

6.—(d) The general principles on which the Commission based its proposals included the following:—

- (i) "That primary consideration be given to the line of ethnic separation in such a way as to secure the fairest possible settlement between the two peoples."
- (ii) "That rectifications of the frontier, in some places in favour of the Poles and in others in favour of the Germans, be made where the ethnic facts are outweighed by the other facts and principles involved."
- (iii) "That natural economic relations and existing means of communication be taken into consideration in order that the normal industrial life of each community should be restored as soon as possible."

7. When on the 19th March, 1919, the Supreme Council considered the Commission's proposals, the Council was unanimous in favour of giving to Poland territorial access to the sea over territory ethnographically Polish. The report of the Commission, however, covered the whole of the proposed German-Polish frontier, and stated that in the whole area to be ceded by Germany to Poland the German census of 1910 showed a German population of 2,132,000 side by side with 2,854,000 Poles. Objection was raised by the British Prime Minister, Mr. Lloyd George, to the large number of Germans who were thus to be transferred, and he drew attention in particular to the Danzig and Marienwerder areas. He felt anxious lest the Germans might refuse to sign a treaty containing such a provision, and lest so large a German element might spell future trouble for Poland.

8. The report having been referred back to the Commission on Polish Affairs, that body addressed a note to the Supreme Council in which it unanimously adhered to its proposals, and maintained that it could not recommend a solution which did not give to Poland Danzig and the direct Danzig-Warsaw railway through Marienburg and Marienwerder. The large number of Germans involved in the whole of its proposals, the Commission declared in this note, was "the result of the nature of the racial distribution in this part of Europe. . . . Before Poland was partitioned there were large German minorities permanently settled on Polish territory. Since the Partition, and more especially since the creation of the German Empire, the immense energy of one of the most efficient of modern States has been directed towards the Germanisation of this area by all possible means. The German minority is widely distributed over the whole area. No adjustment or modification of the boundary can avoid this result. The general conclusion is that the cession of the railway is a comparatively small factor in causing the large number of Germans to be assigned to the Polish State; and the Commission respectfully submit that their original proposals offer the best possible solution to the problem which they were called upon to solve."

9. When the Supreme Council met on the 22nd March, Mr. Lloyd George again expressed doubts whether Germany would accept these proposals. On the 25th March he presented his memorandum entitled "Some considerations for the Peace Conference before they finally draft the Terms" (Cmd. 1614, 1922). The purpose of this memorandum was to reduce the number of Germans to be placed "under the control of a people which is of a different religion, and which has never proved its capacity for a stable self-government," in order to avoid a situation which must "lead sooner or later to a new war in the east of Europe." The danger which Mr. Lloyd George chiefly emphasised was that Germany might throw in her lot with Bolshevism. The German Government were weak. Neither the British Empire nor America would agree to occupy Germany. Therefore the terms of the treaty must be such as a responsible Government in Germany could expect to be able to carry out.

10. The Supreme Council yielded to Mr. Lloyd George's determined insistence and decided to reduce the territory to be ceded to Poland by constituting Danzig a Free City and by holding a plebiscite in the Marienburg-Marienwerder area east of the Vistula. In spite of a Polish majority in the rural parts of *Kreis* Stuhm lying in this area, this plebiscite (see para. 11) was bound to go in favour of Germany owing to the larger German majority in the districts of Marienwerder and Rosenberg. It may be noted, however, that the total population of the plebiscite area was only 160,000, of whom 136,000 were Germans; so that the number of Germans, in whose interests the Polish State was deprived of