

Asquith States Peace Terms

The Associated Press carried the following under a London date of July 26: A little group of pacifists instituted a peace debate in the House of Commons this afternoon, introducing a resolution that the German Reichstag resolution favoring peace by an understanding expressed the principles for which Great Britain stood throughout, and calling on the government and the entente allies to restate their peace terms. Further, the resolution declares the allies should accept the Russian proposal that the forthcoming allied conference on war aims should comprise representatives of the people and not solely spokesmen of the government.

The resolution was moved by James Ramsay MacDonald, socialist and labor member from Leicester, and was supported by Charles P. Trevelyan, Hasting B. Less-Smith, and Arthur A. Pensonby, liberals, and Philip Snowden, socialist.

MacDonald agreed his resolution expressed the opinion of only a small minority, but contended this minority was ever growing. Stockholm had borne its fruit; the allied conference would bear more, and the international conference would bear still more.

Trevelyan, who seconded the resolution, agreed in condemning the uncertainty in the speech of the German chancellor, Dr. Michaelis, and said all agreed peace awaited unconditional restoration of Belgium and France. He doubted whether there could be peace until all the governments expressly repudiated the ideal of conquest or annexations.

While it might be the duty of the government to reply to the German chancellor, it was the duty of the House of Commons to reply to the Reichstag resolution, he declared. He said Dr. Michaelis' speech was made on that resolution and that he did not speak against it or try to persuade the Reichstag from passing, it ought not to be overlooked.

Former Premier Asquith thought previous speakers attached more importance to the Reichstag resolution than it deserved. They seemed to have regretted circumstances under which it was passed. After an obscure struggle in Berlin, in which for a time it seemed as if advocates of a relatively moderate policy would get their way, the military chief arrived on the scene and obtained the dismissal of the imperial chancellor, in whom the emperor only a few days before had expressed undoubted confidence.

Peace, said Asquith, should become the supreme interest of mankind, but subject to an all-important condition, namely, that it is a peace which does not defeat the purpose for which the great nations entered upon and have continued the war, and that it does not turn to waste the immeasurable loss and suffering which they had shared and are sharing in common.

He welcomed the news that a conference would be held early in autumn on the invitation of the Russian government. Nothing but good could come of a plain restatement of the allies' aims in a good cause. Two new facts of the present year, first, that Russia had ceased forever to be autocratic, and, second, the appearance, with all her moral and material forces, of the United States into the struggle, had a direct and practical bearing upon the opinion of the world as to the sincerity of the allies' aims.

"They mean," continued the former premier, "that the allied nations now include an overwhelming majority of the free peoples of the world. The allies are fighting for nothing but freedom. That is the policy of this unprecedented aggregation of free peoples.

"Earnestly as we desire peace, no peace is worth having which restores, under some thin disguise, the precarious status quo antebellum and left countries like Belgium, Serbia and Greece at the mercy of dynastic intrigue or under the menace of military coercion. It would be premature and futile to grapple in detail with the geographical problems eventually to be solved.

"The principle clearly agreed to by every one of the allies is that in any rearrangement made the governing principle ought to be the interests and the wishes of the populations effected.

*The Reichstag resolution referred to is quoted in an article on "German Politics," on Page 10.

But is that principle acceptable to the central powers? Is Germany prepared not only to evacuate Belgium, but to make reparation for the colossal mischief and damage which accompanied her devastating occupation and the practical enslavement of a large portion of the Belgian people? Is she prepared not only to do that but to restore to Belgium, not a pretense of, but absolute independence?

"I should like to know the German answer to these questions. I find no answer in the vague, indeterminate formulae of the Reichstag. I have no desire to say that peace is impossible but I can not see, from what has recently occurred in Berlin, any real approximation of a practical kind to the aims and object of the allies."

Asquith thought the German people was the greatest obstacle to peace, but said that was a matter for the German people themselves. So far as the allies were concerned, the best hope of peace, he said, was a frank and open statement, both by way of avowal and disavowal of the objects for which they were fighting, and as a means to that end he welcomed the fullest use of all opportunities for an interchange of views between representatives of the great democracies.

It could not be too clearly stated that this was a matter for the peoples, rather than the governments. "Once that is realized by the democracies of the world," continued the former premier, "we shall be within measurable sight of an honorable and lasting peace. Meanwhile we shall not be helping the advent of peace if we give the impression that there is any faltering in our determination or doubt in our ability to carry on the burden. We look up with clear conscience until our ends are achieved."

