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WEATHER—UNSETTLED

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IN DESPERATION THE KAISER IS WILLING TO MAKE PEACE

DOUBTFUL IF BRITISH WILL MEET TERMS

Kaiser Claims Central Powers Have Ability to Continue Struggle, But Desire to Avoid Further Bloodshed—Most Wonderful Coup Sprung by Teutonic Allies at a Time When Premier Lloyd-George and Former Premier Asquith are Ill.

KAISER'S REFERENCE TO DEITY AS USUAL RIDICULED IN GREAT BRITAIN—"SPIRITUAL AND MATERIAL PROGRESS OF EUROPE THREATENED WITH RUIN," SAYS GERMANY UNLESS WAR IS STOPPED.

Germany wants peace and wants it badly. Here is the statement, undoubtedly written or dictated by Kaiser Wilhelm.

Berlin, Dec. 12.—Following is the text of the note from Germany and her allies to the hostile governments:

"The most terrific war ever experienced in history, has been raging for the last two years and a half over a large part of the world—a catastrophe which thousands of years of common civilization was unable to prevent, and which injures the most precious achievements of humanity.

"Our aims are not to shatter nor annihilate our adversaries.

"In spite of our consciousness of our military and economic strength, and our readiness to continue the war (which has been forced upon us) until the bitter end, if necessary; at the same time prompted by the desire to avoid further bloodshed and make an end to the atrocities of war, the four allied powers propose to enter forthwith into peace negotiations.

Advocates Lasting Peace.

"The propositions which they bring forward for such negotiations, which have for their object a guarantee of the existence of the honor and liberty of evolution for their nations, are, according to their belief, an appropriate basis for the establishment of a lasting peace.

"The four allied powers have been obliged to take up arms to defend justice and the liberty of national evolution.

"The glorious deeds of our armies have in no way altered their purpose. We always maintained the firm belief that our rights and justified claims in no way control the rights of these nations.

Threatened With Ruin.

"The spiritual and material progress which were the pride of Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century are threatened with ruin. Germany and her allies, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey, gave proof of their unconquerable strength in this struggle. They gained gigantic advantages over adversaries superior in number and war material. Our lines stand unshaken against ever-repeated attempts made by armies.

"The last attack in the Balkans has been rapidly and victoriously overcome. The most recent events have demonstrated that further continuance of the war will not result in breaking the resistance of our forces, and the whole situation with regard to our troops justifies our expectation of further successes.

Says Fight Can Go On.

"If in spite of this offer of peace and reconciliation the struggle should go on, the four allied powers are resolved to continue to a victorious end, but they disclaim responsibility for this before humanity and history.

"The Imperial government, through the good offices of your excellency, ask the government of (here is inserted the name of the neutral power addressed in each instance) to bring this communication to the knowledge of the government (here are inserted the names of the belligerents)."

FRENCH ANNOUNCEMENT

Bulletin, Paris, Dec. 13.—Gen. Nivelle, commander of the French troops at Verdun has been appointed commander-in-chief of the armies of the north and northeast. The official announcement of this appointment says it is the first step towards the re-organization of the higher command.

IRISH PARTY DECIDES TO BE PASSIVE

Will Await Declaration of Government's Irish Policy Before Deciding Future Attitude.

London, Dec. 13.—A meeting of the Irish parliamentary party today, with John Redmond presiding, passed a resolution declaring the intention of the party to await a declaration of the government's Irish policy before deciding upon its attitude in future towards the government, but realizing that it favored a vigorous prosecution of the war.

Another resolution declared against conscription in Ireland, and asserted that an attempt to enforce it would produce disastrous results.

A third resolution adopted said that while Ireland was denied self-government, and while martial law still prevailed, Ireland must remain a source of weakness in the Empire.

ST. JOHN WOMAN GRANTED DIVORCE

Frederickton, Dec. 12.—At an adjourned sitting of the divorce court today Judge Crockett granted an absolute divorce to the plaintiff in the case of Lily May Carr vs. William S. Carr. The parties belong to Sumbury and the plaintiff is now a resident of St. John.

VESSELS IN TROUBLE

London, Dec. 12.—The Belgian steamer Keltier, bound from Newcastle, N. B., for Queenstown, was towed into Falmouth, full of water.

N. S. Yacht in Trouble, Boston, Dec. 12.—A radio message stating that the schooner or yacht Grille was sinking fast off Cape Race, was picked up by one of the wireless stations tonight.

The Grille was built at Mahone Bay, N. S., and her home port is Lunenburg.

What Washington Says.

Washington, Dec. 12.—Germany's proposal for peace is regarded here as having broken the chains which for months have restrained the United States, as well as other neutrals from making offers of mediation.

