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Vol. I, No. 3

February, 1918

## WAR AIMS OF BELLIGERENTS

AS ELICITED BY

# RUSSIA'S ATTEMPTS TO SECURE A GENERAL PEACE

I

THE RUSSIAN OFFER

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REPLIES TO THE RUSSIAN OFFER

Published Bimonthly by the WORLD PEACE FOUNDATION

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Two decisive reasons have led to the publication of the documents in this issue. First, they serve to illuminate recent events in Russia which have had a world-wide effect; second, students of international affairs have felt that they should be made available for future reference. They cover the eventful period from November, 1917, to February, 1918.

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## WORLD PEACE FOUNDATION

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## WAR AIMS OF BELLIGERENTS.

## I. THE RUSSIAN PEACE OFFER.

- 1. PROGRAM DRAWN UP BY CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN COUNCIL OF WORKMEN'S AND SOLDIERS' DELEGATES IN THE FORM OF INSTRUCTIONS TO ITS DELEGATE TO THE ALLIED WAR CONFERENCE, PARIS, DATED OCTOBER 20, 1917.
- I. Evacuation by the Germans of Russia, and autonomy of Poland, Lithuania and the Lettish provinces.
  - II. Autonomy of Turkish Armenia.
- III. Solution of the Alsace-Lorraine question by a plebiscite, the voting being arranged by local civil authorities after the removal of all the troops of both belligerents.
- IV. Restoration to Belgium of her ancient frontiers and compensation for her losses from an international fund.
- V. Restoration of Serbia and Montenegro with similar compensation, Serbia to have access to the Adriatic, Bosnia and Herzegovina to be autonomous.
- VI. Disputed Balkan districts to receive provisional autonomy, followed by a plebiscite.
- VII. Rumania to be restored her old frontiers on condition that she grant Dobrudja autonomy and grant equal rights to Jews.
- VIII. Autonomy for the Italian provinces of Austria to be followed by a plebiscite.
  - IX. Restitution of all colonies to Germany.
  - X. Re-establishment of Greece and Persia.
- XI. Neutralization of all straits leading to inner seas and also the Suez and Panama Canals. Freedom of navigation for merchant ships. Abolition of the right to torpedo merchant ships in war time.
- XII. All belligerents to renounce war contributions or indemnities in any form, but the money spent on the maintenance of prisoners and all contributions levied during the war to be returned.

New York Times, October 22, 1917.

- XIII. Commercial treaties not to be based on the peace treaty; each country may act independently with respect to its commercial policy, but all countries to engage to renounce an economic blockade after the war.
- XIV. The conditions of peace should be settled by a peace congress consisting of delegates elected by the people and confirmed by Parliament. Diplomatists must engage not to conclude separate treaties, which hereby are declared contrary to the rights of the people, and consequently void.
- XV. Gradual disarmament by land and sea, and the establishing of a non-military system.
- 2. Note of Leon Trotsky, Russian national commissioner for foreign affairs, to the diplomatic representatives of the allies formally offering an armistice on all fronts and proposing peace negotiations, November 22, 1917.

## PETROGRAD, November 21, 1917.

I herewith have the honor to inform you, Mr. Ambassador, that the All-Russian Congress of Soldiers' and Workmen's Delegates organized on Oct. 26 a new government in the form of a Council of National Commissioners. The head of this government is Vladimir Ilich Lenin. The direction of the foreign policy has been intrusted to me in the capacity of National Commissioner for Foreign Affairs.

Drawing attention to the text of the offer of an armistice and a democratic peace on the basis of no annexations or indemnities and the self-determination of nations, approved by the All-Russian Congress of Soldiers' and Workmen's Delegates, I have the honor to beg you to regard the above document as a formal offer of an immediate armistice on all fronts and the immediate opening of peace negotiations—an offer with which the authoritative government of the Russian republic has addressed itself simultaneously to all the belligerent peoples and their Governments.

Accept my assurance, Mr. Ambassador, of the profound respect of the Soldiers' and the Workmen's Government for the people of France [etc.], which cannot help aiming at peace, as well as all the rest of the nations exhausted and made bloodless by this unexampled slaughter.

## L. TROTSKY, National Commissioner for Foreign Affairs.

Associated Press dispatch, November 22, 1917. The note was sent in fulfilment of a resolution of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Congress voted on November 10, 1917, a translation of which is printed in Current History, Vol. VII, Part I, 422.

#### a. INCLOSURE.

General notice to Russian representatives abroad offering armistice to all nations involved in the war, and order to Russian commander-in-chief to offer a cessation of hostilities, November 20, 1917.

By order of the All-Russian Congress of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates the Council of Commissioners of the People has taken power into its hands, together with the obligation to offer to all the nations and their respective Governments an immediate armistice on all fronts, with the purpose of immediately opening pourparlers for the conclusion of a democratic peace.

When the power of the Council is firmly established in all the most important places of the country the Council will make, without delay, a formal offer of armistice to all the nations involved in the war—to the Allies and also to the nations at war with us.

A draft message to this effect has been sent to all the people's representatives abroad, and to all the plenipotentiary representatives of the Allied nations in Petrograd.

## ORDER TO COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

To you, Citizen Commander-in-Chief, the Council, in fulfilling the resolution of the Congress of Delegates, gives the order that, after receiving the present message, you shall approach the commanding authorities of the enemy armies with an offer of a cessation of all hostile activities for the purpose of opening peace pour parlers.

In charging you with the conduct of these preliminary pour parlers, the Council orders you:

- 1. To keep the Council constantly informed, by direct wire, of all your pour-parlers with the enemy armies.
  - 2. To sign the preliminary act only after approval by the Council.

(Signed)

VLADIMIR ULIANOV-LENIN [alias Cederblum],

President of the Council of Commissioners of the People.

L. TROTSKY [alias Braunstein], Commissioner for Foreign Affairs.

N. KRILENKO, Commissioner for War.

VLADIMIR BONCH-BRUEVICH, Chairman of the Council.

N. GORBUNOV, Secretary.

b. Notification by Russian Council of Commissioners of the People to the army and navy deposing commander-in-chief, appointing his successor and instructing regiments to begin pourparlers with the enemy, November 22, 1917.<sup>2</sup>

To All Committees of Regiments, Divisions, Corps, Armies; to All the Soldiers of the Revolutionary Army, and to All the Sailors of the Revolutionary Navy:

During the night of November 20 the Council of Commissioners of the People sent a wireless message to the Commander-in-Chief, Dukhonin, containing an order that he should immediately and formally offer an armistice to all the nations, Allied and hostile, involved in the war. This message was received at Headquarters on November 21, at 5.05 A.M.

British Admiralty, per Wireless Press, London Times, November 22, 1917, page 6. A textual summary of this order is printed in Current History, Vol. VII, Part II, 7.

British Admiralty, per Wireless Press, London Times, November 23, 1917, page 6.

Dukhonin was instructed to keep the Council continually informed of the progress of the *pourparlers*, and only to sign the agreement for an armistice after sanction by the Council.

At the same time a similar offer for an armistice was formally submitted to all the plenipotentiary representatives of the Allies in Petrograd.

Having received no answer from Dukhonin up to yesterday evening, the Council authorized Lenin, Stalin and Krilenko to ask Dukhonin by direct wire for the cause of such delay.

The pour parlers have been in progress since 4.30 A.M. to-day.

Dukhonin attempted many times to evade giving an explanation of his conduct and a clear answer to the orders of the Government. When a categorical order was sent to Dukhonin instructing him to offer immediately and formally an armistice for the purpose of beginning peace pour parlers he refused to obey.

Now, in the name of the Government of the Russian Republic, and by order of the Council, Dukhonin has been informed that he has been deposed from his functions for disobeying the instructions of the Government and for conduct which is bringing unheard-of and terrible sufferings upon all the working masses, upon the whole country, and especially upon the Armies.

At the same time Dukhonin has been ordered to continue his duties till a new Commander-in-Chief, or any other person authorized by him, arrives to take over the command.

Ensign Krilenko has been appointed the new Commander-in-Chief.

Soldiers! the question of peace is in your hands. You must not permit the counter-revolutionary generals to destroy the great work of peace. You must arrest and guard them well, so that lynch-law, which is not worthy of a Revolutionary Army, cannot take place, and so that these generals cannot evade imminent justice. You will observe the strongest revolutionary and military discipline.

Let the regiments which are in the frontal positions elect immediately plenipotentiaries who shall formally begin peace pourparlers with the enemy. The Council gives you the right to do this. On the progress of the pourparlers you shall inform us by all possible means.

Only the Council has the right to sign the final agreement of armistice.

Soldiers! the question of peace is in your hands. Have watchfulness, tenacity and energy, and the will for peace will win!

In the name of the Government of the Russian Republic.

(Signed) V. ULIANOV-LENIN [alias Cederblum],

President of the Council of Commissioners of the People.

N. KRILENKO, Commissioner for War and Highest Commander-in-Chief.

PETROGRAD, Nov. 22, 1017.

c. Order of N. Krilenko, Russian national commissioner for war directing the army to cease firing and begin fraternization, November 28, 1917.

Our envoys have returned, bringing an official reply from the German Commander-in-Chief signifying his assent to the proposal to inaugurate negotiations

for an armistice on all fronts. The first meeting of the negotiators is fixed for November 19 [December 2, N. S.].

Any person concealing or opposing the promulgation of this order will, contrary to all existing usage, be brought before a revolutionary court-martial.

I order firing to cease immediately and fraternization to begin on all fronts. Great vigilance is necessary regarding the enemy. No military operations should be undertaken except in reply to those by the enemy. . . .

The Army is starving. It is without clothes and boots. The horses are dying for want of fodder. We have no means of assuring the transport of supplies. In a short time we shall obtain a general peace. Meanwhile all attention and care should be devoted to the Army remaining in the trenches.

3. Note sent by Leon Trotsky, Russian people's commissioner for foreign affairs, to all Allied embassies and legations, requesting participation in armistice, December 6, 1917.

The negotiations opened by the delegates of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria on the one side, and the delegates of Russia on the other side, have been interrupted, on the initiative of our delegation, for a week, with the purpose of providing the opportunity, during this period, of informing the peoples and Governments of the Allied countries on the existence of such negotiations and on their tendency.

On Russia's part it has been arranged to declare that the proposed armistice has for its object the preparation of a peace on a democratic basis as expressed in the manifesto by the All-Russian Soviet Congress.

The armistice can be signed only under the conditions that the troops will not be sent from one front to another, and that the Islands of the Moon Sounds must be cleared by Germans.

Concerning the aims of the war the enemy delegates evaded a definite reply.

Indicating that they had been authorized to negotiate exclusively on the military side of the (proposed?) armistice, and not concerning the question of a general armistice, the delegates of the opposite side declined on the ground that they did not possess powers for deciding a general armistice with the countries whose delegates are not taking part in the conference.

The delegates of the opposite side proposed, in their turn, an armistice on the front from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, the duration of this armistice to be 28 days.

At the same time the delegates of the opposite side promised to transmit to their respective Governments the proposal made by the Russian delegation to invite all belligerent countries (that is, all Allied countries, except Russia) to take part in the negotiations.

London Times, December 8, 1917, page 9.

Our delegation refused to sign at this stage of the negotiations a formal armistice, and it was decided again to suspend all hostile activities for a week and to interrupt for the same period the negotiations on an armistice.

As a result a period of over one month will exist between the first decree of November 8 [November 21, N. S.] by the Council's authority concerning peace, and the moment of the continuation of the peace negotiations on December 12 [December 25, N. S.]. This period is, even for the present disturbed state of international communications, amply sufficient to afford the Allied Governments the opportunity to define their attitude toward the peace negotiations, that is, their willingness or their refusal to take part in the negotiations for an armistice and peace.

In the case of a refusal they must declare clearly and definitely before all mankind the aims for which the peoples of Europe may have to lose their blood during a fourth year of war.

> (Signed) L. TROTSKY. Peoble's Commissioner for Foreign Affairs.

- 4. Basic principles for peace negotiations put forward by RUSSIAN PLENIPOTENTIARIES OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSIONERS IN THE SESSION OF THE PEACE CONFERENCE, BREST-LITOVSK, DECEMBER 22, 1917.1
- I. No forcible appropriation of any territories taken in the course of the war. The occupying armies to be withdrawn from those territories at the earliest moment.
- II. Complete political independence to be given to those nationalities which were deprived of it before the beginning of the war.
- III. Nationalities not hitherto in the enjoyment of political independence to be allowed the right to decide by means of a referendum whether they

London Times, December 26, 1917, page 6.
The German version of the principles differs, and, as translated in Washington, reads:
"In the sitting of the 22d of this month the Russian delegation declares it proceeds from the expressed will of the Russian people to reach as soon as possible a conclusion of a general, just and acceptable peace for all.

"Making reference to resolutions of the All-Russian Congress of Workingmen and Soldiers' Deputies and of the All-Russian Farmers' Congress, the Russian delegation declares that it is considered a crime to continue war simply for the purpose of making annexations and that, therefore, it makes known solemnly its determination to put their signatures to conditions for peace which will end this war upon the foundation of principles of just conditions for all peoples in like manner without exception.

"Proceeding from these principles the Russian delegation has proposed to place as foundation for peace negotiations the following six points:

"One—No forcible union of districts which have come into possession during war is allowed.

Troops which are occupying these districts will be withdrawn in shortest time.

"Two—Political independence of peoples which have lost their independence in this war will be in fullest extent restored.

"Three—Possibility shall be granted to national groups which before the war were not politically independent to decide the question of submitting themselves to one or other State or to determine their political independence by referendum. This referendum must be carried out in such a way

elect to be united to other nations or to acquire independence. The referendum should be so arranged as to insure complete freedom in the voting.

- IV. In the case of territories inhabited by several nationalities, the rights of minorities to be safeguarded by special provisions.
- V. None of the belligerent powers to pay any war indemnity. War requisitions should be returned and sufferers by war should be compensated from a special fund levied on all belligerent countries in proportion to their resources.
- VI. Colonial questions to be settled in accordance with preceding conditions in the colonies.

In conclusion the Russian delegates proposed that no indirect pressure should be exerted on weaker nations by such economic boycotting as made . their subjection oppressive by commercial dependence or blockades.

## II. REPLIES TO THE RUSSIAN OFFER

1. STATEMENT OF COUNT OTTOKAR CZERNIN VON CHUDENITZ, AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, ON BEHALF OF THE CENTRAL QUADRUPLE ALLIANCE IN REPLY TO THE RUSSIAN PEACE PRINCIPLES, AND CONSTITUTING THE BASIS OF THEIR GENERAL PEACE PROPOSAL, BREST-LITOVSK, DECEMBER 25, 1917.

The delegations of the allied [Teutonic] powers, acting upon the clearly expressed will of their Governments and peoples, will conclude as soon as possible a general peace. The delegations, in complete accord with the repeatedly expressed viewpoint of their Governments, think that the basic principles of the Russian delegation can be made the basis of such a peace.

The delegations of the Quadruple Alliance are agreed immediately to conclude a general peace without forcible annexations and indemnities. They share the view of the Russian delegation, which condemns the continuation of the war purely for aims of conquest.

that complete independence is assured in voting for the whole population of the district concerned,

that complete independence is assured in voting for the whole population of the district concerned, including emigrants and refugees.

"Four—In reference to districts of mixed nationality the right of the minority shall be protected by special law which gives to it independence for its national culture and, when this can be carried through, practically an autonomous administration.

"Five—As to what concerns replacement of losses of private persons in consequence of war, they shall be met from an especial fund to which belligerents shall contribute proportionately.

"Six—Colonial questions shall be decided by the observation of fundamental principles expressed under number one to number four.

under number one to number four.

"In addition to these points, the Russian delegation proposed to the contracting parties to declare every kind of indirect attack on the freedom of weaker nations by stronger as inadmissible; for instance, by economic boycott, by economic predominance of one land over another based on compulsory commercial treaties, by special tariffs which limit freedom of trade of their countries, by sea blockades which have in view not immediate war aims, etc."—(Official Bulletin, January 2, 1918; see also London Times, December 28, 1917, page 7.)

Associated Press dispatch, December 27, 1917; Reuter translation, London Times, December 28, 1917, page 7.

The statesmen of the allied [Teutonic] Governments in programs and statements have emphasized time and again that for the sake of conquest they will not prolong the war a single day. The Governments of the allies unswervingly have followed this view all the time. They solemnly declare their resolve immediately to sign terms of peace which will stop this war on the above terms, equally just to all belligerents without exception.

It is necessary, however, to indicate most clearly that the proposals of the Russian delegation could be realized only in case all the powers participating in the war obligate themselves scrupulously to adhere to the terms, in common with all peoples.

The powers of the Quadruple Alliance now negotiating with Russia cannot, of course, one-sidedly bind themselves to such terms, not having the guarantee that Russia's allies will recognize and carry out these terms honestly without reservation with regard to the Quadruple Alliance. Starting upon these principles, and regarding the six clauses proposed by the Russian delegation as a basis of negotiations, the following must be stated:

Clause r. Forcible annexation of territories seized during the war does not enter into the intention of the allied powers. About troops now occupying seized territories, it must be stipulated in the peace treaty, if there is no agreement before, regarding the evacuation of these places.

Clause 2. It is not the intention of the allies to deprive of political independence those nations which lost it during the war.

