

Russian Empire it will be possible to be on good relations with these nations as well as with the rest of Russia, for whom we urgently wish a return of guarantees which will secure a peaceful order of things and the welfare of the country.

(VII) "As far as the Belgian question is concerned, it has been declared repeatedly by my predecessors in office that at no time during the war has the forcible annexation of Belgium by the German Empire formed a point in the program of German politics. The Belgian question belongs to a complicity of questions the details of which will have to be regulated during the peace negotiations. As long as our enemies do not unreservedly adopt the attitude that the integrity of the territory of the Allies offers the only possible foundation for peace negotiations I must adhere to the standpoint which, up to the present, has always been taken, and must decline any discussion of the Belgian question until the general discussion takes place.

(VIII) "The occupied parts of France are a valuable pawn in our hands. Here also forcible annexation forms no part of the official German policy. The conditions and modalities of the evacuation, which must take into consideration the vital interests of Germany, must be agreed between Germany and France. I can only once again expressly emphasize that there can never be any question of the separation of the Imperial provinces. We will never permit ourselves to be robbed of Alsace-Lorraine by our enemies under the pretext of fine phrases—of Alsace-Lorraine which, in the meantime, has become more and more closely allied internally with German life, which is developing more and more economically in a highly satisfactory manner, and where more than 87 per cent of the people speak the German mother tongue.

(IX), (X), (XI) "As regards the questions dealt with by President Wilson under these clauses, namely, the frontier question, the future development of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and the future of the Balkan states, they embrace questions of paramount importance to the political interests of our ally, Austria-Hungary. Where German interests are concerned we will guard them to the utmost, but the reply to President Wilson's proposals in connection with these points I would prefer to leave in the first instance to the Foreign Minister of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. A close connection with the allied Danube monarchy is the vital point of our policy today and must be a guiding line for the future. The faithful comradeship in arms which has proved itself so brilliantly during the war must continue to have its effect also in peace, and we on our part will bring everything to bear in order to bring about for Austria-Hungary a peace which takes into account her justified claims.

(XII) "Also in connection with the affair mentioned by President Wilson under point 12, which concerns our brave and powerful ally Turkey, I would like in no way to forestall the attitude of the Turkish statesmen. The integrity of Turkey and the security of her capital, which is closely connected with the questions of the straits, are important and vital interests also of the German Empire. Our ally can in this respect rely on our most explicit assistance.

(XIII) "It was not the Entente—who found nothing but meaningless words for Poland, and before the war never mediated on her behalf with Russia—but the German Empire and Austria-Hungary who freed Poland from the Czaristic regime which was oppressing her national individuality. Therefore, it must be left to Germany and Austria-Hungary and Poland to come to an agreement about the future

organization of that country. We are, as has been proved by the negotiations and declarations of the last year, well under way with the task.

(XIV) "As regards point fourteen I am sympathetic, as is shown by my previous political activity toward any thought which for the future excludes all possibility and probability of wars and tends to promote a peace and harmonious co-operation between the nations. If the conception of the League of Nations mentioned by President Wilson demonstrates, under further development, and after trial, that it really was conceived in a spirit of complete justice to all and with complete freedom from prejudice, the Imperial Government will be gladly prepared—after all the other questions in suspense have been settled—to investigate the principles of such a national union.

PRESIDENT WILSON'S REJOINER TO THE CENTRAL POWERS.

In his address to congress on February 11, 1918, President Wilson said:

MUST REMOVE CAUSES OF WAR.

"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 entrusted 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.

"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 justice 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 bases of commercial and industrial life to be safeguarded by common agreement and guaranty; but he cannot expect that to be conceded 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 es-