There are indications that when the United States, acting as the intermediary, transmits the German proposal it may accomplish its action by some steps, necessarily delicate, to throw the influence of the United States into the balance for at least a consideration, however preliminary, of the terms on which a lasting peace might be brought to the world.

STRONG OPPOSITION IN ENGLAND TO OFFER

Undercurrent Feeling that Move of Kaiser Will be Turned Down Vigorously—Government Members, However, Are Silent.

London, Dec. 13.—A strong current of public sentiment opposed to the German peace proposal was evinced in the first expressions available last night both from public men and the British press, although these were without knowledge of any definite terms, and without any word from high authoritative sources indicating the attitude of the government. The only information in the press reports was from Berlin and in the absence of some tangible official proposition British officials were disposed to maintain reserve. It was noticeable that the proposal had not created any profound impression among the average Londoners. There was little talk in the hotels or other public places and this discussion was far less animated than in the recent ministerial crisis.

Government Silent.

Government circles also held aloof from any discussion with an evident desire to learn more of the details before committing the new administration to a definite course of action. The foreign office would make no comment in the absence of the terms, but indicated that the British attitude, up to the present, was embodied in the declaration made from time to time by the former premier and Viscount Grey, and that any new proposals would have to be considered by all the Entente Allies before a definite attitude was possible.

These in close association with the new government took this view that the proposals would prove entirely unacceptable, mainly because they were not likely to touch what the ruling authorities regard as the most essential basis of any peace, namely, such guarantees against German militarism as will permit England, France and their allies to demobilize their vast armies, reduce their enormous military expenses and return to lasting conditions of peace.

May Defer Announcement.

Both Premier Lloyd George and Mr. Balfour, secretary for foreign affairs, are slightly ill, and this may result in deferring the announcement of the plans of the new government. Next Thursday, but if an announcement is made it will possibly include reference to the German proposal, though this is unlikely, pending receipt of the proposal itself through official channels. Some early expressions, indicating the general drift of sentiment, were as follows:

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle—"We want to know about the terms, for them, the Imperial Chancellor's suggestion of peace is preposterous and ridiculous. We, too, are conscious of victory, and his boasts will be laughed at."

The Marquis of Londonderry—"We have got to win the war. Peace at the

PEACE OFFER MADE TO FORCE A "SHOW-DOWN" IS POSSIBLE

Restoration of Belgium and Portions of France Part of Germany's Offer—Should Offer be Declined Washington Thinks it will be Made Next Fall.

New York, Dec. 12.—An Associated Press despatch from Washington says:

Despatches to the German embassy, telling of Chancellor Von Bethmann-Hollweg's action in calling in the neutral diplomats and transmitting the peace proposals of the Central Powers, arrived after the news despatches.

The terms for the restoration of Belgium and portions of France gave no indication, so far as is known, of stipulations such as generally have been expected by the Allies, although they did not absolutely dispose of their possibility. It was indicated that while the German allies might not entirely expect that the proposals would actually cause a peace conference, they were not without hope that they would and they were hopeful at least that they would be the means of getting the belligerents together in some manner to discuss the situation, and this it was expected would lead to a basis for peace.

British Cabinet Crisis.

In German quarters the crisis in the British cabinet, the coming of winter and the lull in the fighting, are given as reasons for making the peace proposals at this time.

Should the offer be declined, it is said here, it will be made again next fall, and if necessary the fall after that.

Another of the objects, it is explained by German diplomats, is to force a "show-down," and establish whether the Entente Allies are willing to make peace, or whether it is their intention to crush Germany and dismember her. Germany, they say, is convinced of the ability and strength of the enemies to continue the war on its present or even greater scale for ten years, if necessary, and is no less confident of her own ability to do so.

It is regarded here as unlikely that any peace conference would be held in the United States. It is more likely to go to Bern or The Hague.

Double Purpose.

Among the Entente diplomats here Germany's offer was pronounced to be of double purpose and unlikely of success. (Continued on page 3)

EXTRAORDINARY SITUATION, SAYS GERMAN CHANCELLOR

Crowded Galleries in Reichstag Listen to Address of Von Bethmann-Hollweg, Chancellor of German Empire.

Says Germany Must Have Guarantee of Her Existence, Declaring That His Country, in Offering Peace, is Doing Something Which May Be Turning Point in War.

(Via Overseas News Agency). Berlin, Dec. 12, by wireless to Sayville.—Chancellor Von Bethmann-Hollweg today announced to the Reichstag that Germany, together with her allies, "conscious of the responsibility before God, before their own nations, before humanity," had proposed this morning to the hostile powers to enter on peace negotiations.

Practically all the members of parliament answered the unexpected summons. The crowded house and thronged galleries listened in attentive silence when the chancellor rose for his speech.

Extraordinary Situation.

