial and not a strategic route, may seek as part of a general settlement in which she must surrender much, to have the future of her great economic enterprises in Anatolia and Mesopotamia assured to her. A revision of sea law, which will make our maritime power consistent with neutral rights in an orderly world, must be our equivalent for her consent to reduced armaments and a system of regulated conciliation.

These are but hints, susceptible of much variation, towards a settlement which might be attainable without an indefinite prolongation of the war. The argument for moderation would be destroyed only by conclusive proof that Germany is unwilling to co-operate in establishing European security on the basis of an international League. The first step should be an authorized attempt, through American agency, to discover her real mind. If she will accept this organic principle of a settlement, the details, difficult and perplexed as they are, need not defy skilful and patient negotiation.

this "Drang towards the East" has been the life and soul of Pan-Germanism, it being clearly recognized by all German writers and authorities that "whole work" can only be accomplished with and through Austria; success, in fact, depending on the fate of Austria, on whose fate that also of Turkey, as a German interest, is inevitably involved.

Thus, if the Germans were to walk out of France to-morrow and Belgium the day after, yet keep Serbia and maintain their Turco-Bulgarian military and economic partnership, in great part the Pan-German scheme would be realized, and Germany and she could end the war on such terms, would incontestably have gained the chief part of her objective.

And this idea it is, which Germans designate as Austria's "ethnic landslide," without which all Pan-Germans agree there can be no chance of success.

This is what the Germans are fighting for, what they hope to maintain, and as it is the Germanic central objective, so, militarily, it is the weak spot in their armor. The Austrian principal of government, "Divide and Conquer," is not suitable in war. Pressed on all sides, Austria is in dire stress, and because Austria is in jeopardy, so is the Austro-German policy in the Balkans, on which hangs the allegiance of both Turks and Bulgarians, and its point of danger is from Salonica.

Without Austria Pan-Germanism has neither meaning nor power, for the whole essence of Pan-German Imperialism lies in the territorial expansion of Austria-Hungary by means of which alone pressure can be brought to bear on Turkey, and through Turkey on the Balkan peoples.

A decisive blow struck upwards from Salonica, breaking through the Bulgarian resistance and liberating Serbia, and Pan-Germanism will receive a mortal wound from which in this war there can be no recovery. The Young Turks joined Germany because of their belief in German arms, and Bulgaria joined Germany also for the same reason. But if the Bulgarians are defeated and driven into their own country, Turkey will find herself cut off, stranded, reeling into helplessness, and the hour of Austria's fate will have sounded.

That is why the offensive from Salonica is of such enormous importance. It is here that the German heel of Achilles lies. It is there, if we strike well and victoriously (above all if we strike now, when the Austro-German armies are fully engaged, that a decision may be reached of overwhelming military and political significance, which would not only frustrate all Germany's ambitions, but inevitably hasten the end of the war, if only by process of disintegration.

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