Clause 3. The question of subjection to that or the other country of those nationalities who have not political independence cannot, in the opinion of the powers of the Quadruple Alliance, be solved internationally. In this case it must be solved by each Government, together with its peoples, in a manner established by the Constitution.

Clause 4. Likewise, in accordance with the declaration of statesmen of the Quadruple Alliance, the protection of the rights of minorities constitutes an essential component part of the constitutional rights of peoples to self-determination. The Allied Governments also grant validity to this principle everywhere, in so far as it is practically realizable.

Clause 5. The allied powers have frequently emphasized the possibility that both sides might renounce not only indemnification for war costs, but also indemnification for war damages. In these circumstances, every belligerent power would have only to make indemnification for expenditures for its nationals who have become prisoners of war, as well as for

r Compare the Russian proposal, which relates to nationalities deprived of independence before the war not to those losing it during the war. The statement of Count Czernin follows the German version.

damage done in its own territory by illegal acts of force committed against civilian nationals belonging to the enemy. The Russian Government's proposal for the creation of a special fund for this purpose could be taken into consideration only if the other belligerent powers were to join in the peace negotiations within a suitable period.

Clause 6. Of the four allied powers, Germany alone possesses colonies. On the part of the German delegation, in full accord with the Russian proposals regarding that, the following is declared:

The return of colonial territories forcibly seized during the war constitutes an essential part of German demands, which Germany cannot renounce under any circumstances. Likewise, the Russian demand for immediate evacuation of territories occupied by an adversary conforms to German intentions. Having in view the nature of the colonial territories of Germany, the realization of the right of self-determination, besides the above outlined considerations, in the form proposed by the Russian delegation is at present practically impossible.

The circumstance that in the German colonies the natives, notwithstanding the greatest difficulties and the improbability of victory in a struggle against an adversary many times stronger and who had the advantage of unlimited import by sea, remained in the gravest circumstances faithful to their German friends, may serve as proof of their attachment and their resolve by all means to preserve allegiance to Germany, proof which by its significance and weight is far superior to any expression of popular will.

The principles of economic relations proposed by the Russian delegation in connection with the above six clauses are approved wholly by the delegations of the allied powers, who always have denied any economic restrictions and who see in the re-establishment of regulated economic relations, which are in accord with the interests of all people concerned, one of the most important conditions for bringing about friendly relations between the powers now engaged in war.

2. Extract from proceedings of Brest-Litovsk conference proposing 10-day recess to enable other nations to join the negotiations, December 25, 1917.<sup>2</sup>

The leader of the Russian delegation, replying said:

"The delegation notes with satisfaction that the reply of the delegations of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey accepted the principle

of a general democratic peace without annexations. The delegation recognizes the enormous importance of this advance on the road to a general peace. It must, however, observe that the reply contains an important reservation on point 3. The Russian delegation has further noted with satisfaction in the declaration of the four allied powers on point 5 the recognition of the principle of no indemnities. It has made a reservation, however, regarding indemnification for the support of war prisoners."

The Russian delegation further declared that it attached importance to the indemnification from an international fund of private persons who have suffered from acts of war. The delegation also recognized that the evacuation by the enemy of occupied German colonies corresponds to the principles it has laid down, and it proposes that the question whether the principle of the free expression of the people's will is applicable to colonies should be reserved for a special commission.

Finally, the head of the Russian delegation declared that, despite the differences mentioned, the delegation is of opinion that the frank statement contained in the reply of the four allied powers—namely, that no aggressive intentions are entertained, offers a real possibility of an immediate start with the negotiations for a general peace between the belligerent States.

The Russian delegation therefore proposed that negotiations be interrupted for 10 days from December 25 until January 4 so that the peoples whose Governments have not yet joined in the negotiations proceeding here for a general peace may have an opportunity of making themselves acquainted with the principles of such a peace as now set forth. After the expiry of this period the negotiations must under all circumstances be continued.

Count Czernin then asked the Russian delegation to present its answer in writing. . . .

3. ATTITUDE OF THE ALLIES. EXTRACT FROM A SPEECH BY STEPHEN PICHON, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, IN THE FRENCH CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, JANUARY 11, 1918.

Stephen Pichon, French minister for foreign affairs, stated the decision of the Allies in a speech to the Chamber of Deputies on January 11, 1918, when he said:

"I telegraphed to our Allies and inquired whether they did not think it opportune to agree to make identical combined statements. The Allies finally decided unanimously that it was preferable to keep to separate

declarations, leaving to each country full latitude as to form, since there was no disagreement in substance." <sup>1</sup>

4. The War Aims of the Allies: Speech of David Lloyd George, British premier, before the Labor Conference on Manpower of the Empire, London, January 5, 1918.<sup>2</sup>

## Explanatory Note.

Early in the war the British Government found it necessary to exempt men in certain occupations from military service. Eventually a List of Certified Occupations was issued and the exemptions indicated by this list became the subject of negotiations between the Government and the trade unions. The Military Service Act (5 & 6 Geo. 5, ch. 104, January 27, 1916) did not take full cognizance of the importance of occupational exemptions and it was therefore revised, after conference with the labor interests, by the Military Service Act (6 & 7 Geo. 5, ch. 15, May 25, 1916). The necessity of still further revising this act resulted in the so-called Man-Power Conference which began its sessions at Central Hall, Westminster, January 3, 1918, between representatives of the British Government and the representatives of the trade unions which were parties to the arrangements made in connection with recruiting under the schedule of protected occupations.

The British prime minister before the House of Commons, December 20, 1917 explained the relation between the Government and the trade unions in these words:

The tribunals [for determining liability to military service] are necessarily hampered and restricted by the conditions which Parliament imposed upon them, and probably which governments have imposed upon them owing to pledges given from time to time to avert labor troubles.... On behalf of the Government [Mr. Henderson] did his very best to smooth over those difficulties. He went on behalf of the Government to negotiate and whatever pledges he gave on behalf of the government for the time being, he did so with the full support and consent of the war cabinet.... It was the best thing to do in the interests of the country, and the reason why now we have got to ask that these pledges shall be either altered or cancelled is because the conditions have changed and the demands upon the man-power of the country are greater in consequence of those conditions....

After an agreement had been entered into which gave protection to men engaged in certain trades, this question was asked by one of the trade unionists—this was on April 26, 1916; [Mr. Asquith] was Prime Minister at the time—"What

London Times, January 14, 1918, page 7.

London Times, January 7, 1918.

guarantee have we got if we come to an agreement that the Government will keep it?" Mr. Henderson's answer was:—"You have got no guarantee at all, and you cannot get any guarantee at all in view of the changing circumstances of a great war like this. What we will do if we are compelled by the necessities of the war—which must always be paramount—again to depart from the schedule is that we will ask you to come and meet us before we do it."...

Does anyone doubt that the conditions have materially changed? They have changed through circumstances over which not merely no government has any control, but circumstances over which this country has no control. Therefore it will be necessary for us to take action which will enable us to call men who at the present moment are protected by the conditions of these schedules to take their part in defense of their country in another sphere. But, as [Mr. Henderson] gave an undertaking on behalf of the Government, an undertaking which binds us all, ... that if there were circumstances which would justify the Government in departing from the schedule, if they were compelled by the necessities of the war to depart from the schedule, they would ask them to come and meet the Government before doing it, it is proposed that before the scheme which the Government have got in their minds and the proposals which they mean to submit to the House-before they come to the House of Commons and state what their plans are, and ask for the necessary legislation to enable them to carry out those plans, we propose to summon the unions which are concerned, to state the whole of the circumstances to them, and place before them the circumstances which have induced the Government to ask the House of Commons for a release from those pledges. My right hon, friend the Minister for National Service (Sir A. Geddes) proposes next week to invite the leaders of the trade unions to meet him in order to place the whole of these conditions before them.

In preparation for the meeting announced by the prime minister, the labor interests on December 17, 1917, had issued a memorandum on war aims.

This memorandum was approved by the Executive Committee of the Labor Party and the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress for submission to the conference. It followed the main lines of a memorandum drawn up by a sub-committee of the Executive Committee of the Labor Party on the occasion of its conference on the abortive Stockholm project in August, 1917, and was as follows:

Memorandum of the British Labor Movement on war aims submitted to the Prime Minister in negotiations on man-power of the Empire, voted by special conference Central Hall, Westminster, December 28, 1917.

1. The War.—The British Labor movement declares that whatever may have been the causes of the outbreak of war, it is clear that the peoples of Europe, who are necessarily the chief sufferers from its horrors, had themselves no hand in it. Their common interest is now so to conduct the terrible struggle in which they find themselves engaged as to bring it, as soon as may be possible, to an issue in a secure and lasting peace for the world. The British Labor

London Times, Weekly Edition, December 28, 1917, page 1,083.

movement sees no reason to depart from the declaration unanimously agreed to at the Conference of the Socialist and Labor parties of the Allied nations on February 14, 1915.1

2. Making the World Safe for Democracy.—Whatever may have been the causes for which the war was begun, the fundamental purpose of the British Labor movement in supporting the continuance of the struggle is that the world may henceforth be made safe for democracy.

Of all the war aims, none is so important to the peoples of the world as that there shall be henceforth on earth no more war. Whoever triumphs, the people will have lost unless some effective method of preventing war can be found.

As a means to this end, the British Labor movement relies very largely upon the complete democratization of all countries; on the frank abandonment of every form of imperialism; on the suppression of secret diplomacy, and on the placing of foreign policy, just as much as home policy, under the control of popularly elected legislatures; on the absolute responsibility of the foreign minister of each country to its legislature; on such concerted action as may be possible for the universal abolition of compulsory military service in all countries, the common limitation of the costly armaments by which all peoples are burdened, and the entire abolition of profit-making armament firms, whose pecuniary interest lies always in war scares and rivalry in preparation for war.

But it demands, in addition, that it should be an essential part of the treaty of peace itself that there should be forthwith established a supernational authority. or League of Nations, which should not only be adhered to by all the present belligerents, but which every other independent sovereign State in the world should be pressed to join; the immediate establishment by such League of Nations not only of an International High Court for the settlement of all disputes between States that are of justiciable nature, but also of appropriate machinery for prompt

\* The declaration referred to was voted in London, February 14, 1915, and reads:

I. This conference cannot ignore the profound general causes of the European conflict, itself a monstrous product of the antagonisms which tear asunder capitalist society, and of the policy of colonial dependencies and aggressive imperialism, against which international socialism has never

colonial dependencies and aggressive imperialism, against which international socialism has never ceased to fight, and in which every government has its share of responsibility.

The invasion of Belgium and France by the German armies threatens the very existence of independent nationalities, and strikes a blow at all faith in treaties. In these circumstances a victory for German imperialism would be the defeat and the destruction of democracy and liberty in Europe. The Socialists of Great Britain, Belgium, France and Russia do not pursue the political and economic crushing of Germany; they are not at war with the people of Germany and Austria, but only with the governments of those countries by which they are oppressed. They demand that Belgium shall be liberated and compensated. They desire that the question of Poland shall be settled in accordance with the wishes of the Polish people, either in the sense of autonomy in the midst of another State, or in that of complete independence. They wish that throughout all Europe, from Alsace-Lorraine to the Balkans, those populations that have been annexed by force shall receive the right freely to dispose of themselves.

freely to dispose of themselves.

While inflexibly resolved to fight until victory is achieved to accomplish this task of liberation, the Socialists are none the less resolved to resist any attempt to transform this defensive war into a war of conquest, which would only prepare fresh conflicts, create new grievances, and subject various peoples more than ever to the double plague of armaments and war.

Satisfied that they are remaining true to the principles of the International, the members of the Conference express the hope that the working classes of all the different countries will before long find themselves united again in their struggle against militarism and capitalist imperialism. The victory of the Allied Powers must be a victory for popular liberty, for unity, independence and autonomy of the nations in the peaceful federation of the United States of Europe and the world.

II. On the conclusion of the war the working classes of all the industrial countries must unite in the International in order to suppress secret diplomacy, put an end to the interests of militarism and those of the armament makers, and establish some international authority to settle points of difference among the nations by compulsory conciliation and arbitration, and to compelal nations to maintain peace. . . .

and effective mediation between States at issue that are not justiciable; the formation of an International Legislature, in which the representatives of every civilized State would have their allotted share; the gradual development, as far as may prove to be possible, of international legislation agreed to by and definitely binding upon the several States, and for a solemn agreement and pledge by all States that every issue between any two or more of them shall be submitted for settlement as aforesaid, and that they will all make common cause against any State which fails to adhere to this agreement.

3. Territorial Adjustments.—The British Labor movement has no sympathy with the attempts made, now in this quarter and now in that, to convert this war into a war of conquest, nor should the struggle be prolonged for a single day, once the conditions of a permanent peace can be secured, merely for the sake of extending the boundaries of any State.

But it is impossible to ignore the fact that not only restitution and reparation, but also certain territorial readjustments, are required if a renewal of armaments and war is to be avoided. These readjustments must be such as can be arrived at by common agreement on the general principle of allowing all peoples to settle their own destinies and for the purpose of removing any obvious cause of future international conflict.

- (a) Belgium.—The British Labor movement emphatically insists that a fore-most condition of peace must be the reparation by the German Government, under the direction of an International Commission, of the wrong admittedly done to Belgium; payment by that government for all the damage that has resulted from this wrong, and the restoration of Belgium to complete and untrammeled independent sovereignty, leaving to the decision of the Belgian people the determination of their own future policy in all respects.
- (b) Alsace and Lorraine.—The British Labor movement reaffirms its reprobation of the crime against the peace of the world by which Alsace and Lorraine were forcibly torn from France in 1871—acpolitical blunder the effects of which have contributed in no small degree to the continuance of unrest and the growth of militarism in Europe—and, profoundly sympathizing with the unfortunate inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine, who have been subjected to so much repression, asks in accordance with the declarations of the French Socialists that they shall be allowed, under the protection of the supernational authority, or League of Nations, freely to decide what shall be their future political position.
- (c) The Balkans.—The British Labor movement suggests that the whole problem of the re-organization of the administration of the peoples of the Balkan Peninsula might be dealt with by a Special Conference of their representatives, or by an authoritative International Commission, on the basis of (a) the complete freedom of these people to settle their own destinies, irrespective of Austrian, Turkish or other foreign dominion; (b) the independent sovereignties of the several nationalities in those districts in which these are largely predominant; (c) the universal adoption of religious tolerance, the equal citizenship of all races and local autonomy; (d) a Customs Union embracing the whole of the Balkan States, and (e) the entry of all the Balkan National States into a Federation for the concerted arrangement by mutual agreement among themselves of all matters of common concern.
- (d) Italy.—The British Labor movement declares its warmest sympathy with the people of Italian blood and speech who have been left outside the inconvenient

and indefensible boundaries that have as a result of the diplomatic agreements of the past been assigned to the Kingdom of Italy, and supports their claim to be united with those of their own race and tongue. It realizes that arrangements may be necessary for securing the legitimate interests of the people of Italy in the adjacent seas, but it has no sympathy with the far-reaching aims of conquest of Italian imperialism, and believes that all legitimate needs can be safeguarded without precluding a like recognition of the needs of others or an annexation of other people's territories.<sup>1</sup>

- (e) Poland, etc.—With regard to the other cases in dispute, from Luxemburg on the one hand, of which the independence has been temporarily destroyed, to the lands now under foreign domination inhabited by other races—the outstanding example being that of the Poles—the British Labor movement relies, as the only way of achieving a lasting settlement, on the application of the principle of allowing each people to settle its own destiny.
- (f) The Jews and Palestine.—The British Labor movement demands for the Jews of all countries the same elementary rights of tolerance, freedom of residence and trade, and equal citizenship that ought to be extended to all the inhabitants of every nation. But it further expresses the hope that it may be practicable by agreement among all the nations to set free Palestine from the harsh and oppressive government of the Turk, in order that the country may form a free State, under international guarantee, to which such of the Jewish people as desire to do so may return and work out their own salvation, free from interference by those of alien race or religion.
- (g) The Problem of the Turkish Empire.—The whole civilized world condemns the handing back to the universally execrated rule of the Turkish Government any subject people which has once been freed from it. Thus whatever may be proposed with regard to Armenia, Mesopotamia and Arabia they cannot be restored to the tyranny of the Sultan and his pashas.

The British Labor movement disclaims all sympathy with the imperialist aims of governments and capitalists who would make of these and other territories now dominated by the Turkish hordes merely instruments either of exploitation or militarism. If in these territories it is impracticable to leave it to the peoples to settle their own destinies, the British Labor movement insists that, conformably with the policy of "no annexations," they should be placed for administration in the hands of a commission acting under the supernational authority, or League of Nations. It is further suggested that the peace of the world requires that Constantinople should be made a free port, permanently neutralized, and placed (together with both shores of the Dardanelles and possibly some or all of Asia Minor) under the same impartial administration.

