

TEXT OF GERMANY'S REPLY TO PEACE TREATY

DECLARE ALLIED POWERS WANT PEACE OF MIGHT

Germany's Answer to Conditions laid down at Versailles consists of 60,000 words Protesting that Allies have "Forsaken Peace of Justice."

The following text of the German reply to the Peace Treaty was received in Ottawa by the Canadian Government on June 15, from Paris:

The German reply and counter proposals are to the conditions of peace laid down to them at Versailles on May 7.

The reply covers 119 pages and includes a covering letter by Brockdorff-Rantzau of May 29 which has already been published, and a second section of comments following the main outline of the original draft treaty. Two separate documents on legal and financial questions are included as part of the general reply. Both English and French translations have been furnished in pamphlet form, the former totalling about 60,000 words.

The Germans maintain that the Allied and Associated powers have forsaken the peace of justice which they solemnly pledged themselves in the armistice negotiations and concluded a peace of might in which all the principles quoted at length from speeches of the statesmen of Allied and Associated powers have been violated.

They protest against the proposed terms individually and collectively, demand a return to the original agreements, press for verbal negotiations and state that Germany expects justice on a basis of equality and reciprocity.

The reply begins with a detailed analysis of the legal basis of peace, alleges a flagrant series of contradictions to this basis, and points out that the results would be the complete enslavement of the German people and the betrayal of all the world's cherished hopes of peace. In the counter-proposals Germany demands immediate admission to the League of Nations as part of the spirit of the armistice agreement and as necessary for the acceptance of the proposed military, naval, and air terms. She then analyzed the territorial changes demanded, claiming that the right of self-determination has been wilfully violated throughout.

She bitterly assails the abolition of all German rights outside Europe as irreconcilable with the preliminary negotiations and as wholly impossible to a great people who not only have supreme needs for markets and supplies but who have shown themselves capable of sharing the world's task of colonization. WANTS GERMAN COMMISSION.

Germany is wholly unable to accept the repatriations committee set forth by the Allies as involving an infringement of her sovereignty, but proposes a co-operative German commission to work alongside it. She accepts responsibility only for civilian losses in occupied Belgium and France and agrees to

maximum payments of one hundred billion marks, provided the other terms as to colonies, overseas trade, and territories are accepted as she proposes. As to deliveries of ships, raw materials and machinery, she can meet the Allied claims only in part largely because of decreased production.

Germany demands that in the economic provisions she be treated on a basis of equality and reciprocity and not in the one-sided way outlined. She agrees to freedom of traffic on German rivers and within Germany but always on condition that there be no interference with German sovereignty. Similarly with the original of treaties lapsed through the war, she expects reciprocal treatment rather than the assumption by the Allies of the right to say what engagements are or are not to become operative again.

The Germans refuse to accept the trial of the ex-kaiser or to sanction his extradition from Holland on the ground that no German subject can be brought before a foreign court without establish law or legal basis. Similarly she cannot agree to extradite other subjects accused of violations of the laws and customs of war. Instead, she proposes an international court of neutrals to judge the fact of crime, the punishment to remain with the national courts. The labour clauses are not satisfactory to Germany and as a result she again proposes an international conference to examine the Allied and Associated proposals, the German proposals, and the Berne resolutions. A bitter protest is entered against the occupation of the Rhine provinces and the demand made that all Allied troops be withdrawn within six months of peace. The occupation as proposed would break up German economic life and allow the prejudicing of German interests in favour of France and Belgium.

The summary herewith makes no attempt to criticize any statements of facts or figures made in reply. The German delegation alone is responsible for them, but it may be stated that many of them, especially as to the eastern frontier are disputable if not absolutely incorrect and that facts bearing in the opposite direction have been omitted.

SECTION TWO, PART ONE.

The first part of the German comments contains general remarks.

CHAPTER ONE—The legal basis of peace.—The German delegates state that they entered upon their task with the conviction that the contents of the treaty of peace had in principle been outlined by the events preceding it.

They then recapitulate the interchange of communications with President Wilson between October 5, 1918, and the armistice on November 11. As a result of these they consider that

Germany as a basis of peace has expressly accepted President Wilson's fourteen points and nothing else. The acceptance of the terms of the armistice was to be evidence for the honest acceptance of these conditions by Germany. This evidence has been furnished. The Allies also have accepted President Wilson's fourteen points, and a solemn agreement as to the basis of peace therefore exists between the two contracting parties. Germany has a right to this basis, and the Allies, by forsaking it, would break an international legal agreement. But the practical application of the principles must be negotiated upon, and Germany has a right to discussion.

CHAPTER TWO—Contradictions.—Chapter two deals at length with alleged contradictions between the draft of the treaty and this agreed basis, taken in connection with previous assurances of the statesmen of the Entente. The delegates point out that their enemies have repeatedly professed that they were not making war against German people, but against an imperialistic and irresponsible Government. But the conditions of peace are an obvious contradiction to such assurances.

