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THE SUBMARINE IS AN OUTLAW

When the Lusitania crisis was at its height many persons expressed their relief that Congress was not in session. Those persons felt that had the chosen representatives of the people been meeting in Washington, much irresponsible, bellicose and politico-patriotic speeches would have been uttered for constituent consumption. They feared that such wild oratory would bring results that might afterward prove regrettable.

Now Congress is in session and again there is a grave international problem facing the Administration. Congress in revolt did not breathe forth fire. Congress was restrained and appeared to be impressed with its responsibility to the Nation. Although its members doubtless knew that if the Nation should go to war at the present time the people would probably rally to the support of the Government and reelect the Democratic Administration, they played the role of forebearance. Congressmen usually are hair-triggered on questions of National honor. This week they showed that they could forego patriotic oratory and were willing to count the cost of war. As pointed out more in detail yesterday, this was a remarkable situation, irrespective of certain Congressmen's views that the submarine raised only a technicality in international law.

While Congress may be commended for its sobriety and its evidence of maturity, there is, however, only one position for the Nation to take at the present moment in regard to the Administration's foreign policy.

And that is to give it unanimous support.

It goes without saying that every sober-minded citizen does not want war if it can be honestly avoided. President Wilson himself has made it manifest that he realizes to the full what a calamity it would be to a Nation. The country is convinced that he has used, and will use, every legitimate means to keep this country from being drawn into the world-wide conflagration.

The United States occupies an extremely trying position to-day. As the largest Neutral Nation at peace, upon it naturally rests the grave responsibility of being the champion of the rights of neutral Nations, their world-wide trade and their citizens, Nations under what is known as international law.

Two courses are open to us. We can strenuously defend international law and use all our power to restrain any belligerent seeking to defy the laws of humanity, even if it leads us to the greatest sacrifice. Or we can abandon our position as the champion of neutral rights and allow any belligerent to establish the evil precedent of committing the most atrocious acts upon humanity.

No man can hesitate between those two courses. We cannot permit any outrage to human rights covered by international law. So far President Wilson has strenuously and consistently protested against the violation of human rights, as his action in the Lusitania case has evidenced. He has insisted that Germany must answer our demands.

A few weeks ago it appeared as if the Lusitania tragedy would, under no circumstances, be repeated. Suddenly Germany announced that she would sink all armed belligerent merchant vessels. As pointed out in these columns recently, a few weapons upon a merchant vessel does not make her a warship any more than a cargo of Naval stores on a battleship makes that vessel a craft of commerce.

To send the citizens of neutral Nations to a watery grave because they travelled on a vessel that merely carried a small armament is to defy international law. Germany asked us to agree to this defiance. To agree to a change in the status of merchant vessels during a war would anyway be as unfair as if we suddenly put an embargo upon arms. It would deliberately be taking sides in the contest.

At the bottom of all this controversy over international law is the submarine. Before the war began it was never considered by the Nations that the submarine would be used as a destroyer of commerce. The submarine cannot possibly make adequate provision for the crews and passengers of the destroyed merchant vessels.

In war times 50 and 100 years ago no one ever thought of destroying a merchant vessel without placing the passengers and crew on another vessel so that they could be landed in safety. Capt. Semmes of the Alabama could have done much more damage to our commerce had he not observed the recognized international law of the sea and transhipped all persons

from destroyed vessels to a place of safety, thus giving the Naval officers of the North clues as to his whereabouts and making his own destruction only a matter of time.

It was therefore a great shock to humanity when the Lusitania was heartlessly destroyed with all on board. Since the days of piracy there has been no such exhibition of wanton cruelty on the high seas. Now, if the submarine which destroyed the Lusitania had been a warship probably the Germans would have rescued the passengers and crew. The fault lay in the use of a submarine for such dastardly work. The fault lies with the threatened use of the submarine now.

The United States cannot and will not recognize the submarine as a legitimate destroyer of commerce, because the submarine cannot recognize the rights of humanity. The submarine does not rate a mere legal technicality: it is an outlaw.

—Uncle Dudley in the Boston Globe.

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Swiss Cols. Acquitted

ZURICH, via Paris, March 5.—Col. Reichel, Swiss Federal Auditor, in the course of his charge for the prosecution against the two Swiss Colonels, whose acquittal has already been announced on the charge of communicating secret military documents to the German and Austrian attaches in Switzerland, said he strongly condemned the too friendly relations of one of the Colonels with the Attachés, and added that, to explain his sentiment in this regard, he need only point to the fate of Belgium, "whose adversaries have never been able, with any show of reason, to reproach her with anything, except certain relations which her general staff is supposed to have had with foreign powers. If one of the belligerents," he concluded, "wished to find a pretext for attacking Switzerland, it could also invoke the communication by Swiss officials of confidential documents to its enemies."

HOME RULE FOR IRELAND MARCH 17?

Rumors From Abroad Hint Action Before War is Ended—Significant Comment in Official Paper

By C. O'CONNELL GALVIN.

Things of a momentous nature may be happening in Ireland by next St. Patrick's Day.

Rumors coming from sources which are not entirely ignorant of what is passing in high state circles on the other side of the Atlantic are floating across, hinting that there is a possibility of the Home Rule Act being put in operation in Ireland without waiting for the end of the war, and that March 17th next, Ireland's national holiday, may witness some events of surpassing interest to the Irish race the world over.

The current issue of "Ireland," which is the official organ in America of the Irish Parliamentary party, has the following significant editorial, with the caption, "Is Home Rule at Hand?"

It would not be at all surprising if the question of what is to be done about Home Rule came up before many weeks, notwithstanding the very natural desire of British parties to put all else aside during the continuance of the war.

Whatever may underlie the speech of Mr. Campbell, there is no avoiding the fact that Ireland is in many ways being treated as if Home Rule were an accomplished fact. In the arrangements about recruiting, the Derby scheme was applied to Great Britain, but not to Ireland.

When it was made known that while Home Rule was hung up Ireland would not think of assenting to compulsory measures, opponents of Home Rule grumbled a little, and even went so far as to threaten Mr. Redmond that unless he yielded Home Rule would be destroyed; but the Coalition government ruled that what the Irish Party decided Great Britain must endorse.

After that, when the Irish party voted against conscription in Britain, they were told in so many words that they should no longer consider themselves as being in London but as being in Ireland and should govern themselves accordingly. They did. They withdrew from participation in the discussion of the measure.

Surely the wise statesmanlike thing for the British government to do would be to serve notice that a further postponement of the operation of Home Rule beyond the seventeenth of March will not be sought, but that an honest and a final effort will be made to confer upon the country the boon that has been earned.

Ireland has been generous. Ireland has been patient. If Mr. Asquith is capable of a stroke of statesmanship the equal of that with which Mr. Redmond astonished the world at the outbreak of war, he might give Ireland Home Rule on St. Patrick's Day and win for himself and his country's allies a moral support equivalent to the strength of many an army corps.

Since the war began down to the present hour, Ireland has indeed proved her claim to such an act of statesmanship as that hinted in this quoted article. By every test that could be applied to any race or nation, Ireland has played true in her compact with Great Britain.

It is now for Britain to meet the test of proving true to her compact with the Irish people.

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