(h) The Colonies of Tropical Africa.—With regard to the colonies of the several belligerents in tropical Africa from sea to sea—whether including all north of the Zambesi River and south of the Sahara Desert, or only those lying between 15 degrees north and 15 degrees south latitude, which are already the subject of international control—the British Labor movement disclaims all sympathy with the imperialist idea that these should form the booty of any nation, should be exploited for the profit of the capitalist, or should be used for the promotion of

The last sentence was added to the text submitted to the labor conference on August 10, 1917. In the interval the treaty of May 9, 1915, had been published textually at Petrograd. For its text see The New Europe, Vol. VI, 24-27, and Current History, Vol. VII, Part II, 494-497.

the militarist aims of governments. In view of the fact that it is impracticable here to leave the various peoples concerned to settle their own destinies, it is suggested that the interests of humanity would be best served by the full and frank abandonment by all the belligerents of any dreams of an African empire; the transfer of the present colonies of the European powers in tropical Africa, however the limits of this area may be defined, to the proposed supernational authority, or League of Nations, herein suggested, and their administration, under the legislative council of that authority as a single, independent African State, with its own trained staff, on the principles of (1) taking account in each locality of the wishes of the peop'e when these can be ascertained; (2) protection of the natives against exploitation and oppression and the preservation of their tribal interests; (3) all revenues raised to be expended for the welfare and development of the African State itself, and (4) the permanent neutralization of this African State and its abstention from participation in international rivalries or any future wars.

- (i) Other Cases.—The British Labor movement suggests that any other territories, in which it is proposed that the future safe-guarding of pacific relations makes necessary a transfer of sovereignty, should be made the subject of amicable bargaining, with an equivalent exchange in money or otherwise.
- 4. Economic Relations.—The British Labor movement declares against all the projects now being prepared by imperialists and capitalists not in any one country only, but in most countries, for an economic war after peace has been secured, either against one or other foreign nation or against all foreign nations, as such an economic war if begun by any country would inevitably lead to reprisals, to which each nation in turn might in self-defense be driven.

It realizes that all such attempts at economic aggression, whether by protective tariffs or capitalist trusts or monopolies, inevitably result in the spoliation of the working classes of the several countries for the profit of the capitalists; and the British workmen see in the alliance between the military imperialists and the fiscal protectionists in any country whatsoever not only a serious danger to the prosperity of the masses of the people, but also a grave menace to peace.

On the other hand, if unfortunately a genuine peace cannot be secured, the right of each nation to the defense of its own economic interests and, in face of the world shortage hereinafter mentioned, to the conservation for its own people of a sufficiency of its own supplies of foodstuffs and raw material cannot be denied.

The British Labor movement, accordingly, urges upon the Labor parties of all countries the importance of insisting, in the attitude of the government toward commercial enterprises, along with the necessary control of supplies for its own people, on the principle of the open door, on customs duties being limited strictly to revenue purposes, and on there being no hostile discrimination against foreign countries. But it urges equally the importance not merely of conservation, but also of the utmost possible development by appropriate government action of the resources of every country for the benefit not only of its own people, but also of the world, and the need for an international agreement for the enforcement in all countries of the legislation on factory conditions, hours of labor, and the prevention of sweating and unhealthy trades necessary to protect the workers against exploitation and oppression.

5. The Problems of Peace.—To make the world safe for democracy involves much more than the prevention of war, either military or economic. It will be

a device of the capitalist interests to pretend that the treaty of peace need concern itself only with the cessation of the struggle of the armed forces and with any necessary territorial readjustments. The British Labor movement insists that, in view of the probable world-wide shortage after the war of exportable foodstuffs and raw materials and of merchant shipping, it is imperative, in order to prevent the most serious hardships and even possible famine in one country or another, that systematic arrangements should be made on an international basis for the allocation and conveyance of the available exportable surpluses of these commodities to the different countries in proportion not to their purchasing powers, but to their several pressing needs, and that within each country the government must for some time maintain its control of the most indispensable commodities in order to secure their appropriation, not in a competitive market, mainly to the richer classes, in proportion to their means, but systematically, to meet the most urgent needs of the whole community, on the principle of "No cake for any one until all have bread."

Moreover, it cannot but be anticipated that in all countries the dislocation of industry attendant on peace, the instant discharge of millions of munition workers and workers in war trades, and the demobilization of soldiers—in face of the scarcity of industrial capital, the shortage of raw materials and the insecurity of commercial enterprise—will, unless prompt and energetic action be taken by the several governments, plunge a large part of the wage-earning population into all the miseries of unemployment, more or less prolonged. In view of the fact that widespread unemployment in any country, like a famine, is an injury not to that country alone, but impoverishes also the rest of the world, the British Labor movement holds that it is the duty of every government to take immediate action not merely to relieve the unemployed when unemployment has set in, but actually, so far as may be practicable, to prevent the occurrence of unemployment.

It therefore urges upon the Labor parties of every country the necessity of their pressing upon their governments the preparation of plans for the execution of all the innumerable public works (such as the making and repairing of roads and railways, the erection of schools and public buildings, the provision of working-class dwellings, and the reclamation and afforestation of land) that will be required in the near future not for the sake of finding measures of relief for the unemployed but with a view to these works being undertaken at such a rate in each locality as will suffice, together with the various capitalist enterprises that may be in progress, to maintain at a fairly uniform level year by year and throughout each year the aggregate demand for labor, and thus prevent there being any unemployed. It is now known that in this way it is quite possible for any government to prevent, if it chooses, the very occurrence of any widespread or prolonged involuntary unemployment, which, if it is now in any country allowed to occur, is as much the result of government neglect as is any epidemic disease.

6. Restoration and Reparation.—The British Labor movement holds that one of the most imperative duties of all countries immediately peace is declared will be the restoration, so far as may be possible, of the homes, farms, factories, public buildings and means of communication in France, Belgium, Tyrol and North Italy, East Prussia, Poland, Galicia, Russia, Rumania, the Balkans, Greece, Armenia, Asia Minor and Central Africa; that the restoration should not be limited to compensation for public buildings, capitalist undertakings, and material property proved to be destroyed or damaged, but should be extended to setting

up the wage-earners and peasants themselves in homes and employments; and that to insure the full and impartial application of these principles the assessment and distribution of the compensation, so far as the cost is contributed by any international fund, should be made under the direction of an International Commission.

But the British Labor movement will not be satisfied unless a full and free judicial investigation be made into the accusations, so freely made on all sides, that particular governments have ordered, and particular officers have exercised, acts of cruelty, oppression, violence and theft against individual victims for which no justification can be found in the ordinary usages of war. It draws attention in particular to the loss of life and property of merchant seamen and other non-combatants (including women and children) resulting from this inhuman and ruthless conduct.

It should be part of the conditions of peace that there should be forthwith set up a court of claims and accusations, which should investigate all such allegations as may be brought before it, summon the accused person or government to answer the complaint, to pronounce judgment and award compensation or damages, payable by the individual or government condemned, to the persons who had suffered wrong or to their dependents. The several governments must be responsible, financially and otherwise, for the presentation of the cases of their respective nationals to such a court of claims and accusations.

6. Telegram of Arthur Henderson, President of Special Conference of the British Labor Movement, to Camille Huysmans, Secretary of the International Socialist Bureau at Stockholm, December 28, 1918.<sup>1</sup>

The Conference of the British Labor and Socialist movement carried to-day the War Aims Memorandum as published *Times*, 19th December. Endeavoring to influence Government accordingly. Please communicate terms and decision Chairman, Soviet, Petrograd, conveying the strong desire Trades Union Congress and Labor Party Executive against separate peace. Also inform Branting.

Immediately after the adoption of the memorandum the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress and the Executive Committee of the Labor Party met jointly and got into communication with the prime minister with the purpose of laying the memorandum before him. Mr. Lloyd George agreed to see them at once. "A full and frank exchange of views took place not only on the broad question of general policy, but on the detailed proposals of the memorandum," said the London Times.<sup>2</sup> Difficulties expressed by the labor leaders "were satisfactorily met, and the interview removed the last trace of misunderstanding which may have existed between the prime minister and labor. The initiative in securing this understanding with the prime minister had been taken by the labor leaders. It was fortunately timed for all parties, as the Government were enabled to build upon this foundation the imposing edifice which has since been revealed to the world."

London Times, December 29, 1917, page 7. A more definite appeal to the Russian Bolsheviki authorities was issued on January 15, 1918, on behalf of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress and the National Executive of the Labor Party. This is printed in the London Times of January 16, 1918, page 4, and summarized in Current History, Vol. VII, Part II, 206-7.

London Times, January 7, 1918, page 7.

## PRIME MINISTER LLOYD GEORGE'S SPEECH

When the Government invite organized Labor in this country to assist them to maintain the might of their armies in the field, its representatives are entitled to ask that any misgivings and doubts which any of them may have about the purpose to which this precious strength is to be applied should be definitely cleared, and what is true of organized labor is equally true of all citizens in this country without regard to grade or avocation.

When men by the million are being called upon to suffer and die and vast populations are being subjected to the sufferings and privations of war on a scale unprecedented in the history of the world, they are entitled to know for what cause or causes they are making the sacrifice. It is only the clearest, greatest and justest of causes that can justify the continuance even for one day of this unspeakable agony of the nations. And we ought to be able to state clearly and definitely not only the principles for which we are fighting but also their definite and concrete application to the war map of the world.

We have arrived at the most critical hour in this terrible conflict, and before any Government takes the fateful decision as to the conditions under which it ought either to terminate or continue the struggle, it ought to be satisfied that the conscience of the nation is behind these conditions, for nothing else can sustain the effort which is necessary to achieve a righteous end to this war. I have therefore during the last few days taken special pains to ascertain the view and the attitude of representative men of all sections of thought and opinion in the country. Last week I had the privilege not merely of perusing the declared war aims of the Labor Party, but also of discussing in detail with the Labor leaders the meaning and intention of that declaration. I have also had an opportunity of discussing this same momentous question with Mr. Asquith and Viscount Grey. Had it not been that the Nationalist leaders are in Ireland engaged in endeavoring to solve the tangled problem of Irish self-government, I should have been happy to exchange views with them, but Mr. Redmond, speaking on their behalf, has, with his usual lucidity and force, in many of his speeches, made clear what his ideas are as to the object and purpose of the war. I have also had the opportunity of consulting certain representatives of the Great Dominions Overseas.

I am glad to be able to say as a result of all these discussions that, although the Government are alone responsible for the actual language I propose using, there is national agreement as to the character and purpose of our war aims and peace conditions, and in what I say to you to-day, and through you to the world, I can venture to claim that I am speaking not merely the mind of the Government but of the nation and of the Empire as a whole.

## WHAT WE ARE NOT FIGHTING FOR

We may begin by clearing away some misunderstandings and stating what we are not fighting for. We are not fighting a war of aggression against the German people. Their leaders have persuaded them that they are fighting a war of self-defense against a league of rival nations bent on the destruction of Germany. That is not so. The destruction or disruption of Germany or the German people has never been a war aim with us from the first day of this war to this day. Most reluctantly and, indeed, quite unprepared for the dreadful ordeal, we were forced to join in this war in selfdefense, in defense of the violated public law of Europe, and in vindication of the most solemn treaty obligations on which the public system of Europe rested, and on which Germany had ruthlessly trampled in her invasion of Belgium. We had to join in the struggle or stand aside and see Europe go under and brute force triumph over public right and international justice. It was only the realization of that dreadful alternative that forced the British people into the war. And from that original attitude they have never swerved. They have never aimed at the break up of the German peoples or the disintegration of their State or country. Germany has occupied a great position in the world. It is not our wish or intention to question or destroy that position for the future, but rather to turn her aside from hopes and schemes of military domination and to see her devote all her strength to the great beneficent tasks of the world. Nor are we fighting to destroy Austria-Hungary, or to deprive Turkey of its capital, or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace, which are predominantly Turkish in race.

Nor did we enter this war merely to alter or destroy the Imperial constitution of Germany, much as we consider that military autocratic constitution a dangerous anachronism in the 20th century. Our point of view is that the adoption of a really democratic constitution by Germany would be the most convincing evidence that in her the old spirit of military domination had indeed died in this war, and would make it much easier for us to conclude a broad democratic peace with her. But, after all, that is a question for the German people to decide.

## COUNT CZERNIN'S PRONOUNCEMENT

It is now more than a year since the President of the United States, then neutral, addressed to the belligerents a suggestion that each side should

state clearly the aims for which they were fighting. We and our Allies responded by the note of January 10, 1917.

To the President's appeal the Central Empires made no reply, and, in spite of many adjusations, both from their opponents and from neutrals, they have maintained a complete silence as to the objects for which they are fighting. Even on so crucial a matter as their intention with regard to Belgium they have uniformly declined to give any trustworthy indication.

On December 25 last, however, Count Czernin, speaking on behalf of Austria-Hungary and her Allies, did make a pronouncement of a kind. It is indeed deplorably vague. We are told that "it is not the intention" of the Central Powers "to appropriate forcibly" any occupied territories or "to rob of its independence" any nation which has lost its "political independence" during the war. It is obvious that almost any scheme of conquest and annexation could be perpetrated within the literal interpretation of such a pledge.

Does it mean that Belgium, Servia, Montenegro and Rumania will be as independent and as free to direct their own destinies as the Germans or any other nation? Or does it mean that all manner of interferences and restrictions, political and economic, incompatible with the status and dignity of a freed self-respecting people, are to be imposed? If this is the intention then there will be one kind of independence for a great nation and an inferior kind of independence for a small nation. We must know what is meant, for equality of right among nations, small as well as great, is one of the fundamental issues this country and her Allies are fighting to establish in this war. Reparation for the wanton damage inflicted on Belgian towns and villages and their inhabitants is emphatically repudiated. The rest of the so-called "offer" of the Central Powers is almost entirely a refusal of all concessions. All suggestions about the autonomy of subject nationalities are ruled out of the peace terms altogether. The question whether any form of self-government is to be given to Arabs, Armenians or Syrians is declared to be entirely a matter for the Sublime Porte. A pious wish for the protection of minorities "in so far as it is practically realizable" is the nearest approach to liberty which the Central statesmen venture to make.

## GOVERNMENT BY CONSENT.

On one point only are they perfectly clear and definite. Under no circumstances will the "German demand" for the restoration of the whole

of Germany's colonies be departed from. All principles of self-determination, or, as our earlier phrase goes, government by consent of the governed, here vanish into thin air.

It is impossible to believe that any edifice of permanent peace could be erected on such a foundation as this. Mere lip service to the formula of no annexations and no indemnities or the right of self-determination is useless. Before any negotiations can ever be begun, the Central Powers must realize the essential facts of the situation.

The days of the Treaty of Vienna are long past. We can no longer submit the future of European civilization to the arbitrary decisions of a few negotiators striving to secure by chicanery or persuasion the interests of this or that dynasty or nation. The settlement of the new Europe must be based on such grounds of reason and justice as will give some promise of stability. Therefore it is that we feel that government with the consent of the governed must be the basis of any territorial settlement in this war. For that reason also, unless treaties be upheld, unless every nation is prepared at whatever sacrifice to honor the national signature, it is obvious that no treaty of peace can be worth the paper on which it is written.

#### BELGIUM AND ALSACE-LORRAINE.

The first requirement, therefore, always put forward by the British Government and their Allies, has been the complete restoration, political, territorial and economic, of the independence of Belgium and such reparation as can be made for the devastation of its towns and provinces. This is no demand for war indemnity, such as that imposed on France by Germany in 1871. It is not an attempt to shift the cost of warlike operations from one belligerent to another, which may or may not be defensible. It is no more and no less than an insistence that before there can be any hope for a stable peace, this great breach of the public law of Europe must be repudiated, and, so far as possible, repaired. Reparation means recognition. Unless international right is recognized by insistence on payment for injury done in defiance of its canons it can never be a reality. Next comes the restoration of Serbia, Montenegro, and the occupied parts of France, Italy and Rumania. The complete withdrawal of the alien armies and the reparation for injustice done is a fundamental condition of permanent peace.

We mean to stand by the French democracy to the death in the demand they make for a reconsideration of the great wrong of 1871, when, without

any regard to the wishes of the population, two French provinces were torn from the side of France and incorporated in the German Empire. This sore has poisoned the peace of Europe for half a century, and until it is cured healthy conditions will not have been restored. There can be no better illustration of the folly and wickedness of using a transient military success to violate national right.

I will not attempt to deal with the question of the Russian territories now in German occupation. The Russian policy since the Revolution has passed so rapidly through so many phases that it is difficult to speak without some suspension of judgment as to what the situation will be when the final terms of European peace come to be discussed. Russia accepted war with all its horrors because, true to her traditional guardianship of the weaker communities of her race, she stepped in to protect Serbia from a plot against her independence. It is this honorable sacrifice which not merely brought Russia into the war, but France as well. France, true to the conditions of her treaty with Russia, stood by her Ally in a quarrel which was not her own. Her chivalrous respect for her treaty led to the wanton invasion of Belgium; and the treaty obligations of Great Britain to that little land brought us into the war.

The present rulers of Russia are now engaged, without any reference to the countries whom Russia brought into the war, in separate negotiations with their common enemy. I am indulging in no reproaches; I am merely stating facts with a view to making it clear why Britain cannot be held accountable for decisions taken in her absence, and concerning which she has not been consulted or her aid invoked. No one who knows Prussia and her designs upon Russia can for a moment doubt her ultimate intention. Whatever phrases she may use to delude Russia, she does not mean to surrender one of the fair provinces or cities of Russia now occupied by her forces. Under one name or another—and the name hardly matters these Russian provinces will henceforth be in reality part of the dominions of Prussia. They will be ruled by the Prussian sword in the interests of Prussian autocracy, and the rest of the people of Russia will be partly enticed by specious phrases and partly bullied by the threat of continued war against an impotent army into a condition of complete economic and ultimate political enslavement to Germany. We all deplore the prospect. The democracy of this country mean to stand to the last by the democracies of France and Italy and all our other Allies. We shall be proud to fight to the end side by side by the new democracy of Russia, so will America and so will France and Italy. But if the present rulers of Russia take action which is independent of their Allies we have no means of intervening to arrest the catastrophe which is assuredly befalling their country. Russia can only be saved by her own people.

