

**THE HOHENZOLLERN PLOT.**

(Continued from page 919.)

commercial men in Germany when our money for the Kaiser's war chest was wanted were to have been then redeemed.

**Charges Imperial Blackmail.**

But this is what has happened in reality: In December of 1916 the chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, began to have interviews once more with business men. The purpose of these interviews was to get more money from them. Guarantees were asked from seventy-five business men in Germany, including myself, that they would undertake to subscribe £200,000,000 to the next war loan. I was personally asked to guarantee a subscription of £200,000. I declined to give this guarantee; so did some others. I was then

favoured with a private interview with Bethmann-Hollweg's private secretary, who told me that if I declined to give the guarantee and subsequently the money I would lose on a contract I had with the War Office. But not only that—I was threatened with the practical ruin of my business if I did not give the guarantee.

I described this demand as blackmail of the worst sort and refused to guarantee a mark to the war loan. Two months later I lost my contract, and the greater part of my business has been taken over at a figure that means confiscation. Moreover, I am not to get paid until after the war, but am to receive 4 per cent. on the purchase price. Every man who declined to promise a subscription to the amount he was asked has been treated in the same manner.

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