Speeches of Mr. Asquith, Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Winston Churchill, and President Wilson are quoted as proving that the war was not intended to be against the German people. To-day, however, the Allied powers are facing not an irresponsible German Government, but the German people ruling its own future for itself. This has been utterly disregarded in the draft treaty, and it cannot be imagined what harder terms could have been imposed upon an imperialistic government.

Again, it was affirmed that the peace to be concluded with Germany was to be a peace of right and not of might. To this effect speeches of M. Painlevé, M. Pichon, Mr. Winston Churchill, Mr. Balfour, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Lloyd George, and President Wilson are quoted.

But the peace treaty shows that none of these solemn assurances have been kept. The purely German territory of the Saar is to be separated from the German Empire for at least fifteen years. The line of demarcation for a plebiscite in Schleswig has been traced through purely German districts, and goes further than Denmark herself wished. In the east Upper Silesia is to be separated from Germany and conveyed to Poland, though it has had no political connection with Poland for 750 years. The province of Posen and most of West Prussia are to be separated from Germany, though millions of Germans are living there. The Mimet district is also to be separated in order to cut off Germany economically from Russia. East Prussia is to be isolated from the empire; the purely German city of Danzig is to become a free city. The settlement of the colonial question is equally unjust. Germany has natural claim to colonies from her culture and undeniable colonial accomplishments.

Further provisions are equally contrary to a peace of right, such as those insisting that Germany should recognize beforehand treaties of which may be entered into by her enemies with the states formerly part of the Russian Empire. The economic provisions for the liquidation of German property within the territories of the Allies, the claim that German citizens must be handed over to courts of the hostile powers, the insistence on Germany acknowledging her responsibility for all damage incurred by the German Government hostile to her, are all contrary to the innate rights of nations.

Again, as to the League of Nations, Germany has repeatedly been promised that the League of Nations would unite the belligerents, conquerors as well as to be conquered, to secure the world against future disasters. To this effect speeches are quoted by Mr. Asquith, Lord Robert Cecil, Lord Grey, M. Ribot, and President Wilson.

All these utterances made it a matter of course that Germany would from the beginning take part in establishing the League of Nations; but the statute of the League has been established without German help and Germany is not even

invited to join the League. Germany's importance is independent of her temporary military or political position. If she is not admitted it is impossible to speak of a League of Nations.

The enemies of Germany have repeatedly assured the whole world that they do not aim at the destruction of Germany. Speeches to this effect by Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Milner, M. Pichon, and President Wilson are quoted.

But the proposed treaty of peace shows that Germany's position as a world power is to be destroyed in every possible manner. Economic provisions are cited to prove the intended destruction of German economic life, both at home and abroad, even to the detail of the confiscation of her cables.

During the war a new principle has been put forward, the right of self-determination of nations. Speeches proclaiming this principle by Mr. Asquith, Mr. Churchill, Lord Grey, Mr. Lloyd George, Signor Orlando, M. Pichon, and President Wilson are quoted or alluded to.

But the treatment of the inhabitants of the Saar region and of the districts of Eupen, Malmédy and Moresnet does not comply with such a solemn recognition of this right. The same is true about Alsace-Lorraine, the cession of which without consulting the population would be a new wrong.

If two and a half million Germans are to be torn away from their native land against their own will, this cannot be considered compatible with self-determination. Statistics are given with regard to a number of districts in central and Upper Silesia and in Southeast Prussia to prove that the majority of the populations is German.

The cession of Danzig and Memel is claimed to be equally contrary to the principles laid down, as is the refusal to allow the German Austrians to unite with Germany, and the compulsion exercised on millions of Germans to remain part of the newly created Czechoslovak State. Even in Germany itself the right of self-determination is denied by the nomination of an alien commission to carry out the conditions of the treaty, surrender of independence which may not be inflicted upon any state.

CHAPTER THREE—Results.—A brief third chapter deals with the results of the draft period. The delegates claim that it involves the utter destruction of German economic life, and leaves the German people to a financial slavery of a kind unknown in history. The delegates point out that this would first make itself felt in the sphere of economics, for Germany's creditors could not obtain the immense sums required from a pauperized country. The elimination of Germany from the world's trade might get rid of a troublesome competitor, but the world would become infinitely poorer.

The world now requires an international community of labour, to which Germany agrees. But the proposed treaty is merely a celebration of the last triumph of imperialist and capitalist tendencies. The delegates appeal to the innate right of men and nations; the proposed treaty is incompatible with respect for this innate right; but in the resolve to fulfil her obligations Germany makes the counter-proposals which follow:—

SECTION THREE, PART TWO GERMAN PROPOSALS.

CHAPTER ONE—The League of Nations.—A lasting peace can only be obtained by way of a League of Nations which guarantees equal rights for the great and small powers. Germany has already submitted its own proposals for such a league, but the delegation is to negotiate on the basis of the Allied proposals if Germany is admitted on equal terms as soon as peace has been signed. At the same time clauses must be inserted, guaranteeing complete equality in trade conditions and free-preventing economic warfare and exclusion by boycott.

Germany is prepared to agree to the basic idea of army, navy, and air regu-

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