We believe, however, that an independent Poland, comprising all those genuinely Polish elements who desire to form part of it, is an urgent necessity for the stability of Western Europe.

## AUSTRIA, ITALY, TURKEY

Similarly, though we agree with President Wilson that the breakup of Austria-Hungary is no part of our war aims, we feel that, unless genuine self-government on true democratic principles is granted to those Austro-Hungarian nationalities who have long desired it, it is impossible to hope for the removal of those causes of unrest in that part of Europe which have so long threatened its general peace.

On the same grounds we regard as vital the satisfaction of the legitimate claims of the Italians for union with those of their own race and tongue. We also mean to press that justice be done to men of Rumanian blood and speech in their legitimate aspirations. If these conditions are fulfilled Austria-Hungary would become a power whose strength would conduce to the permanent peace and freedom of Europe, instead of being merely an instrument to the pernicious military autocracy of Prussia that uses the resources of its allies for the furtherance of its own sinister purposes.

Outside Europe we believe that the same principles should be applied. While we do not challenge the maintenance of the Turkish Empire in the homelands of the Turkish race with its capital at Constantinople—the passage between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea being internationalized and neutralized—Arabia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine are in our judgment entitled to a recognition of their separate national conditions.

What the exact form of that recognition in each particular case should be need not here be discussed, beyond stating that it would be impossible to restore to their former sovereignty the territories to which I have already referred.

Much has been said about the arrangements we have entered into with our Allies on this and on other subjects. I can only say that as new circumstances, like the Russian collapse and the separate Russian negotiations, have changed the conditions under which those arrangements were made, we are, and always have been, perfectly ready to discuss them with our Alliés.

#### THE GERMAN COLONIES

With regard to the German colonies, I have repeatedly declared that they are held at the disposal of a conference whose decision must have primary regard to the wishes and interests of the native inhabitants of such colonies. None of those territories are inhabited by Europeans. The governing consideration, therefore, in all these cases must be that the inhabitants should be placed under the control of an administration acceptable to themselves, one of whose main purposes will be to prevent their exploitation for the benefit of European capitalists or Governments. The natives live in their various tribal organizations under chiefs and councils who are competent to consult and speak for their tribes and members, and thus to represent their wishes and interests in regard to their disposal.

The general principle of national self-determination is therefore as applicable in their cases as in those of occupied European territories. The German declaration, that the natives of the German colonies have, through their military fidelity in the war, shown their attachment and resolve under all circumstances to remain with Germany, is applicable not to the German colonies generally, but only to one of them, and in that case (German East Africa) the German authorities secured the attachment, not of the native population as a whole, which is and remains profoundly anti-German, but only of a small warlike class from whom their askaris, or soldiers, were selected. These they attached to themselves by conferring on them a highly privileged position as against the bulk of the native population, which enabled these askaris to assume a lordly and oppressive superiority over the rest of the natives. By this and other means they secured the attachment of a very small and insignificant minority whose interests were directly opposed to those of the rest of the population, and for whom they have no right to speak. The German treatment of their native populations in their colonies has been such as amply to justify their fear of submitting the future of those colonies to the wishes of the natives themselves.

## REPARATION

Finally, there must be reparation for injuries done in violation of international law. The peace conference must not forget our seamen and the services they have rendered to, and the outrages they have suffered for, the common cause of freedom.

One omission we notice in the proposal of the Central Powers which seems to us especially regrettable. It is desirable, and indeed essential, that

the settlement after this war shall be one which does not in itself bear the seed of future war. But that is not enough. However wisely and well we may make territorial and other arrangements, there will still be many subjects of international controversy. Some, indeed, are inevitable.

The economic conditions at the end of the war will be in the highest degree difficult. Owing to the diversion of human effort to warlike pursuits, there must follow a world-shortage of raw materials, which will increase the longer the war lasts, and it is inevitable that those countries which have control of the raw materials will desire to help themselves and their friends first.

## "JUST AND LASTING PEACE"

Apart from this, whatever settlement is made will be suitable only to the circumstances under which it is made, and, as those circumstances change, changes in the settlement will be called for.

So long as the possibility of dispute between nations continues, that is to say, so long as men and women are dominated by passioned ambition and war is the only means of settling a dispute, all nations must live under the burden not only of having from time to time to engage in it, but of being compelled to prepare for its possible outbreak. The crushing weight of modern armaments, the increasing evil of compulsory military service, the vast waste of wealth and effort involved in warlike preparation, these are blots on our civilization of which every thinking individual must be ashamed.

For these and other similar reasons, we are confident that a great attempt must be made to establish by some international organization an alternative to war as a means of settling international disputes. After all, war is a relic of barbarism, and, just as law has succeeded violence as the means of settling disputes between individuals, so we believe that it is destined ultimately to take the place of war in the settlement of controversies between nations.

If, then, we are asked what we are fighting for, we reply, as we have often replied—We are fighting for a just and a lasting peace—and we believe that before permanent peace can be hoped for three conditions must be fulfilled.

First, the sanctity of treaties must be re-established; secondly, a territorial settlement must be secured based on the right of self-determination or the consent of the governed; and, lastly, we must seek by the creation of some international organization to limit the burden of armaments and diminish the probability of war.

On these conditions the British Empire would welcome peace, to secure those conditions its peoples are prepared to make even greater sacrifices than those they have yet endured.

5. The terms for which America fights: speech of Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States, to Congress, January 8, 1918.

## Gentlemen of the Congress:

Once more, as repeatedly before, the spokesmen of the Central Empires have indicated their desire to discuss the objects of the war and the possible basis for a general peace. Parleys have been in progress at Brest-Litovsk between Russian representatives and representatives of the Central Powers to which the attention of all the belligerents has been invited for the purpose of ascertaining whether it may be possible to extend these parleys into a general conference with regard to terms of peace and settlement.

The Russian representatives presented not only a perfectly definite statement of the principles upon which they would be willing to conclude peace, but also an equally definite program of the concrete application of those principles.

The representatives of the Central Powers, on their part, presented an outline of settlement which, if much less definite, seemed susceptible of liberal interpretation until their specific program of practical terms was added.

That program proposed no concessions at all either to the sovereignty of Russia or to the preferences of the populations with whose fortunes it dealt, but meant, in a word, that the Central Empires were to keep every foot of territory their armed forces had occupied,—every province, every city, every point of vantage,—as a permanent addition to their territories and their power.

It is a reasonable conjecture that the general principles of settlement which they at first suggested originated with the more liberal statemen of Germany and Austria, the men who have begun to feel the force of their own peoples' thought and purpose, while the concrete terms of actual settlement came from the military leaders who have no thought but to keep what they have got. The negotiations have been broken off. The Russian representatives were sincere and in earnest. They cannot entertain such proposals of conquest and domination.

Official Bulletin, January 8, 1918.

#### INCIDENT FULL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The whole incident is full of significance. It is also full of perplexity. With whom are the Russian representatives dealing? For whom are the representatives of the Central Empires speaking? Are they speaking for the majorities of their respective parliaments or for the minority parties. that military and imperialistic minority which has so far dominated their whole policy and controlled the affairs of Turkey and of the Balkan states which have felt obliged to become their associates in this war? The Russian representatives have insisted, very justly, very wisely, and in the true spirit of modern democracy that the conferences they have been holding with the Teutonic and Turkish statesmen should be held within open. not closed, doors, and all the world has been audience, as was desired. To whom have we been listening, then? To those who speak the spirit and intention of the resolutions of the German Reichstag of the 10th of July last.<sup>1</sup> the spirit and intention of the liberal leaders and parties of Germany, or to those who resist and defy that spirit and intention and insist upon conquest and subjugation? Or are we listening, in fact, to both, unreconciled and in open and hopeless contradiction? These are very serious and pregnant questions. Upon the answer to them depends the peace of the world.

#### ISSUES OF LIFE AND DEATH INVOLVED

But, whatever the results of the parleyscat Brest-Litovsk, whatever the confusions of counsel and of purpose in the utterances of the spokesmen of the Central Empires, they have again attempted to acquaint the world with their objects in the war and have again challenged their adversaries to say what their objects are and what sort of settlement they would deem just and satisfactory. There is no good reason why that challenge should not be

The resolution referred to was introduced in the name of the Center, Radical and Socialist parties; and was adopted, 214 ayes, 176 noes, 17 abstentions. Its text is as follows:

"As on August 4, vol4, so on the threshold of the fourth year of the war, the German people stand upon the assurance of the speech from the Throne—we are driven by no lust of conquest."

"Germany took up arms in defense of its liberty and independence and for the integrity of its territories. The Reichstag labors for peace and a mutual understanding and lasting reconciliation among the nations. Forced acquisitions of territory and political, economic and financial violations are incompatible with such a peace.

"The Reichstag rejects all plans aiming at an economic blockade and the stirring up of enmity among the peoples after the war. The freedom of the seas must be assured. Only an economic peace can prepare the ground for the friendly association of the peoples.

"The Reichstag will energetically promote the creation of international juridical organizations. So long, however, as the enemy Governments do not accept such a peace, so long as they threaten Germany and her allies with conquest and violation, the German people will stand together as one man, hold out unshaken, and fight until the rights of Germany and its allies to life and development are secured. The German nation united is unconquerable.

"The Reichstag knows that in this announcement it is at one with the men who are defending the Fatherland; in the heroic struggles they are sure of the undying thanks of the whole people."—

New York Timbe, July 21, 1917.

responded to and responded to with the utmost candor. We did not wait for it. Not once, but again and again we have laid our whole thought and purpose before the world, not in general terms only, but each time with sufficient definition to make it clear what sort of definitive terms of settlement must necessarily spring out of them. Within the last week, Mr. Lloyd George has spoken with admirable candor and in admirable spirit for the people and Government of Great Britain. There is no confusion of counsel among the adversaries of the Central Powers, no uncertainty of principle, no vagueness of detail.

The only secrecy of counsel, the only lack of fearless frankness, the only failure to make definite statement of the objects of the war lies with Germany and her allies. The issues of life and death hang upon these definitions. No statesman who has the least conception of his responsibility ought for a moment to permit himself to continue this tragical and appalling outpouring of blood and treasure unless he is sure beyond a peradventure that the objects of the vital sacrifice are part and parcel of the very life of society and that the people for whom he speaks think them right and imperative as he does.

There is, moreover, a voice calling for these definitions of principle and of purpose which is, it seems to me, more thrilling and more compelling than any of the many moving voices with which the troubled air of the world is filled. It is the voice of the Russian people. They are prostrate and all but helpless, it would seem, before the grim power of Germany, which has hitherto known no relenting and no pity. Their power, apparently, is shattered. And yet their soul is not subservient. They will not yield either in principle or in action. Their conception of what is right, of what it is humane and honorable for them to accept, has been stated with a frankness, a largeness of view, a generosity of spirit, and a universal human sympathy which must challenge the admiration of every friend of mankind; and they have refused to compound their ideals or desert others that they themselves may be safe. They call to us to say what it is that we desire, in what, if in anything, our purpose and our spirit differ from theirs; and I believe that the people of the United States would wish me to respond with utter simplicity and frankness. Whether their present leaders believe it or not, it is our heartfelt desire and hope that some way may be opened whereby we may be privileged to assist the people of Russia to attain their utmost hope of liberty and ordered peace.

#### DAYS OF CONOUEST GONE BY.

It will be our wish and purpose that the processes of peace, when they

are begun, shall be absolutely open, and that they shall involve and permit henceforth no secret understandings of any kind. The day of conquest and aggrandizement is gone by; so is also the day of secret covenants entered into in the interest of particular governments and likely at some unlooked-for moment to upset the peace of the world. It is this happy fact, now clear to the view of every public man whose thoughts do not still linger in an age that is dead and gone, which makes it possible for every nation whose purposes are consistent with justice and the peace of the world to avow now or at any other time the objects it has in view.

We entered this war because violations of right had occurred which touched us to the quick and made the life of our people impossible unless they were corrected and the world secured once for all against their recurrence. What we demand in this war, therefore, is nothing peculiar to ourselves. It is that the world be made fit and safe to live in; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace-loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair dealings by the other peoples of the world as against force and selfish aggression. All the peoples of the world are in effect partners in this interest, and for our own part we see very clearly that unless justice be done to others it will not be done to us. The program of the world's peace, therefore, is our program; and that program, the only possible program, as we see it, is this:

- I. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.
- II. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.
- III. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.
- IV. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.
- V. A free, open-minded and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.

- VI. The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest co-operation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy and assure her of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and, more than a welcome, assistance also of every kind that she may need and may herself desire. The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy.
- VII. Belgium, the whole world will agree, must be evacuated and restored, without any attempt to limit the sovereignty which she enjoys in common with all other free nations. No other single act will serve as this will serve to restore confidence among the nations in the laws which they have themselves set and determined for the government of their relations with one another. Without this healing act the whole structure and validity of international law is forever impaired.
- VIII. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly 50 years, should be righted, in order that peace may once more be made secure in the interest of all.
- IX. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.
- X. The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development.
- XI. Rumania, Serbia and Montenegro should be evacuated; occupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea, and the relations of the several Balkan states to one another determined by friendly counsel along historically established lines of allegiance and nationality; and international guarantees of the political and economic independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan states should be entered into.
- XII. The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees.

XIII. An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant.

XIV. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.

In regard to these essential rectifications of wrong and assertions of right we feel ourselves to be intimate partners of all the governments and peoples associated together against the Imperialists. We cannot be separated in interest or divided in purpose. We stand together until the end.

For such arrangements and covenants we are willing to fight and to continue to fight until they are achieved; but only because we wish the right to prevail and desire a just and stable peace such as can be secured only by removing the chief provocations to war, which this program does remove. We have no jealousy of German greatness, and there is nothing in this program that impairs it. We grudge her no achievement or distinction of learning or of pacific enterprise such as have made her record very bright and very enviable. We do not wish to injure her or block in any way her legitimate influence or power. We do not wish to fight her either with arms or with hostile arrangements of trade if she is willing to associate with us and the other peace-loving nations of the world in covenants of justice and law and fair dealing. We wish her only to accept a place of equality among the peoples of the world,—the new world in which we now live,—instead of a place of mastery.

Neither do we presume to suggest to her any alteration or modification of her institutions. But it is necessary, we must frankly say, and necessary as a preliminary to any intelligent dealings with her on our part, that we should know whom her spokesmen speak for when they speak to us, whether for the Reichstag majority or for the military party and the men whose creed is imperial domination.

We have spoken now, surely, in terms too concrete to admit of any further doubt or question. An evident principle runs through the whole program I have outlined. It is the principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities, and their right to live on equal terms of liberty and safety with one another, whether they be strong or weak.

Unless this principle be made its foundation, no part of the structure of international justice can stand. The people of the United States could

act upon no other principle; and to the vindication of this principle they are ready to devote their lives, their honor, and everything that they possess.

The moral climax of this the culminating and final war for human liberty has come, and they are ready to put their own strength, their own highest purpose, their own integrity and devotion to the test.

6. Address of Count Georg Friedrich von Hertling, chancellor of the German Empire, before the main committee of the imperial Reichstag in reply to the address of President Wilson, January 24, 1918.<sup>1</sup>

Gentlemen, When last I had the honor to speak before your Committee—that was on January 3—we were faced by an incident which had occurred at Brest-Litovsk. At that time I expressed the opinion that we should await the settlement of this incident in all equanimity. The facts have corresponded with this expectation. The Russian delegation has again arrived at Brest-Litovsk, and negotiations have been resumed and continued. The negotiations are progressing slowly. They are exceedingly difficult.

I have already referred on a previous occasion to the exact circumstances from which these difficulties arise. Indeed, many times, there were reasons to doubt whether the Russian delegation was in earnest with their peace negotiations, and all sorts of wireless messages, which are going around the world with remarkably strange contents, tended to strengthen this doubt. Nevertheless, I hold firmly to the hope that we shall come to a favorable conclusion in the near future with the Russian delegation at Brest-Litovsk.

Our negotiations with the Ukrainian representatives are in a more favorable position. Here, too, difficulties have yet to be overcome, but the prospects are favorable. We hope shortly to reach conclusions with Ukraine which will be in the interests of both parties and will be economically advantageous.

One result, gentlemen, might be recorded, as you all know. The Russians last month proposed to issue an invitation to all the belligerents to participate in the negotiations. Russia submitted certain proposals of a very general character. At that time we accepted the proposal to invite

<sup>\*</sup>Translation from the Department of State, Division of Foreign Intelligence, supplemented by paragraphs from the news report of Reuter's Telegraph Agency.

the belligerents to take part in the negotiations, on the condition, however, that the invitation should have a definite period for its acceptance.

At ten o'clock on the evening of January 4 the period expired. No answer had come, and as a result we were no longer under obligations and had a free hand for separate peace negotiations with Russia. Neither were we longer bound, of course, by the general peace proposals submitted to us by the Russian delegation.

## DECLARATIONS, BUT NO REPLY

Instead of the reply which was expected, but which was not forthcoming, two declarations were made by enemy statesmen—Premier Lloyd George's speech and President Wilson's speech. I willingly admit that Lloyd George altered his tone. He no longer indulges in abuse, and appears desirous of again demonstrating his ability as a negotiator, which I had formerly doubted. I cannot go so far, however, as many opinions which have been expressed in neutral countries, which would read in this speech of Lloyd George a serious desire for peace and even a friendly disposition.

