

SERBIAN DIPLOMAT AGAINST PEACE TALK

Germans Simply Striving to End the War Now on Basis of Their Victories, He Says.



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IN these days I am often asked what I think about the persistent peace offers coming from German quarters. Here is my answer:

For forty-four years the Germans have prepared for the great European war, which Admiral Count von Goetzen in 1898 fixed in his conversation with the American Admiral Dewey for 1913, failing only in one year in his prediction. Decided to begin the attack, they only looked for a pretext. The intimate confidant of the German Kaiser, Professor Schiemann, suggested to the German Government early in the Spring of the same year, 1913, in a leading article in the Berlin Kreuz-Zeitung, that if Germany wished a war with France it was sufficient for her to let Austria attack Serbia! And so they did.

To justify more the great war, not only in the eyes of their people but at the same time in the opinion of other countries, the German Government forged charges of an attack on Belgium by French armies and of the dropping by French aviators of bombs over Nuremberg. Everybody knows, and I know it positively—even the German Government knew it—that France never intended to violate the Belgian neutrality. The Nuremberg authorities have stated since that there was no dropping of bombs over their city and its neighborhood in the last days of July, 1914. In doing this the Berlin Government had forgotten that the Kaiser had said to King Albert of Belgium in the first days of November, 1913, that the war had to begin soon, and asked the Belgian King to join in it, or at least to let German armies pass through Belgian territory without seriously opposing the violation of its neutrality.

Count of Hohenzollern having succeeded in becoming successively Margrave of Brandenburg, King of Prussia, head of North German Confederation, Kaiser of Germany, William II. thought with his collaborators that the moment had arrived for him and for his dynasty to take in his hands the command of Europe as Emperor, as the real heir of Rome, preparing for Germany's and his successor's domination of the world in the next generation. The great war had to

begin, in the German viewpoint, in 1914; there were for them no days to be lost, because they thought that there was no better moment for them, they being the only military-prepared nation, whereas France had scarcely voted her law for the three years' service, Russia scarcely made a loan for constructing strategical railways in Poland, England being implicated in Irish and in labor difficulties, Serbia scarcely commencing to consolidate her situation after the two Balkan wars—which would have enabled her to oppose the Austro-German pushing toward the east. More than that, Bethmann Hollweg hoped to get the approval of England in offering her for her neutrality the Belgian Congo.

So, in complicity with Austro-Hungary and Bulgaria, Germany has imposed on the world the most tremendous war in the history of mankind. They have successively crushed down Belgium, Serbia, Rumania, and dishonored Greece; they have prepared the Russian revolution and, through it, brought anarchy in the great Slavonic empire. They have invaded and devastated the most industrial part of France and an important portion of Italy. Through their violation of the most elemental principles of international law, and of formerly freely accepted international obligations, they have forced into the war first Great Britain and later the United States of America.

Having for a long time premeditated and methodically prepared their plans, they are arrived at the point where they consider their task as accomplished, and naturally they now preach the peace which, shall have, as the Kaiser proclaimed it the other day, to take in account the victory of German arms. Having chosen the day and the hour of military attack, and having had for that reason the command of the war, the Kaiser and his agents now take the initiative of peace talk with the sincere wish to realize as soon as possible the fruits of their victory, counting on the fatigue and demoralization of allied nations and armies. Their victory would be evident even in the case of a simple settlement on the basis of the status quo ante bellum. How immensely greater would it be if they should be allowed to keep an important

part of their territorial and economic acquisitions! With these advantages they would control the whole civilized world. The German heel would dictate the laws to the nations. That law would be the famous "Faustrecht."

For the defense of justice and liberty, France has given 1,000,000 of her best sons and 150,000,000,000 francs; Great Britain with her dominions as many men and twice if not three times as much of money; Russia, a nation of 180,000,000 inhabitants and of immense resources, has been ruined and put out of the way for decades if not for centuries; Italy has been seriously weakened; Belgium and Serbia ruined in spite of their bravery and honesty. The non-German parts of Austria-Hungary have been ruined, too; Turkey and Bulgaria are completely in German hands. The land of Washington and of Lincoln has been obliged to go to arms, to modify its fundamental laws and traditions, to militarize provisionally the most democratic nation in the world, to organize from the elementary beginnings an army of millions, to radically revolutionize its methods of finance, of commerce, of industry, of communications, and of daily life—because President Wilson, in complete harmony with his country, thought that the United States of America was not to stay apart in this epochal struggle for the highest human interests!

And, in belief of having obtained the principal object of the war, the German Emperor and his Government try to undermine England, France, Italy, and the United States of America as they have done with Russia, making a strenuous and persistent peace propaganda and hoping to win for their plans the working classes in the allied countries.

If the workmen are true fighters for political, moral, and social freedom, they cannot listen to the songs of this Teuton siren, because of such a peace they would be the first to suffer. May they not forget the declaration of Bebel that the German Socialists will fight under the Prussian colors every German enemy, and be aware at the same time of the autocratic German spirit, instanced both by the Protestant Hohenzollerns and the Catholic Hapsburgs.

The workmen in all allied countries will not forget, I hope, that Germany and Austria-Hungary are the only countries in Europe where the men are not equal and where you meet dominating and dominated peoples. Nobody in the allied (and even in the neutral) countries should overlook the fact that, speaking of peace today, before we hold victory in our hands, means simply and exclusively serving German purposes. Beware of peace talk before we shall be able to have a real and a just peace. The German peace can never be such a one.