

for social organization, and—security against interruption from without. No nation in the world is more passionately devoted to its own independence. This has always been true. It is now more true than ever. Freedom to pursue their own course within their own country is all that the Swedes care for—and the world at large, all mankind, will be sure to profit if this desire of theirs is not foiled. The Swedes will be neutral until forced by open infringement of their neutrality to take up arms. They will be friendly with every nation that leaves them alone—even Russia. They will be grateful for any action on the part of greater Powers tending to rid them of the fear of unprovoked aggression that has so long been haunting them. They are looking for no expansion of their territory. If Finland were offered them by the Concert of Powers to-day their answer would probably be: ‘Finland is a nation by itself and should be subject to no other nation.’ If, on the other hand, Finland were once more to become an autonomous member of a Russian Federation, with all its grievances disposed of, I think the Swedes would shed three-fourths of the nervousness that has possessed them in recent years. They do not fear a practically free Finland, tied to Russia by bonds of affection. They do fear a harassed and oppressed Finland that may be prepared as a tool against themselves.

There is in these desires of theirs no vestige of the impossible. What they ask for is eminently practicable and desirable from the viewpoint of every nation wedded to democratic principles. And, as the war goes on, I think the mood in Sweden may change considerably. There, as elsewhere, time is fighting on the side of the Allies. In the meantime nothing is wanted on the part of England but patience. But, when the time comes