It is true, he declares he does not desire to destroy Germany, and never desired to destroy her. He has even words of respect for our political, economic and cultural position. But other utterances also are not lacking, and the idea continually comes to the surface that he has to pronounce judgment on Germany, charging her with being guilty of all possible crimes. That is an attitude with which we can have nothing to do, and in which we can discover no trace of a serious purpose to attain peace. We are to be the guilty ones, over whom the Entente is now sitting in judgment. That compels me to give a short review of the situation and the events preceding the war at the risk of repeating what long ago was said.

### GERMANY'S INTERNATIONAL POSITION

The establishment of the German Empire in the year 1871 made an end of dismemberment. By the union of its tribes the German Empire in Europe acquired a position corresponding to its economic and cultural achievements and the claims founded thereon. Bismarck crowned his work by the alliance with Austria-Hungary. It was purely a defensive alliance, so conceived and willed by the exalted allies from the first.

Not even the slightest thought of its misuse for aggressive aims ever occurred in the course of decades. The defensive alliance between Germany and the Danube monarchy, closely connected by old traditions and allied to us by common interest, was to serve especially for the maintenance of peace.

But Bismarck had even then, as he was often reproached for having. an obsession in regard to coalitions which menaced the allied Central Powers. and the events of the times that followed have shown that it was not a mere terrifying phantom. The danger of enemy coalitions which threatened the allied Central Powers often made an appearance. By King Edward's isolation policy the dream of coalitions became a reality. The German Empire, progressing and growing in strength, stood in the way of British imperialism. In French lust of revenge and Russian aspirations of expansion, this British imperialism found only too ready aid. Thus future plans, dangerous for us, were formed.

The geographical situation of Germany in itself had always brought near to us the danger of war on two fronts, and now it became increasingly visible. Between Russia and France an alliance was concluded whose participants were twice as numerous as the population of the German Empire and Austria-Hungary. Republican France lent the Russia of the Czar billions to construct strategical railways in the Kingdom of Poland in order to facilitate an advance against us. The French Republic drew on its last man for three years of service. Thus France, with Russia, built up armaments extending to the limit of the capabilities of both, thereby pursuing aims which our enemies now term imperialistic.

It would have been a neglect of duty had Germany remained a calm spectator of this game and had we not also endeavored to create an armament which would protect us against future enemies. I may perhaps recall that I as a member of the Reichstag very frequently spoke on these matters, and on the occasion of new expenditure on armament, pointed out that the German people, in consenting to these, solely desired to pursue a policy of peace, and that such armaments were only imposed upon us to ward off the danger threatening from a possible enemy. It doesn't appear that any regard was paid to these words abroad.

### GERMANY'S ATTITUDE TOWARD ALSACE-LORRAINE

And Alsace-Lorraine, of which Lloyd George speaks again. He speaks of the wrong Germany did in 1871 to France. Alsace-Lorraine-you need not be told, but abroad they appear still to be ignorant of things-Alsace-Lorraine comprises, as is known, for the most part purely German regions which by a century-long violence and illegality were severed from the German Empire and, until finally in 1789 the French Revolution swallowed up the last remnant, Alsace and Lorraine then became French provinces.

When in the war of 1870 we demanded back the districts which had been criminally wrested from us, that was not a conquest of foreign territory but rightly and properly speaking what to-day is called disannexation, and this disannexation was then expressly recognized by the French National Assembly, the constitutional representatives of the French people at that time, March 29, 1871, by a large majority of votes.

And in England too, gentlemen, language quite other than is heard to-day has been heard. I can appeal to a classic witness. It is none other than the famous British historian and author Thomas Carlyle who in a letter to the *Times* wrote: "No people has had such a bad neighbor as Germany has possessed during the last 400 years in France. Germany would have been mad had she not thought of erecting such a frontier wall between herself and such a neighbor when opportunity offered."

Observe that I have not repeated a very hard expression which Carlyle used about France. I know of no law of nature, no resolution of heavenly parliaments, whereby France alone of all earthly beings was not obliged to restore stolen territories if the owners from whom they had been snatched had an opportunity of reconquering them. And respected English press organs expressed themselves in a like sense. I mention for example the Daily News.<sup>2</sup>

#### REPLY TO PRESIDENT WILSON

I now come to President Wilson. Here, too, I recognize that the tone appears to have changed. The unanimous rejection of Mr. Wilson's attempt in reply to the Pope's note to sow discord between the German Government and the German people has had its effect.

This unanimous rejection might of itself lead Mr. Wilson on the right path. A beginning to that end has perhaps been made, for now there is at any rate no longer talk about oppression of the German people by an autocratic German Government and the former attacks on the House of Hohenzollern have not been repeated.

I shall not enlarge upon the distorted representation of German policy which is contained in Mr. Wilson's message, but will deal in detail with the points which Mr. Wilson lays down there, not less than fourteen points, in which he formulates his peace program; and I pray your indulgence in dealing with these as briefly as possible.

fort of May 10, 1871.

The Carlyle letter was published on November 18, 1870, not in December. The newspaper publishing the letter did not approve it.—Editor's note.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> As clear a series of proofs could be adduced for the French claim. The chancellor refers to these territories having been detached from the German Empire, but the allusion is to the Holy Roman Empire, which was not a lineal predecessor of the present German Empire. The French National Assembly's vote of March 29, 1871, was passed at a time when France was occupied by German troops and the assembly was consequently not a free agent respecting matters stipulated in the preliminary treaty of peace of February 26, 1871, which was made definitive by the treaty of Frankfort of May 10, 1871.

I.—The first point is the demand that there shall be no more secret international agreements. History shows that it is we above all others who would be able to agree to the publicity of diplomatic documents. I recall that our defensive allance with Austria-Hungary was known to the whole world from 1888, while the offensive agreement of the enemy States first saw the light of publicity during the war, through the revelations of the secret Russian archives.<sup>1</sup> The negotiations at Brest-Litovsk are being conducted with full publicity. This proves that we are quite ready to accept this proposal and declare publicity of negotiations to be a general political principle.

II.—In his second point Mr. Wilson demands freedom of shipping on the seas in war and peace. This also is demanded by Germany as the first and one of the most important requirements for the future. Therefore, there is here no difference of opinion. The limitation introduced by Mr. Wilson at the end which I need not quote textually, is not intelligible, appears superfluous and would therefore best be left out. (The limiting clause reads: "... except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.") It would therefore be highly important for the freedom of shipping in future if strongly fortified naval bases on important international routes, such as England has at Gibraltar, Malta, Aden, Hongkong, the Falkland Islands and many other places, were removed.

III.—We too are in thorough accord with the removal of economic barriers which interfere with trade in a superfluous manner. We too condemn economic war, which would inevitably bear within it causes of future warlike complications.

IV.-Limitation of armaments. As already declared by us, the idea of limitation of armaments is entirely discussable. The financial position of all European States after the war might most effectively promote a satisfactory solution.

It is therefore clear that an understanding might be reached without difficulty on the first four points of Mr. Wilson's program.

The German-Austro-Hungarian alliance treaty of October 7, 1879, was secret until published by Prince Bismarck in the Berlin Official Gazette, February 3, 1888, to serve the political purpose of putting "an end to doubts which have been entertained in various quarters of its purely defensive character, and have been turned to account for various ends." That treaty was only one of the series constituting the Triple Alliance, and none of the others has been published with the exception of Arts. I, III, IV and VII of the main treaty of May 22, 1882 (as revised in 1887), which were quoted in the diplomatic exchanges between Austria-Hungary and Italy prior to the latter's declaration of

war. The effort evidently was made to imply that, while Germany's pre-war alliance was defensive, the opposing one—the Triple Entente—was offensive. The implied antithesis is not true. The Triple Entente was at least as defensive as the Triple Alliance. Moreover, more was known of it than of the Triple Alliance. (See Pierre Albin, La France et l'Allemagne en Europe (1885-1894), Paris, Félix Alcan, 1013.) If the implication stated was not intended, the term "offensive agreements" can only refer to arrangements made during the course of the war. In that case the phrase loses all propriety it otherwise might have.—Editor's note.

V.—I now come to the fifth point, settlement of all colonial claims and disputes. Practical realization of Mr. Wilson's principles in the realm of reality will encounter some difficulties in any case. I believe that for the present it may be left for England, which has the greatest colonial empire, to make what she will of this proposal of her ally. This point of the program also will have to be discussed in due time, on the reconstitution of the world's colonial possessions, which we also demand absolutely.

VI.—Evacuation of Russian territory. Now that the Entente has refused, within the period agreed upon by Russia and the Quadruple Alliance, to join in the negotiations, I must in the name of the latter decline to allow any subsequent interference. We are dealing here with questions which concern only Russia and the four allied powers. I adhere to the hope that, with recognition of self-determination for the peoples on the western frontier of the former Russian empire, good relations will be established, both with these peoples and with the rest of Russia, for whom we wish most earnestly a return of order, peace and conditions guaranteeing the welfare of the country.

VII.—Belgium. My predecessors in office repeatedly declared that at no time did the annexation of Belgium to Germany form a point in the program of German policy. The Belgian question belongs to those questions the details of which are to be settled by negotiation at the peace conference.

So long as our opponents have not unreservedly taken the standpoint that the integrity of the allies' territory can offer the only possible basis of peace discussion, I must adhere to the standpoint hitherto always adopted and refuse the removal in advance of the Belgian affair from the entire discussion.

VIII.—The occupied parts of France are a valuable pawn in our hands. Here, too, forcible annexations form no part of the official German policy. The conditions and methods of procedure of the evacuation, which must take account of Germany's vital interests, are to be agreed upon between Germany and France. I can only again accentuate expressly the fact that there can never be a question of dismemberment of Imperial territory. Under no fine phrases of any kind shall we permit the enemy again to take from us territory of the empire which with ever increasing intimacy has linked itself to Germanism, which has in a highly gratifying manner ever and increasingly developed in an economic respect, and of whose people more than 87 per cent speak the German mother tongue.

IX, X, XI.—The questions dealt with by Mr. Wilson under points 9, 10 and 11 touch both the Italian frontier question and questions of the future

development of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, and the future of the Balkan States, questions in which for the greater part the interests of our ally, Austria-Hungary, preponderate. Where German interests are concerned, we shall defend them most energetically. But I may leave the answer to Mr. Wilson's proposals on these points in the first place to the Austro-Hungarian foreign minister.

Close contact with the allied dual monarchy forms the kernel of our present policy, and must be the guiding line in the future. Loyal comradeship in arms, which has stood the test so brilliantly in war time, must continue to have its effect in peace. We shall thus, on our part, do everything for the attainment of peace by Austria-Hungary which takes into account her just claims.

XII.—The matters touched upon by Mr. Wilson in point 12 concern our loyal, brave ally Turkey. I must in no wise forestall her statesmen in their attitude. The integrity of Turkey and the safeguarding of her capital which is connected closely with the question of the straits, are important and vital interests of the German Empire also. Our ally can always count upon our energetic support in this matter.1

XIII.—Point 13 deals with Poland. It was not the Entente—which had only empty words for Poland and before the war never interceded for Poland with Russia—but the German Empire and the Austro-Hungarian monarchy who liberated Poland from the Czaristic régime which was crushing her national characteristics. It may thus be left to Germany and Austria-Hungary and Poland to come to an agreement on the future constitution of this country. As the negotiations and communications of the last year prove, we are on the road to the goal.2

XIV.—The last point, the 14th, deals with a league of nations. Regarding this point, I am sympathetically disposed, as my political activity shows, toward every idea which eliminates for the future a possibility or a

A Constantinople telegram of February 7, 1918, said that Halil Bey, the new Turkish foreign minister, speaking before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber, said: "We adhere to the standpoint that the fate of national groups which were not independent before the war cannot be regulated otherwise than by institutions created in accordance with the constitution of each individual country. The Straits will remain open in future to international traffic as in the past, and on the same conditions."

The Minister eulogized the Turkish constitution, which, he maintained, dealt equally with all, and he resolutely rejected all proposals, from whatever quarter, which would mean any interference in the internal affairs of the country. Halil Bey declared that he was in complete accord with Count Hertling's and Count Czernin's replies to Mr. Lloyd George and President Wilson.—(London Times,

February 9, 1918, page 5.)

\*The German chancellor in this paragraph evidently refers only to a portion of the Poland which President Wilson spoke of as due for a historical resurrection. The last partition of Poland, confirmed by the treaty of Vienna of June 9, 1815, was between Prussia, Austria and Russia. Austria in 1848 assimilated to her share the Republic of Cracow established by the treaty of Vienna. It is difficult to say that within the last hundred years the fate of one-third of the former Poland has been more happy than that of another. Germany in the course of the war has, however, set up a Polish kingdom in what was Russian Poland, and it is to this only that the chancellor refers. Neither the German Empire nor Austria-Hungary has "freed" their Polish territories.—Editor's note.

probability of war, and will promote a peaceful and harmonious collaboration of nations. If the idea of a league of nations, as suggested by President Wilson, proves on closer examination really to be conceived in a spirit of complete justice and complete impartiality toward all, then the Imperial Government is gladly ready, when all other pending questions have been settled, to begin the examination of the basis of such a league of nations.

# "LET THEM REVISE THEIR PROGRAMS"

Gentlemen, you have acquainted yourselves with the speech of Premier Lloyd George and the proposals of President Wilson. I must repeat what I said at commencement: We now must ask ourselves whether these speeches and proposals breathe a real and earnest wish for peace. They certainly contain certain principles for a general world peace to which we also assent, and which might form the starting point and aid negotiations.

When, however, concrete questions come into the question, points which for us are of decisive importance, their peace will is less observable. Our enemies do not desire to destroy Germany, but they cast covetous eyes on parts of our allies' lands. They speak with respect of Germany's position but their conception ever afresh finds expression as if we were the guilty who must do penance and promise improvement. Thus speaks the victor to the vanquished, he who interprets all our former expressions of a readiness for peace as merely a sign of weakness.

The leaders of the Entente must first renounce this standpoint and this deception. In order to facilitate this I would like to recall what the position really is. They may take it from me that our military position was not so favorable as it now is. Our highly gifted army leaders face the future with undiminished confidence in victory. Throughout the whole army, in the officers and men, lives unbroken the joy of battle.

I will remind you of the words I spoke November 29 in the Reichstag. Our repeatedly expressed willingness for peace and the spirit of reconciliation revealed by our proposals must not be regarded by the Entente as a license permitting the indefinite lengthening of the war. Should our enemies force us to prolong the war, they will have to bear the consequences resulting from it. If the leaders of the enemy powers really are inclined toward peace let them revise their programs once again, or, as Premier Lloyd George said, proceed to reconsideration. If they do that and come forward with fresh proposals, then we will examine them carefully, because our aim is no other than the re-establishment of a lasting general peace. But this lasting general peace is not possible so long as the integrity of the

German Empire, the security of her vital interests and the dignity of our fatherland are not guaranteed. Until that time we must quietly stand by each other and wait. As to the purpose, gentlemen, we are all one.

### VICTORY WILL BE OURS

In regard to the methods and the "modalities," there may be differences of opinion. But let us shelve all these differences. Let us not fight about formulæ which always fall short in the mad course of the world events, but, above dividing party controversies, let us keep our eyes on the one mutual aim, the welfare of the fatherland. Let us hold together, the Government and the nation, and victory will be ours. A good peace will and must come. The German nation bears in an admirable manner the sufferings and the burdens of the war, which is now in its fourth year. In connection with these burdens and sufferings I think especially of the sufferings of the small artisans and the lowly-paid officials. But you all, men and women, will hold on and see it through. With your political knowledge you do not allow yourselves to be fooled by catch phrases, you know how to distinguish between the realities of life and the promising dreams. Such a nation cannot go under. God is with us and will be with us also in the future.

7. ADDRESS OF COUNT OTTOKAR CZERNIN VON CHUDENITZ, AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, BEFORE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF THE AUSTRIAN DELEGATION, JANUARY 24, 1918.1

It is my duty to give a faithful picture of the peace negotiations, discuss the various phases of the results reached to date, and to draw from them conclusions which are true, logical and justified. It seems to me above all that those who seem to find the course of the negotiations too slow are not able to have even a slight idea of the difficulties which are naturally met in them everywhere. In what follows I shall describe these difficulties, but would like to point out in advance the cardinal difference between the peace

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The translation is the one supplied to the American press by the Department of State on February 6, 1918, compared with a Reuter summary telegraphed from Basel on January 24, a German text published in the New Yorker Staatszeitung, February 22, and the Associated Press summary telegraphed from Basel on January 24.

