

In 1918 great hopes were placed on the Separatist Movement in Bavaria, but, in spite of French encouragement and aid, that movement languished and died; That, it must be remembered, was in time of internal ferment, distress, and disillusionment throughout Germany. It may well be that, toward the end of this war, a similar series of factors may be operating; on the other hand, the Nazi alterations in the structure of the Reich have made it, to all appearances, far more closely knit than it was in 1918. In general, therefore, it would seem unwise to put much faith in domestic separatist movements. What can be accomplished by allied action is another matter.

The Vision of Division

There are, then, various plans under discussion both for the cession to other States of Border territories held before 1938, and for the division into independent political units of the territory remaining after such transfers. Both plans are intended to make impossible a united Germany powerful enough to repeat the aggression of the Second and Third Reichs. The former is also a means of compensating Poland for the loss of a part of her pre-1939 lands.

In considering the wisdom of any of the schemes mentioned, the original assumption will be retained, i.e. that the possibility of renewed aggression cannot be dismissed, and that measures of protection must be taken. This is a long-range view, since a Germany in the hour of defeat and for some time afterwards would be in no position to be aggressive. Judgment on her frontiers must also be based on a long-range view.

The transfer of territory to other states may be examined first. There is much to be said for ceding East Prussia to Poland, so long as a removal of population is organized. It would solve the problem of the Corridor, give to Poland a sea-coast and well-rounded frontiers, and break up one of the chief centres of the Junker-Militaristic tradition. Posen, too, can on ethnic grounds be allowed to Poland. There are less good reasons for continuing Poland westward to the River Oder, for that would mean to Germany the loss of the greater part of Pomerania, and bringing alien rule well into the old Margravate of Brandenburg. Would such a move, in the long run, produce the desired end of weakening Germany?

The same questions must be asked in considering the desirability of dividing the rest of Germany into separate units. The argument for division would run something like this:- Before they were united the German states were no danger to Europe; united Germany has been consistently aggressive; in the twentieth century the aggression was not caused by a struggle for the lands inhabited by Germans, and so there is an inherent danger in the German character; therefore, it is necessary to return to the conditions under which Germans were not a menace. This makes a case which cannot lightly be dismissed, but against it a series of counter-arguments should be balanced; the object of policy is to produce peace, and to get rid of the friction which threatens it; forcible separation of one part of Germany from another would lead to a violent Nationalism fed by a sense of grievance, and thence to a struggle to revive the united Reich; out of such a situation war must come sooner or later.