The chancellor first outlined the extraordinary political situation and then, insisting upon the achievements of the central powers, "made an announcement which he thought possibly may be the turning point in the war, which more than two years has held the world under its spell.

The chancellor said the propositions which Germany was bringing forward have for their object the guarantee of existence, of honor and of liberty of evolution for the four allied central powers.

The chancellor continued: "The Reichstag had not been adjourned for a long period, but fortunately it was left to the discretion of the president as to the day of the next meeting. This decision was caused by the hope that soon happy events in the field would be recorded, a hope fulfilled quicker almost, than expected. I shall be brief for actions speak for themselves."

Speaks of Roumania.

The chancellor said Roumania had entered the war in order to roll up the German positions in the east and those of Germany's allies. At the same time the grand offensive on the Somme had as its object to pierce the German western front, and the renewed Italian attacks were intended to paralyze Austria-Hungary.

"The situation was serious," the chancellor continued, "but with God's help our troops shaped conditions so as to give us security, which not only was complete but still more so than ever before. The western front stands, not only does it stand but in spite of the Roumanian negotiation it is fitted out with larger reserves of men and material than it has been formerly."

"The most effective precautions have been taken against all Italian diversions. And while on the Somme and on the Carso the drumfire resounded, while the Russians launched troops against the eastern frontier of Transylvania, Field Marshal Von Hindenburg captured the whole of Western Wallachia and the hostile capital of Bucharest, leading with unparalleled genius the troops that in competition with all the allies made possible what hitherto was considered impossible.

Hindenburg Does Not Rest.

"And Hindenburg does not rest. Military operations progressed. By strokes of the sword at the same time firm foundations for our economic life have been laid. Great stocks of grain, victuals, oil and other goods fell into our hands in Roumania. Their transport has begun. In spite of scarcity, we could have lived on our own supplies but now our safety is beyond question.

"To these great events on land," the chancellor continued, "heroic deeds of equal importance are added by our submarines. The spectre of famine, which our enemies intended to appear before us now pursues them without mercy. When, after the termination of the first year of the war, the Emperor addressed the nation in a public appeal, he said: 'Having in a public appeal, he said: 'Having my head filled with awe and determination.' Neither our Emperor, nor our nation ever changed their minds

in this respect. Neither have they now. The genius and heroic acts of our leaders have fashioned these facts as firm as iron.

"If the enemy counted upon the weariness of our forces, then he was deceived.

"The Reichstag, by means of the national auxiliary war service law, helped to build a new offensive and defensive bulwark in the midst of the great struggle," the chancellor continued.

"Behind the fighting army stands the nation at work. The gigantic force of the nation working for the common aim.

Not Besieged Fortresses.

"The spirit is not a besieged fortress as our adversaries imagine, but one gigantic and firmly disciplined unit with inexhaustible resources. That is the German empire, which is firmly and faithfully united with its brothers in arms, who have been tested in battle, under the Austro-Hungarian, Turkish and Bulgarian flags.

"Not confused by asseverations we progressed with firm decision and we thus continue our progress, always ready to defend ourselves and fight for our nation's existence, for its free future and always ready to stretch out our hand for peace.

Their Responsibility.

"Our strength has not made our ears deaf to our responsibility before God, before our own nation and before humanity. The declarations formerly made by us concerning our readiness for peace were evaded by our adversaries. Now we have advanced one step further in this direction.

"On August 14, 1914, the Emperor had personally to take the gravest decision which ever fell to the lot of a German—the order for mobilization—which he was compelled to give as a result of the Russian mobilization. During these long and earnest years of the war the Emperor has been moved by a single thought: How peace could be restored to safeguard Germany after the struggle in which she has fought victoriously.

"Nobody can testify better to this than I, who bear the responsibility for all actions of the government. In a deep moral and religious sense of duty towards his nation and, beyond it, towards humanity, the Emperor now considers that the moment has come for official action towards peace.

Kaiser Proposes Peace.

"His Majesty therefore in complete harmony and in common with our allies, decided to propose to the hostile powers to enter into peace negotiations. This morning I transmitted a note to this effect to all the hostile powers, through the representatives of those powers which are watching over our interests and rights in the hostile states. I asked the representatives of Spain, the United States and Switzerland to forward that note.

"The same procedure has been adopted today in Vienna, Constantinople and Sofia; other neutral states and His Holiness the Pope have been similarly informed."

THREE ST. JOHN MEN ON CASUALTY LIST

Ottawa, Dec. 12.—Casualty list.

Infantry.

Missing—

H. E. Baker, 39 Marsh Road, St. John, N. B.

H. T. Turner, 161 Rodney street, St. John, N. B.

Frederick Whelan, 24 Chapel street, West St. John, N. B.

Died—

J. A. Kainé, Campbellton, N. B.

Dangerously ill—

H. G. Milton, Prosser Brook, N. B.