A significance attaches to the circumstance that this speech was delivered before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Austrian Delegation. Count Czernin is minister for foreign affairs of the Austrian Monarchy, and he refers in his speech to the careful distinction he has observed between the Austrian and Hungarian Delegations. These two bodies are selected from the Austrian Reichsrath and Hungarian Parliament and are charged with the constitutionally common interests of the Monarchy, the ministries of war, finance and foreign affairs. They meet separately, and neither is able to obligate the other. (See A. Lawrence Lowell, Government and Parties in Continental Europe, II, 165–170.)

negotiations at Brest-Litovsk and all those which ever took place in history. Never, so far as I know, have peace negotiations taken place in view. is quite impossible that negotiations which approach the present ones in extent and depth can take their course smoothly and without obstacles from the very beginning. Our task is to build a new world, and rebuild all that which this most trying of wars has destroyed and trampled to the ground. Various phases of all the peace negotiations which we know have developed more or less behind closed doors and their results were told to the world only after the negotiations have been completed. All histories teach, and it is easily understood, that the troublesome road of such peace negotiations always leads up and down, that prospects are more favorable some days, less favorable on others. But when these various phases and these details are each day telegraphed to the world it is quite easily understood that they act like electric shocks in the present condition of nervousness which rules in the world, and that they excite public opinion. We were completely aware of the disadvantage of this procedure. Still we immediately gave way to the desire of the Russian Government for publicity because we wished to show ourselves friendly, and because we have nothing to hide, and also because we might have made a false impression had we insisted on a method of provisional secrecy. But the other fact consequent on this complete publicity of the negotiations is that the great public, that country behind the front, and, above all, the leaders, keep their nerves steady. The game must be finished in cold blood and it will come to a good end if the peoples of the Monarchy support the responsible representatives at the peace conference.

## NO COMPENSATIONS, NO INDEMNITIES

In advance let it be said that the basis on which Austria-Hungary treats with the various newly-created Russian governments is that of no compensations nor annexations [ohne Kontributionen und ohne Annexionen]. That is the program which I stated briefly to those who wanted to speak about peace after my nomination as minister, which I have repeated to the Russian people in power on their first offer of peace, and from which I will not deviate. Those who believe I can be crowded off the road which I purpose to go are bad psychologists. I have never let the public be in doubt as to the road which I go and I have never allowed myself to be crowded from this road a hair's breadth, neither to the right nor to the left. Since then I have become the undisputed darling of the Pan-Germans and those in the Monarchy who imitate the Pan-Germans. At the same time I am calumniated as an inciter to war by those who want peace at any price, of which

innumerable letters are proof. Neither has ever troubled me. On the contrary, these double insults are my only amusement in these serious times. I declare once more that I demand not a square meter nor a penny from Russia, and that if Russia, as seems to be the case, itself adopts that point of view also, peace will be made.

Those who want peace at any price might have doubts as to my non-annexationist purposes toward Russia if I did not tell them with the same inconsiderate openness that I shall never allow myself to make a peace which transcends the form I have just sketched. Should our Russian fellow-peacemakers demand the cession of territory from us, or indemnity, I should continue the war despite a desire for peace which I have as well as you, or would resign if I could not make my view prevail.

#### DIFFICULTIES AT BREST-LITOVSK

Having said this in advance, and emphasized once more that there is no reason for the pessimistic view that peace will fail, since negotiating committees have agreed on the basis of no annexations nor contributions,—and only new instructions from the various Russian governments or their disappearance could change this basis,—I now proceed to the two greatest difficulties which contain reasons why the negotiations are not progressing as rapidly as we all should like.

The first difficulty is that we are not treating with one Russian peace-maker, but with various newly-created Russian governments, which have not clearly defined among themselves their spheres of competency. The governments in question are that part of Russia which is led by Petrograd, secondly, our own new neighboring state, great Ukrainia, thirdly, Finland, and, fourthly, Caucasus. With the first two states we treat directly, with the two others now only more or less indirectly, because they have to date sent no negotiator to Brest-Litovsk. These four Russian fellow-peacemakers are met by us four powers and the case of the Caucasus, in which we naturally have no difficulties to remove, but which is in conflict with Turkey, shows the extent of the subjects under discussion.

What interests us especially and chiefly is the newly-created great state which will be our neighbor in the future, Ukrainia. We have got very far in our negotiations with this delegation. We have agreed on the above-mentioned basis of no annexations nor compensations and have agreed what and how commercial relations with the newly-created republic are to be re-established. But this very example of Ukrainia shows one of the ruling difficulties. While the Ukrainian Republic holds the point of view

that it has the right to treat with us quite autonomously and independently, the Russian delegation stands on the basis that the boundaries of its country and those of Ukrainia have not been definitely fixed, and St. Petersburg consequently has the right to participate in our negotiations with Ukrainia, a view with which the gentlemen of the Ukrainian delegation do not care to agree. But this troubled situation of domestic conditions in Russia was the cause of enormous delay. We have overcome these difficulties also and I believe that the negotiations to be taken up in a few days will find the road clear here.

I confess I do not know what the situation is to-day, for yesterday my representative at Brest-Litovsk received two telegrams to the effect that M. Joffe, the president of the Russian delegation, had sent to the delegations of the Quadruple Alliance a circular note declaring that the Government of the Republic of Workmen and Peasants of the Ukraine, which sits at Kharkov, in no case recognizes the secretariat-general of the Kiev Rada as representing the entire Ukrainian people, because the Central Rada represents only the capital classes, and cannot, consequently, speak in the name of the Ukrainian people. The note also states that the Kharkov Rada does not recognize any agreements which might eventually be concluded by the Central Rada without its assent, and announces that the Kharkov Rada is sending two delegates to Brest-Litovsk as delegates of the central committee of all the councils of workmen, soldiers and peasants in the Ukraine.

According to the decision of January 12 of the Central Executive Committee, the note proceeds, these delegates must declare categorically that all attempts on the part of the Central Rada to speak in the name of the Ukrainian people must be considered as overtures due solely to the initiative of the bourgeois groups of the Ukrainian people in opposition to the interests and will of the working classes of the Ukraine. They must declare that the decisions taken by the Rada will not be recognized by the Ukrainian people; that the Rada of Workmen and Peasants recognizes the People's Commissioners as the organ of all the Soviets of Russia and as having the right to speak in the name of the entire Russian federation; that the delegation of the Rada of Workmen and Soldiers sent to Brest-Litovsk to denounce the intrigues of individuals at Kiev will act in complete accord with the delegation of all Russia. President Joffe adds in his communication that his delegation is ready to co-operate to the fullest extent with the new Ukrainian delegation.

There is a new difficulty, for we cannot and do not wish to meddle in the internal affairs of Russia, but, if the way is once clear, other difficulties will

not arise. We will agree with the Ukrainian Republic that the old frontiers of Russia and Austria-Hungary will also apply to the Ukraine.

#### WOULD WELCOME UNION OF POLAND WITH MONARCHY

We want nothing at all of Poland, the boundaries of which have not been definitely settled. Poland's people shall choose their own destiny, free and uninfluenced. I consider the form of popular decision of this question not especially important. The surer it reflects the general will of the people the more I shall be pleased, for I desire only voluntary union on the part of Poland. Only in the desire of Poland in this matter do I see a guarantee of lasting harmony. I hold irrevocably to the point of view that the Polish question must not delay the conclusion of peace by a single day. Should Poland seek close relationship with us after the conclusion of peace, we shall not refuse, but the Polish question shall and will not endanger peace. I should have liked to see the Polish Government take part in the negotiations, for, according to my opinion, Poland is an independent state. The St. Petersburg Government, however, thinks that the present Polish Government is not entitled to speak in the name of the country and failed to recognize it as a competent exponent of the country. Therefore, we desisted from our intention in order not to create a possible conflict. The question is certainly important, but more important for us is the removal of all obstacles which delay the conclusion of peace.

# DISPUTE OVER SELF-DETERMINATION

The second difficulty which we encounter, and which found the greatest echo in the press is the difference of opinion between our German ally and the St. Petersburg Government in the matter of interpretation of the right of the Russian nations to determine their own destinies, that is, those territories occupied by German troops. Germany holds the point of view that it does not intend to make forcible territorial acquisitions from Russia, but to express it in two words the difference of opinion is a double one.

First, Germany holds the legitimate point of view [auf dem berechtigten Standpunkte] that the numerous expressions of desire for independence by legislative bodies, communal bodies, etc., in occupied provinces should be considered as a provisional basis for popular opinion which would be tested later by plebiscite on a broad basis. The Russian Government is now opposed to this point of view since it can as little recognize the right of existing organizations in Courland and Lithuania to speak in the name of these provinces as it can in Polish ones. The second difficulty is that Russia

demands that the plebiscite should take place after all German troops and administrative organs have vacated the occupied provinces, while Germany contends that by such evacuation, carried through to its extreme consequence, a vacuum would have been created, which undoubtedly would bring about irrevocably complete anarchy and the greatest misery. Here it must be explained that everything which to-day allows political life in the occupied provinces is German property. The railways, posts, telegraph, all industries and administrative parts of police and justice are in German hands. The sudden withdrawal of these parts would indeed create a condition which does not seem practically tenable. In both questions we must find compromise. The difference between these two points of view is in my opinion not big enough to justify the failure of the negotiations. But such negotiations cannot be completed over night. They take time.

Once we have reached peace with Russians a general peace cannot long be prevented in my opinion, despite all efforts of Entente statesmen. We have held (heard?) that it was not understood in places why I declared in the first speech after resumption of negotiations that it was now not a question of general peace but of separate peace with Russia in Brest-Litovsk. That was a necessary statement of clear fact, which Trotsky has inevitably recognized, and was necessary because we were treating on a different basis, that is, in a more limited scope, when the question was one of separate peace with Russia rather than a general peace. Although I have no illusions that the effort for a general peace will mature over night, I am still convinced that it is maturing and that it is only a question of our holding through whether we are to have a general honorable peace or not.

#### RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT WILSON

I have been strengthened in this view by the peace offer which the President of the United States of America has made. To the whole world this is a peace offer, for in fourteen points Mr. Wilson develops the basis on which he attempts to bring about general peace. It is evident no such offer can be an elaboration acceptable in all details. Should this be the case negotiations would be unnecessary, for then peace might be made by simple acceptance—by a simple yes and amen. That, of course, is not the case. But I do not hesitate to say that I find in the last proposals of President Wilson considerable approach to the Austro-Hungarian point of view and among his proposals are some to which we can agree with great pleasure.

If I may now be permitted to go into these proposals in detail, there are

two things which I must say first. In so far as the proposals concern our allies—they mention the German possessions, Belgium and the Turkish Empire—I declare that, in loyalty to the obligations which we have undertaken, I am firmly determined to go to the utmost limits for the defense of those allies. We shall defend as our own the territorial status quo ante bellum [den vorkriegerischen Besetzstand] of our allies. That is the point of view of all four allies, and they maintain it with absolute reciprocity.

In the second place, I have to observe that I courteously but resolutely reject the advice as to how we are to govern ourselves. We have in Austria a Parliament elected by universal, equal, direct and secret franchise. There is no more democratic Parliament in the world, and this Parliament, together with the other constitutionally authorized factors, alone has the right to decide upon the internal affairs of Austria. I speak only of Austria, because I should regard it as unconstitutional to speak in the Austrian delegation of internal affairs of the Hungarian State. We do not interfere in American affairs and we want no foreign guardianship by any State.

Having said this in advance I allow myself to answer the remaining points as follows:

I.—I have nothing to say on the point which discusses abolishing secret diplomacy and complete publicity of negotiations. So far as public negotiation is concerned, I from my point of view have no objection to make to such a method if it is based upon complete reciprocity, although I have lively doubts as to whether it is in all circumstances the most practical and speediest way to reach a result. Diplomatic treaties are nothing but bargains.

Now, I can easily imagine cases in which, for example, commercial agreements are to be concluded between States without it being desirable that an incomplete result should be announced in advance to the whole world.

In such negotiations both parties naturally begin by screwing their wishes up as high as possible in order little by little to employ this or that wish as a concession until the balance of interests is finally reached, which must be reached before the conclusion of a treaty is possible.

The text of this passage was incorrect in the German copy supplied to the Associated Press and Reuter's Telegraph Agency at Basel by the German Wolff Telegraph Bureau. The passage as originally given publicity read:

<sup>&</sup>quot;I must first lay down this principle, that in so far as these propositions concern her allies, whether in the case of Germany's possession of Belgium or in the case of Turkey—Austria-Hungary, faithful to her engagements to fight to the end in defense of her allies, will defend the possessions of her allies as she would her own. That is the standpoint of our allies, in regard to which there is perfect reciprocity."

The manager and secretary of Reuter's made this statement: "The discrepancies between our version and that of the "Neue Freie Presse" were due to telegraphic mutilations of our telegrams in course of transmission. The version which we received admitted of no translation other than that which we published."—Manchester Guardian, February 7, 1918.

If such negotiations were conducted in public, it would be impossible to prevent the public from passionately espousing every one of the wishes originally expressed; consequently the abandonment of any one of such wishes, even though it had been expressed only for factical reasons, would be regarded as a defeat. If, indeed, the public has taken a very strong stand in favor of such a wish, either the conclusion of a treaty may be rendered absolutely impossible, or the treaty, if it is concluded, will be regarded—perhaps on both sides—as a defeat. Thus, so far from peaceful relations being promoted, there would be a positive increase of friction among States. But what is valid for commercial treaties would be as valid for political ones which treat of political business.

If the abolition of secret diplomacy means that there are to be no secret treaties—that treaties cannot exist without the public knowing it—I have no objection to the realization of this principle. I do not, indeed, know how the principle can be carried out, and what supervision is intended. If the Governments of two States are at one, they will always be able to conclude a secret agreement, without anybody knowing anything about it. But these are secondary matters. I do not cling to forms, and I shall never wreck a sensible arrangement upon any more or less formal question. We can, therefore, discuss Point I.

II.—Point II relates to the freedom of the seas. In this postulate the President has spoken from the heart of all and I subscribe to this desire of America's completely, especially because the President adds the clause "outside territorial waters," that is, freedom of open sea, but I cannot subscribe to the violation of the sovereign rights of our faithful Turkish ally. Its point of view on this question will be ours.

III.—Point three, definitely against future economic war, is so just and so reasonable and has been so often demanded by us I have nothing to add to it.

IV.—Point four, demanding general disarmament, explains in especially good and clear style the necessity of reducing free competition in armaments after war to a point which the domestic safety of States demands. Wilson explains this clearly. I permitted myself to develop the same a few months ago in a Budapest speech. It is part of my political creed and every voice which speaks in the same sense I gratefully greet.

VI.—As far as the Russian reference is concerned we are proving with deeds that we are ready to create friendly, neighborly relationship.

IX, XI.—As far as Italy, Serbia, Rumania and Montenegro are concerned, I can only repeat the point of view which I have expressed already

The speech referred to was reported in the news dispatches of October 3, 1027.

in the Hungarian Delegation. I refuse to figure as surety for enemy war adventures. I refuse to make one-sided concessions to our enemies, who remain stubbornly on the point of view of battle to final victory, concessions which would lastingly prejudice the Monarchy and give immeasurable advantage to our enemies and drag on the war endlessly and relatively without risk. I trust Mr. Wilson will use the great influence he doubtless has on all his allies so that they will explain the conditions under which they are willing to negotiate, and he will have gained the immeasurable merit of having called a general peace conference to life.

Just as openly and freely as I am here replying to President Wilson, I will also speak with all who show a desire to speak themselves, but it is quite comprehensible that the time and continuation of the war cannot remain without influence on our relations in this connection. I said this once before and may refer to Italy as an example. Italy had the opportunity before the war to attain great territorial acquisitions without a shot. This it refused, entered the war, lost hundreds of thousands of dead, billions in war costs and destroyed values, brought upon its population misery and need, and all this only for the advantage which it could have had once but which is now lost forever.

XIII.—Regarding point thirteen, it is an open secret that we are supporters of the idea that there must be "an independent Polish state which undoubtedly includes territory exclusively populated with Poles." Regarding this I am also of the opinion that we could soon reach an agreement with Mr. Wilson.

XIV.—Nor will the President find anywhere in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy any opposition to his proposal regarding the idea of the league of nations.

### AGREE ON PRINCIPLES AND SOME DETAILS

As may be seen from this comparison of my views with those of Mr. Wilson, we agree not only on great principles in general, according to which the world is to be newly regulated after the end of this war, but our views

<sup>2</sup> Count Czernin's evident intention was to reiterate the remarks referred to as part of his reply to President Wilson. The Austro-Hungarian minister for foreign affairs addressed the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Hungarian Delegation at Vienna on December 4, 1917. The speech dealt with the Bellian origins of the war and closed, according to the Reuter account, as follows:

Affairs Committee of the Hungarian Delegation at Vienna on December 4, 1917. The speech dealt with the Balkan origins of the war and closed, according to the Reuter account, as follows:

"Italy has dearly paid for her treachery toward us. Fertile regions of Italy are now in our hands as a costly pledge for peace negotiations. After having been misled, the Italian people is to-day faced with the collapse of the irredentist idea and imperialist hopes. Since the death of King Carol of Rumania in the autumn of 1914 the history of Rumania is that of continuous treachery. Up to the last moment the Rumanian Government lived under the illusion that it had succeeded in deceiving the Central Powers' diplomacy. Fate has terribly but justly punished Rumanian treachery. The populations of Serbia and Montenegro must ask themselves whether their dynasties and Governments were well advised when, under the influence of the Entente, they began war with us and our group. A series of bitter disappointments was the consequence of this policy."—London Times, December 7, 1917.

also approach each other on several concrete peace questions. The remaining differences do not seem to me so great that a discussion at this point should not bring clearness and rapprochement. This situation, which probably arises from the fact that Austria-Hungary and the United States of America are two great powers among two groups of enemy states whose interests least conflict, suggests the thought that an exchange of ideas between these two powers might be the starting point for conciliatory discussions between all states which have not entered into peace conversations. So much for Wilson's propositions.