BORAH URGES PRESIDENT TO CLARIFY U. S. WAR AIMS

A Washington dispatch, dated July 26, says: In a speech vibrant with patriotic appeal, Senator William E. Borah of Idaho, a republican member of the Foreign Relations committee, today called upon the administration to clarify America's war aims to create a firmer national unity behind the conduct of the war. He frankly declared the outlook of the war "more serious and menacing to the allies" than at any time since August 1, 1914, and urged the senate and the nation to put aside petty issues and give the full measure of their energy to the winning of the war.

The United States, he said, must cease piling up bond issue upon bond issue, and must seek to obtain more of its war funds by immediate taxation or face "bankruptcy and ruin." The tottering of Russia, the increase of the submarine sinkings, the gradual weakening of France, he said, were all combining to throw the burden of carrying on the war upon the United States.

Borah insisted this was no time to talk of peace, but he declared that for the sake of a stronger sentiment behind the war it behooves the administration to restate in clear and unmistakable language just why the United States is making war and upon what terms it will end the conflict.

He urged the administration to make it more plainly "America's war" and to try to bring home to the people the extreme danger that would confront the United States if England and France should fail.

Never at a time in this struggle has the outlook been so serious as at this time, Borah declared. Russia, to all appearance, is out of the conflict because of internal conflicts. What does that mean to the people of the United States. Could a more serious message come over our wires and affect the lives of millions of our boys than the fact that Russia is breaking down? We should pray for the success of Kerensky as never before.

"It means that millions of American boys will find graves on European battlefields. No more serious condition could confront us than confronts the allies now. The situation is here and the hour of sacrifice has arrived. And will the senate stop and parley over money going into the creeks?"

In addition to the Russian situation, Borah declared that the submarine question, which some weeks ago was believed to be favorable

to the allies, has now become "distinctly favorable to the Teutonic powers," with reports showing the number of sinkings increasing. France, too, is being gradually worn down, he asserted. America, being in the war, is there practically as a guarantee of the financial standing of the allies and the conservation of finances, he said, was imperative.

"Has the time not come when we realize that we are in this war?" asked Senator Borah. "We should proceed to legislate upon these measures as if the enemy were at our very gates. Does any one suppose that the central powers, with Russia giving in, submarine war growing more effective, apparently, every day, with France at the height of her fighting powers, would discuss peace except on Germany's terms?"

The American people, Borah declared, should have presented to them definitely and specifically the terms and conditions on which they are fighting. "Give them an American issue to fight for and an American issue to die for," he declared, adding that "if the senate realized that this war was an American war they would not be sitting here passing on the advisability of voting millions of dollars for creeks down which a duck can not pass."

Borah disclaimed intimating that the United States should not be in the war. "But we can't do anything more helpful," he said, "than to make it known that this is an American war, with American institutions involved. Yet if you go before any popular audience they will say it has been treated so far as a European war to settle propositions in Europe."

Referring to the recent Russian "no-annexation" peace proposal, Borah continued:

"That met with no response from any of the allies. The United States could have taken no more important step than to have indorsed that declaration. If the United States had taken a bold stand in favor of peace, Russia would be 100 per cent more effective today as a fighting force. But the United States waited for some of the other powers directing the war to define their position.

"I did not vote for war," he concluded, "out of sympathy with France, much as I admire her, but because our American rights were trampled on and our people murdered, with the prospect of continued outrages and national degradation. I voted for war to make safe our own blessed republic and give dignity, honor and security to this democracy throughout Europe, although I would be glad to see every king and prince exiled and every dynasty broken forever. This has become an American war, a fight for American principles, to be discontinued when American interests are safeguarded and satisfied. It is no longer a war to spread democracy in Europe or for rehabilitation of European countries. It is a war showing that the United States, though slow to act, is swift to avenge."

IMPERIALISTIC AIMS FOR GREAT BRITAIN DENIED BY BALFOUR

A London cablegram, under date of July 30, says: John Annan Bryce, liberal, referring in the house of commons today to the recent statement of Lord Robert Cecil, minister of blockade, that the dismemberment of Austria was not one of Great Britain's war aims, said the statement would create difficulties because Great Britain's engagements with her allies could not be continued if the Austrian empire was to be maintained.

Italy, on the strength of these engagements, Mr. Bryce said, would not be content merely with a rearrangement of the Trentino region.

The references by Mr. Bryce and others to Great Britain's war aims, including Noel Buxton, who said that an unfortunate impression had got abroad in Europe as a result of the speeches in the house of commons last week that Great Britain favored a policy of annexation, but would not define her aims, brought an interesting reply from A. J. Balfour, the foreign secretary.

Mr. Balfour declared that the government had been asked to declare its policy, but he was not sure if that would be a wise course.

The broad questions animating the government had been expounded by the late and present premiers, the foreign secretary and others who held high office during the past three years, he said.

When every ministerial statement was treated as a pledge, it was dangerous to accede to requests for definite announcements.

With respect to the Yugoslav and the Austrian