I now hasten to finish, and the conclusion is perhaps the most important thing I have to say. I am working on a peace with Ukrainia and with St. Petersburg. But peace with St. Petersburg does not change our definite situation. Nowhere do Austrian troops oppose those of the St. Petersburg Government. Ukrainian troops do oppose us. Nothing could be exported from St. Petersburg because it has nothing but revolution and anarchy to export, articles which Bolsheviks would like to export but acceptance of which I politely refuse. Still I desire peace with St. Petersburg also because it makes general peace nearer, as does the conclusion of any peace.

# SEEKS FOODSTUFFS FROM UKRAINIA

Affairs with Ukrainia are definite, for Ukrainia has stocks of foodstuffs which it will export if we agree. The food question is to-day a world worry. Everywhere, with opponent as with neutral States, it plays an important rôle. The way to help out the population is by concluding peace with those Russian Governments which have for export a quantity of foodstuffs. We can and will hold out even without this aid, but I know my duty and it commands me to attempt everything to lessen the suffering of our population. Therefore, I will not reject this advantage for our population because of hysterical nervousness to bring about peace a few days or'weeks earlier. Such a peace needs time. It cannot be concluded over night, for in the conclusion of peace it must be discovered whether, what and how the Russian fellow-peacemakers will supply us. This because Ukraine wishes to settle this business during the peace negotiations and not afterward. I have said already that the troubled relations of these newly created governments involve great hindrance and natural delay to the negotiations. If you attack me in the back, force me to finish hastily, then we will have no economic advantages and our people must go without the advantage which it might derive from peace. If a doctor has to make a difficult operation and people stand behind him with a watch and

force him to finish the operation in a few minutes, the operation will probably be done in record time, but the sick person will not be grateful for the technique of the operation. If you make a wholly wrong impression on your opponents that we must make peace at any price and immediately, we will not get a bushel of grain and success will be more or less platonic. Chiefly it is not at all a question of ending the war after we have agreed on a basis of no annexations. The question is not one—I repeat it the tenth time—of imperialistic or annexationist plans and intentions, but of assuring our population a finally deserved reward for steadily holding out and of giving it those foodstuffs which it will gladly accept.

But our partners are good reckoners and are observing exactly whether or not I am being forced into a bad position by you. If you want to spoil peace and refuse grain shipments then it is logical to force my hand by speeches, resolutions, strikes and demonstrations. It is a thousand times untrue that we are in a position where we would rather make a bad peace without economic advantages to-day than one with economic advantages. Food difficulties in the last analysis do not come from the lack of food. The crises which must be allayed are those of coal transportation and organization. If behind the front you arrange strikes you move in a vicious circle. Strikes increase and make more acute the existing crisis and the transportation of foodstuffs and coal more difficult. You are cutting your own flesh and all those who think that such means hasten peace are in awful error.

# ASKS VOTE OF CONFIDENCE

People are said to spread rumors in the Monarchy that the Government is not unconcerned in the matter of strikes. I leave these people the choice of whether they desire to be considered criminal slanderers or fools. If you had a Government which wanted a different peace from that desired by the overwhelming majority of the population, if you had a Government which was continuing the war because of annexationist intentions, then the battle of the country behind the front against the Government might be comprehensible.

Since the Government wants exactly what the majority of the Monarchy wants—the soonest possible reaching of an honorable peace without annexations—it is madness to attack it in the back, slander it and disturb it. Those who do that, do not fight against the Government but blindly against the peoples whom they pretend to wish to help, and against themselves.

Gentlemen, you have not only the right but the duty to choose the following alternative. Either you have confidence in me that I will continue

the peace negotiations and must help me, or you have it not, and you must bring about my fall. I am sure I have the majority of the Hungarian Delegation behind me. The Hungarian delegation has given me a vote of confidence. If that is doubtful here please clear up the matter. The question of confidence will be put and if I have a majority against me I will immediately draw the conclusion. The pleasure of all those who want to remove me will be much less than my own. Nothing keeps me in my place except a sense of duty to remain as long as I have the confidence of the Emperor and the majority of the Delegation. Good soldiers do not desert. No minister of foreign affairs can carry on negotiations of this importance if he does not know, if all the world does not know, that he is borne up by the confidence of the majority of constitutional bodies. It is one thing or another: either you have confidence in me or not. You must help me or you must bring about my fall. There is no third choice.

8. Excerpt from Official Statement on the Meetings of the Third Session of the Supreme War Council, held at Versailles, January 30 and 31, February 1 and 2, 1918.<sup>2</sup>

The Supreme War Council gave the most careful consideration to the recent utterances of the German Chancellor and the Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, but was unable to find in them any real approximation to the moderate conditions laid down by the Allied Governments. This conviction was only deepened by the impression made by the contrast between the professed idealistic aims with which the Central Powers entered upon the present negotiations at Brest-Litovsk and their now openly disclosed plans of conquest and spoliation.

In the circumstances, the Supreme War Council decided that the only immediate task before them lay in the prosecution, with the utmost vigor and in the closest and most effective co-operation, of the military effort of the Allies until such time as the pressure of that effort shall have brought about in the enemy governments and peoples a change of temper which would justify the hope of the conclusion of peace on terms which would not involve the abandonment, in face of an aggressive and unrepentant militarism, of all the principles of freedom, justice, and the respect for the law of nations which the allies are resolved to vindicate.

A Reuter dispatch from Amsterdam dated January 28, 1918, says: By 14 votes against 7 the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Reichsrath has adopted a vote of confidence in Count Czernin's policy. A telegram from Vienna to the Frankfurter Zeitung says that Czechs and South Slavs were responsible for four of the minority votes, and Czech, Italian, and German Socialists for the remaining three, while the Polish Socialist Daszymski abstained from voting. (London Times, January 29, 1918.)

2 London Times, February 4, 1918, page 7.

The Allies are united in heart and will. Not by any hidden designs, but by their open resolve to defend civilization against an unscrupulous and brutal attempt at domination.

9. Address of Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States, to Congress, February 11, 1918.

# Gentlemen of the Congress:

On the 8th of January I had the honor of addressing you on the objects of the war as our people conceive them. The Prime Minister of Great Britain had spoken in similar terms on the 5th of January. To these addresses the German Chancellor replied on the 24th and Count Czernin, for Austria, on the same day. It is gratifying to have our desire so promptly realized that all exchanges of view on this great matter should be made in the hearing of all the world.

## AUSTRIAN CHANCELLOR'S REPLY

Count Czernin's reply, which is directed chiefly to my own address of the 8th of January, is uttered in a very friendly tone. He finds in my statement a sufficiently encouraging approach to the views of his own Government to justify him in believing that it furnishes a basis for a more detailed discussion of purposes by the two Governments. He is represented to have intimated that the views he was expressing had been communicated to me beforehand and that I was aware of them at the time he was uttering them, but in this I am sure he was misunderstood. I had received no intimation of what he intended to say. There was, of course, no reason why he should communicate privately with me. I am quite content to be one of his public audience.

## COUNT VON HERTLING'S REPLY VAGUE

Count von Hertling's reply is, I must say, very vague and very confusing. It is full of equivocal phrases and leads it is not clear where. But it is certainly in a very different tone from that of Count Czernin, and apparently of an opposite purpose. It confirms, I am sorry to say, rather than removes, the unfortunate impression made by what we had learned of the conferences at Brest-Litovsk. His discussion and acceptance of our general principles lead him to no practical conclusions. He refuses to apply them to the substantive items which must constitute the body of any final settlement. He

is jealous of international action and of international counsel. He accepts, he says, the principle of public diplomacy, but he appears to insist that it be confined, at any rate in this case, to generalities, and that the several particular questions of territory and sovereignty, the several questions upon whose settlement must depend the acceptance of peace by the °23 States now engaged in the war must be discussed and settled, not in general council, but severally by the nations most immediately concerned by interest or neighborhood.

He agrees that the seas should be free, but looks askance at any limitation to that freedom by international action in the interest of the common order. He would without reserve be glad to see economic barriers removed between nation and nation, for that could in no way impede the ambitions of the military party with whom he seems constrained to keep on terms. Neither does he raise objection to a limitation of armaments. That matter will be settled of itself, he thinks, by the economic conditions which must follow the war. But the German colonies, he demands, must be returned without debate. He will discuss with no one but the representatives of Russia what disposition shall be made of the peoples and the lands of the Baltic provinces: with no one but the Government of France the "conditions" under which French territory shall be evacuated, and only with Austria what shall be done with Poland. In the determination of all questions affecting the Balkan states he defers, as I understand him, to Austria and Turkey; and with regard to the agreements to be entered into concerning the non-Turkish peoples of the present Ottoman Empire to the Turkish authorities themselves. After a settlement all around, effected in this fashion, by individual barter and concession, he would have no objection, if I correctly interpret his statement, to a league of nations which would undertake to hold the new balance of power steady against external disturbance.

## CHANCELLOR'S METHOD IMPOSSIBLE

It must be evident to every one who understands what this war has wrought in the opinion and temper of the world that no general peace, no peace worth the infinite sacrifices of these years of tragical suffering, can possibly be arrived at in any such fashion. The method the German Chancellor proposes is the method of the Congress of Vienna. We cannot and will not return to that. What is at stake now is the peace of the world. What we are striving for is a new international order based upon broad and universal principles of right and justice—no mere peace of shreds and patches. Is it possible that Count von Hertling does not see that, does

not grasp it, is in fact living in his thought in a world dead and gone? Has he utterly forgotten the Reichstag resolutions of the nineteenth of July or does he deliberately ignore them? They spoke of the conditions of a general peace, not of national aggrandizement or of arrangements between state and state.

The peace of the world depends upon the just settlement of each of the several problems to which I adverted in my recent address to the Congress. I, of course, do not mean that the peace of the world depends upon the acceptance of any particular set of suggestions as to the way in which those problems are to be dealt with. I mean only that those problems each and all affect the whole world; that unless they are dealt with in a spirit of unselfish and unbiased justice, with a view to the wishes, the natural connections, the racial aspirations, the security and the peace of mind of the peoples involved, no permanent peace will have been attained. They cannot be discussed separately or in corners. None of them constitutes a private or separate interest from which the opinion of the world may be shut out. Whatever affects the peace affects mankind, and nothing settled by military force, if settled wrong, is settled at all. It will presently have to be reopened.

#### SPEAKING IN THE COURT OF MANKIND

Is Count von Hertling not aware that he is speaking in the court of mankind, that all the awakened nations of the world now sit in judgment on what every public man, of whatever nation, may say on the issues of a conflict which has spread to every region of the world? The Reichstag resolutions of July themselves frankly accepted the decisions of that court. There shall be no annexations, no contributions, no punitive damages. Peoples are not to be handed about from one sovereignty to another by an international conference or an understanding between rivals and antagonists. National aspirations must be respected; peoples may now be dominated and governed only by their own consent. "Self-determination" is not a mere phrase. It is an imperative principle of action, which statesmen will henceforth ignore at their peril. We cannot have general peace for the asking, or by the mere arrangements of a peace conference. It cannot be pieced together out of individual understandings between powerful States. All the parties to this war must join in the settlement of every issue anywhere involved in it because what we are seeking is a peace that we can all unite to guarantee and maintain and every item of it must be submitted to the common judgment whether it be right and fair, an act of justice, rather than a bargain between sovereigns.

# NO DESIRE TO INTERFERE IN EUROPE'S AFFAIRS

The United States has no desire to interfere in European affairs or to act as arbiter in European territorial disputes. She would disdain to take advantage of any internal weakness or disorder to impose her own will upon another people. She is quite ready to be shown that the settlements she has suggested are not the best or the most enduring. They are only her own provisional sketch of principles and of the way in which they should be applied. But she entered this war because she was made a partner, whether she would or not, in the sufferings and indignities inflicted by the military masters of Germany against the peace and security of mankind; and the conditions of peace will touch her as nearly as they will touch any other nation to which is intrusted a leading part in the maintenance of civilization. She cannot see her way to peace until the causes of this war are removed, its renewal rendered, as nearly as may be, impossible.

#### RIGHTS OF THE SMALL NATIONS

This war had its roots in the disregard of the rights of small nations and of nationalities which lacked the union and the force to make good their claim to determine their own allegiances and their own forms of political life. Covenants must now be entered into which will render such things impossible for the future; and those covenants must be backed by the united force of all the nations that love justice and are willing to maintain it at any cost. If territorial settlements and the political relations of great populations which have not the organized power to resist are to be determined by the contracts of the powerful Governments which consider themselves most directly affected, as Count von Hertling proposes, why may not economic questions also? It has come about in the altered world in which we now find ourselves that injustice and the rights of peoples affect the whole field of international dealing as much as access to raw materials and fair and equal conditions of trade. Count von Hertling wants the essential basis of commercial and industrial life to be safeguarded by common agreement and guarantee, but he cannot expect that to be conceded to him if the other matters to be determined by the articles of peace are not handled in the same way as items in the final accounting. He cannot ask the benefit of common agreement in the one field without according it in the other. I take it for granted that he sees that separate and selfish compacts with regard to trade and the essential materials of manufacture would afford no foundation for peace. Neither, he may be assured, will separate and selfish compacts with regard to provinces and peoples.

Count Czernin seems to see the fundamental elements of peace with clear eyes and does not seek to obscure them. He sees that an independent Poland, made up of all the indisputably Polish peoples who lie contiguous to one another, is a shatter of European concern and must of course be conceded; that Belgium must be evacuated and restored, no matter what sacrifices and concessions that may involve; and that national aspirations must be satisfied, even within his own Empire, in the common interest of Europe and mankind. If he is silent about questions which touch the interests and purpose of his allies more nearly than they touch those of Austria only, it must of course be because he feels constrained. I suppose. to defer to Germany and Turkey in the circumstances. Seeing and conceding, as he does, the essential principles involved and the necessity of candidly applying them, he naturally feels that Austria can respond to the purpose of peace as expressed by the United States with less embarrassment than could Germany. He would probably have gone much farther had it not been for the embarrassments of Austria's alliances and of her dependence upon Germany.

# TEST "SIMPLE AND OBVIOUS-"

After all, the test of whether it is possible for either Government to go any further in this comparison of views is simple and obvious. The principles to be applied are these:

First, that each part of the final settlement must be based upon the essential justice of that particular case and upon such adjustments as are most likely to bring a peace that will be permanent;

Second, that peoples and provinces are not to be bartered about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were mere chattels and pawns in a game, even the great game, now forever discredited, of the balance of power; but that

Third, every territorial settlement involved in this war must be made in the interest and for the benefit of the populations concerned and not as a part of any mere adjustment or compromise of claims amongst rival States; and,

Fourth, that all well-defined national aspirations shall be accorded the utmost satisfaction that can be accorded them without introducing new or perpetuating old elements of discord and antagonism that would be likely in time to break the peace of Europe and consequently of the world.

A general peace erected upon such foundations can be discussed. Until such a peace can be secured we have no choice but to go on. So far as we can judge, these principles that we regard as fundamental are already everywhere accepted as imperative except among the spokesmen of the military and annexationist party in Germany. If they have anywhere else been rejected, the objectors have not been sufficiently numerous or influential to make their voices audible. The tragical circumstance is that this one party in Germany is apparently willing and able to send millions of men to their death to prevent what all the world now sees to be just.

## NO TURNING BACK FROM COURSE

I would not be a true spokesman of the people of the United States if I did not say once more that we entered this war upon no small occasion, and that we can never turn back from a course chosen upon principle. Our resources are in part mobilized now and we shall not pause until they are mobilized in their entirety. Our armies are rapidly going to the fighting front, and will go more and more rapidly. Our whole strength will be put into this war of emancipation-emancipation from the threat and attempted mastery of selfish groups of autocratic rulers—whatever the difficulties and present partial delays. We are indomitable in our power of . independent action and can in no circumstances consent to live in a world governed by intrigue and force. We believe that our own desire for a new international order under which reason and justice and the common interests of mankind shall prevail is the desire of enlightened men everywhere. Without that new order the world will be without peace and human life will lack tolerable conditions of existence and development. Having set our hand to the task of achieving it, we shall not turn back.

#### NO WORD INTENDED AS THREAT

I hope that it is not necessary for me to add that no word of what I have said is intended as a threat. That is not the temper of our people. I have spoken thus only that the whole world may know the true spirit of America—that men everywhere may know that our passion for justice and for self-government is no mere passion of words, but a passion which, once set in action, must be satisfied. The power of the United States is a menace to no nation or people. It will never be used in aggression or for the aggrandizement of any selfish interest of our own. It springs out of freedom and is for the service of freedom.

10. Address of Count Georg Friedrich von Hertling, Chan-CELLOR OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE, TO THE IMPERIAL REICHSTAG FEBRUARY 25, 1918.

Gentlemen: The Reichstag has a right to receive information on the international political situation and the stand taken by the Imperial leaders in regard thereto. I am complying with the duty arising therefrom, even though I entertain certain doubts on the other hand regarding the utility and success of the former conversations held by the ministers and statesmen of the belligerent Nations before the public (Very correct-on the right). A Liberal member of the English Lower House and former minister. Mr. Walter Runciman, recently expressed the opinion that peace would be brought much nearer if, instead, competent and responsible representatives of the belligerent powers would unite in a closer circle for a mutual expression of opinion (Very correct). I can only agree to this. This would be the way to remove all the many intentional and unintentional misunderstandings and to compel our opponents to take our words as they are meant and also come out for their own part in plain language. I can at least not find that the words which I have spoken here on two occasions have received an objective and unprejudiced consideration in the enemy countries (Very correct—on the right). Furthermore a discussion in a close circle could lead to an understanding on the many individual questions which come into consideration in connection with the settlement of present differences and which must be disposed of before an agreement can be reached. I am thinking in this connection particularly of our attitude toward Belgium. It has been repeatedly stated from here that we do not intend to keep Belgium or to make the Belgian Nation a part of the German Empire, but that, as was stated in the papal note of August 1 of last year, we must guard against the danger that the country with which we wish to live in peace and friendship after the war (Bravo!) should become the seat or the concentration place of hostile machinations in either direction. Such a circle should treat of the means of attaining this end and thus serve the general world peace. Therefore, if a motion to this effect

<sup>\*</sup>Translation inclosed in No. 2073. The Hague, to the Department of State. It will be noted that the remarks of members of the Reichstag are interpolated.

\*The opinion referred to was expressed in the House of Commons February 13, 1918. He said: "He believed that toward the end of the war the only common ground would be a desire for peace without any very definite notion about what that peace might mean. He would give almost anything to have the statesmen of the beligerent countries talking. No harm could be done by that, and the greatest contribution which could be made to the peace of the world at this moment would be that those who represented those nations should have some chance of drawing together and exchanging views. . . . Whatever transactions might take place, the people of this country were not likely to waver one hair's breadth from the objects which they had when they entered the war. The Government need not fear the weakening of the national will."—(London Times, February 14, 1918, Dage 19.) 1918, page 10.)

came from the opposite side, say from the Government at Le Havre, we should not refuse to discuss it even though the discussion would naturally have at first a non-obligatory character (Very correct). For the present, however, it does not look as if the aforementioned suggestion of the English member of Parliament had any prospect of assuming tangible form, and therefore I must adhere to the previous method of the dialogue over the channel and the ocean.

While I am preparing for this, I gladly admit that the message of President Wilson of the 11th instant perhaps represents a slight step toward a mutual understanding. I will therefore pass over the lengthy preliminary remarks in order as far as possible to devote myself to the four principles which, in the opinion of Mr. Wilson, must be observed in a mutual exchange of opinions.

## PRESIDENT WILSON'S FOUR PRINCIPLES

I.—The first paragraph states that each part of the final agreement must be essentially built up on justice in the case in point and based on such a compromise as shall afford the greatest likelihood of bringing about a lasting peace. We should like here to contradict (Very correct! hilarity). The aphorism coined by the great church father Augustine 1,500 years ago: justitia fundamentum regnorum (justice is the foundation of kingdoms), still applies to-day, and it is certain that only a peace borne up in all its parts by the principles of justice has prospects of enduring.

II.—The second paragraph demands that peoples and provinces should not be shoved about from one national sovereignty to another as if it were merely a question of objects or counters in a game, even if this is now discredited for all time in the great game of the equilibrium of forces. These clauses can also be unconditionally agreed to. Indeed one wonders why the President of the United States considered it necessary to emphasize it again. The paragraph embodies a polemic against conditions and views which disappeared long ago, against cabinet politics and cabinet wars. and against the mixture of government domain and royal appanage, all of which belongs to an epoch far past. I do not wish to be impolite, but if one recalls previous utterances of Wilson, one might believe him to be laboring under the delusion that there exists in Germany an opposition between the (remaining?) autocratic government and the legitimate (?) mass of the people, and nevertheless the President of the United States, at least according to the German edition of his book on the State, is acquainted with German political literature and accordingly knows that in

The Associated Press rendering is: Who would contradict this?

Germany princes and rulers are the highest members of the body of the people as a whole organized into a State, being supreme members with whom the final decision rests, but in such a way that, for the reason that they belong to the whole body (even though as supreme organs), their only guide in reaching a proper decision is the welfare of the whole body. It may be useful to impress this emphatically upon Wilson's countrymen.

When, finally, at the end of the second paragraph, he declares "the game of the balance of power" to be forever discredited we can but greet this with joy also. It is known that it was England that invented the principle of the preservation of the balance of power (Very correct!), in order to enforce it specially when one of the Nations on the European Continent threatened to become too powerful for her. It was only another expression for the sovereignty of England (Very correct).

III.—The third paragraph, according to which every solution of a question of territory raised by this war should be reached in the interest and in favor of the population concerned and not as a part of a special compromise of the claims of rival nations, is only the carrying out of what precedes in a certain direction, or rather a logical consequence therefrom, and may therefore be embraced within the consent given to it.

IV.—Finally comes the fourth paragraph, in which he demands that all clearly defined national claims should be given the greatest possible satisfaction that they can receive without engendering new or perpetuating old factors of antagonism which would be likely soon to disturb the peace of Europe and accordingly that of the whole world. To this I can also assent on general principles, and I therefore declare with President Wilson that a general peace may be discussed on such basic principles (Bravo!).

# CONDITIONS OF ACCEPTANCE

Only one reservation must be made. These principles would not only have to be proposed by the President of the United States but to be actually recognized by all nations and peoples (Very correct). Mr. Wilson, who accuses the German Imperial Chancellor of a certain amount of delinquency, seems to me, in his flight of fancy, to have gone far beyond the actual conditions of a union of nations based on justice and mutual unselfish recognition of all nations for the preservation of peace [by?] a court of arbitration established in the name of justice. There would be built up a condition of humanity in which, with all remnants of previous barbarism, war would have completely disappeared and there would be no more bloody victims, no self-mutilation of peoples, no destruction of laboriously acquired works of civilization. This were a consummation devoutly to be

desired but this aim has not yet been attained and no prospect of it exists (Lively applause). When Mr. Wilson takes occasion to say that the Imperial Chancellor speaks to the tribunal of the whole world, I must, as matters stand to-day, in the name of the German empire and its allies, decline this tribunal as prejudiced, however gladly I should welcome the existence of an impartial court of arbitration and however willingly I should co-operate in bringing about such an ideal condition.

· Unfortunately, however, nothing can be discovered of a similar sentiment among the leading powers of the Entente (Very correct). The war aims of England, as they have been manifested recently in the speeches of Lloyd George, are still of an absolutely imperialistic nature and would. impose upon the world a peace to England's liking. When England speaks of the right of self-determination of peoples, she does not think of applying the principle to Ireland or Egypt or India (Very correct!).

## GERMAN WAR AIMS IN RUSSIA

Our war aim has from the beginning been the defense of our native country, the maintenance of our territorial integrity and the freedom of our economic development in every direction (Very correct). Warfare, even where it must be conducted aggressively, is according to its aim defensive. I emphasize this just now with special stress in order not to allow any misunderstanding to arise regarding our operations in the east. After the breaking off of the peace negotiations on the part of the Russian delegation on the 10th of this month, we had a free hand toward Russia. The advance of our troops begun a week after that breaking off of negotiations, was solely for the purpose of assuring us the fruits of the peace concluded with Ukraine. Aims of conquest played no rôle in the matter. We were supported therein by the cry for help from Ukraine, asking us to support them in the organization of their new state against the disturbances fomented by the Bolsheviki.

\*The appeal referred to reads:

"To the German people. On February o this year we signed, in the deep and ardent desire to live in peace and friendship with our neighbors, a peace treaty with the States of the Quadruple Alliance in order to put an end to this useless and fratricidal war, and we united all our strength to one end, namely, to establish and insure the life of our own independent State.

"The joyful news of February o, however, for which the working masses of our people so greatly longed, has brought us no peace in our land. The enemy of our freedom has invaded our country for the purpose once more, as 254 years ago, to subjugate the Ukrainian people with fire and sword. The Russian Maximalists, who, a month ago, dispersed the All-Russian Constitutional Assembly in Petrograd, consisting almost solely of Socialists, have now undertaken, as they call it, a holy war against the Socialists of the Ukraine.

"From the north, hired bands of Red Guards are falling upon our country. They unite themselves with Russian soldiers who have deserted from the front, and with liberated jail birds. Under the experienced command of former police gendarmes, they force their way into our towns; have our public men and leaders of public opinion shot; they levy contributions from the inhabitants; and after destroying and burning our towns they pass on, seeking new booty.

"This barbaric invasion of our northern neighbors once again, under hypocritical pretexts, sets up as its aim, as earlier in our history, the destruction of the independence of our State. Its real

If other military operations in other regions were connected with these. the same may be said of them. They are not pursued for purposes of conquest in any degree (Bravo!). They are undertaken solely at the urgent requests and representations of the populations that they be protected against the atrocities and devastations of the Red Guard and other bands. They were therefore measures undertaken in the name of humanity for the purpose of giving aid, and have no other character. It is a question of creating peace and order in behalf of the peaceful population. We do not intend for instance to establish ourselves in Esthonia or Livonia (Hear! Hear!—on the left), but merely entertain the desire to live after the war on friendly neighborly terms with the political organizations which we find there (Bravol-left). Regarding Courland and Lithuania I need say nothing to-day. It is a question of furnishing to the populations of those countries organs for their self-determination and self-administration, or to strengthen those already being built up (Very correct!). We look with calmness toward their further development.

However, the military action in the east has accomplished a result which far surpasses the aims originally pursued and just characterized by me. One is already known to the gentlemen from the communications given out by the secretary of state for foreign affairs, to the effect that Mr. Trotsky has declared his willingness, in a statement which was soon followed by a written confirmation, to resume the interrupted peace negotiations. On our part we immediately answered by transmitting our peace conditions in the form of an ultimatum. Yesterday (and this is the highly gratifying communication which I have to make to you, gentlemen) the news was received that the St. Petersburg Government had accepted our peace terms (Hear! Hear! and lively applause) and has sent representatives for further

and ultimate objects lie, however, in the ignoble intentions and machinations of those who have an interest in seeing anarchy reign in the Ukraine, as also of those who are striving after the return

and humare objects he, however, he the Juraine, as also of those who are striving after the return of the old despotism.

"Before the whole world we declare that the Petrograd Commissioners of the People lie when they talk about a rising of the people in the Ukraine, and that they lie when they describe the Central Rada, the Parliament of the Ukrainian People's Republic, which consists of Ukrainian Socialists and has carried out far-reaching social-democratic reforms, as a Rada of bourgeois.

"The Petrograd Commissioners, who with words only have stubbornly defended the weal of the Ukraine, Poland, Courland and other peoples, have made use of a fine pose at Brest-Litovsk to recall from the front the remnants of the Russian army for the purpose of secretly throwing them against the Ukraine to rob us, to send our stocks of corn to the north, and to subjugate the country.

"Now, when, after four years, the rigid wall has fallen which separated us from our western neighbors, we raise our voice to proclaim the misfortune of our people. We must see the fruits of our own young Revolution in danger, and we fear for our newly-won freedom. Sanguinary collisions with Russian bands take place daily. In Volhynia and at other points we are collecting new forces to oppose the swarms who are ever anew pressing in from the north.

"In this hard struggle for our existence we look round for help. We are firmly convinced that the peaceful and order-loving German people will not remain indifferent when it learns of our distress. The German army, that stands on the flank of our northern enemy, possesses the power to help us, and, by its intervention, to protect the northern frontiers against further invasion by the enemy. This is what we have to say in this dark hour, and we know that our voice will be heard."—(Reuter dispatch, London Times, February 19, 1918, page 6.)

negotiations to Brest-Litovsk. Accordingly the German delegates proceeded thither yesterday evening. It is possible that there may still be some dispute as to details, but the main point has been attained. The desire for peace on the part of Russia has been expressly manifested, our terms have been accepted, and the conclusion of peace must follow within a brief space of time.

Perhaps never before in history has Aristotle's saying that we must decide for war for the sake of peace received so brilliant a confirmation (Very correct). For the sake of insuring the fruits of our peace with Ukraine our army leaders drew the sword. The peace with Russia will be the happy result (hearty applause). We will not allow our joy over this to be marred by the foolish and inflammatory wireless reports which are circulated throughout the world again and again.

#### RUMANIAN NEGOTIATIONS AND PEACE WITH POLAND

Peace negotiations with Rumania began yesterday in Bukharest in the presence of the secretary of state for foreign affairs. It seemed necessary that he should be present there during the first few days of organization. He will now probably soon proceed to Brest-Litovsk. In the negotiations with Rumania we must remember that we are not alone concerned in them and that we are under obligations to defend the just interests of our faithful allies, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey, and to seek to reconcile any conflicting desires. This may possibly involve difficulties, but with good will on all sides these difficulties can be overcome. However, even with respect to Rumania we must be guided by the principle that we must and wish to make future friends of the nations with which we are now concluding peace on the basis of the success of our arms.

If I may in this connection say a word about Poland, in which the Entente and also Mr. Wilson seemed recently to be specially interested, this country has, as is known, been freed by the united powers of Germany and Austria-Hungary from its former dependency upon Imperial Russia, with the intention of creating an independent state which shall, in the unhindered development of its national culture, at the same time become a pillar in the peace of Europe. The political problem in a narrower sense, the question as to what constitution the new state should receive, could naturally not be decided immediately and is still the subject of careful and detailed consideration on the part of the three countries concerned. To the many difficulties which have to be overcome in this connection (particularly economic difficulties) has been added a new one, arising from the collapse of the old Russia, consisting of the definition of the boundary between the

new nation and neighboring Russian territories. For this reason the announcement of the peace with Ukraine at first caused great unrest in Poland. However, I hope that with good will it will be possible, by taking ethnographical conditions into just consideration, to arrive at a compromise of all claims. The announced intention of making an earnest effort in this direction has already led to a marked feeling of quiet in Polish circles, a thing which I take satisfaction in noting. Germany will, when it comes to settling the boundary question, only demand that which is absolutely required by military considerations.

### ATTITUDE TOWARD GERMAN ENEMIES

As you have gathered, gentlemen, from my statements, the prospect of peace on the whole eastern front from the Baltic to the Black Sea is coming tangibly nearer (Bravo!), and the world, which is tired of war, especially neutral countries, is feverishly inquiring whether this does not open up the way to a universal peace. However, the leaders of the Entente in England, France and Italy seem to be entirely disinclined to listen to the voice of reason and humanity, for, unlike the Central Powers. the Entente has from the beginning pursued aims of conquest. They are fighting for the surrender of Alsace-Lorraine to France. I have nothing to add to what I have said before on this subject (Very correct—on the right). There is no Alsace-Lorraine question in an international sense (stormy applause). If there is any such question it is a purely German question (renewed lively approval). The Entente is fighting for the acquisition of parts of Austro-Hungarian territory by Italy. If the fine words of holy aspirations have been invented in Italy, of holy selfishness, the demand for annexations is not removed thereby (very good). It [the Ententel is fighting for the abandonment of Palestine, Syria and Arabia by the Turkish Empire. England has her eyes directed especially toward the Turkish territory. She has suddenly discovered sympathy for the Arabs, and hopes, by using the Arabs as stalking horses, and perhaps by creating a buffer state under English suzerainty, to annex new territories to the British Empire. That the colonial war aims of England are directed toward increasing and rounding off the tremendous English possessions, particularly in Africa, has been repeatedly announced by English statesmen.

And in the face of this thoroughly aggressive policy, which is directed toward the acquisition of foreign domains, the statesmen of the Entente continually have the audacity to represent militaristic, imperialistic and autocratic Germany as the disturber of the peace which in the interest of world peace must be reduced to the closest limits, if not annihilated. By

a system of lies and calumny they are constantly endeavoring to stir up their own people and also neutral nations against the Central Powers, especially frightening the neutral nations with the specter of a violation of neutrality on the part of Germany. In the face of an intrigue such as has recently been carried on in Switzerland, I take this opportunity of declaring before the whole world that we have never thought for a moment and never shall think of violating Swiss neutrality (Very true-on the right). We know ourselves pledged to Switzerland by the principles of international law as well as our friendly relations of centuries' duration (Bravol). We should feel respect and gratitude toward Switzerland and the remaining neutral nations-Holland, the Scandinavian countries, and Spain, which is particularly exposed to difficulties owing to her geographical situation; likewise, though in less degree, toward the non-European countries which have not yet entered the war, for the steadfast attitude with which they have preserved neutrality in spite of all criticism and pressure (Bravol on all sides). The world longs for peace (Very correct—on the left); it has no other wish than that the sufferings of war, from which it is groaning, should come to an end, but the Governments of hostile nations are always able to stir up anew the war fury among their populations. Continuance of the war to the utmost! As far as is announced, this was the watchword given out at the Conference at Versailles, and in the speeches of the British Prime Minister it is ever loudly re-echoed.

At the same time, other voices, it is true, have been heard recently in England. Besides the speech of Walter Runciman, which I mentioned at the beginning of my speech, an utterance of Lord Milner, along the same lines but perhaps still more conciliatory, though extra-parliamentary, has recently been published.

We can only wish that such voices should increase, and that the peaceful tendencies which doubtless also exist in the Entente countries might make themselves felt, for the world is now standing before the greatest and most ominous decision: either the enemies must decide to make peace—under what conditions we would be willing to enter negotiations they know—or else they intend to continue the criminal folly of a war of conquest; in that case our glorious troops will go on fighting under their skilful leaders. To what extent we are prepared for this is also thoroughly known to our enemies, and our brave, admirable people will hold out still longer; however, the blood of those who have fallen, the suffering of the mutilated, all misery and all pain of the peoples will fall upon the heads of those who obstinately refuse to lend an ear to the voices of reason and humanity (lively applause on all sides).