

# The New REPUBLIC

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## The Week

**L**LOYD GEORGE exhibits his usual adroitness in his pronouncements on Russian policy. "Bolshevism cannot be crushed by force of arms," he has believed for over a year, but of course he was not so dogmatic in this belief as to refuse a chance to the anti-Bolshevists, who failed, not for want of equipment, but for reasons more fundamental. Also, Mr. George believes that the "ring of fire" composed of the border states pressed to war against Russia, is an impossible solution. Neither do the states want to provide the men nor do the great powers want to provide the money. Real war with the Soviet government is impracticable, but so is real peace. "Until they are assured the Bolsheviks have dropped the methods of barbarism in favor of civilized government, no civilized community in the world is prepared to make peace with them." Mr. George does not say "until the Bolsheviks have dropped barbaric methods," but until the other governments are assured of this.

**L**ORD ROBERT CECIL proposes the sending of an international commission to Russia to find out exactly what Russian conditions are. This pro-

posal may perhaps be regarded as complementary to Lloyd George's policy. Such a commission would not only find out that the Soviet government is not now employing the terror, but it could also negotiate for amnesty for the unfortunate Russian emigrés who with Allied encouragement backed the defunct enterprises of Kolchak, Denikin and Yudenitch. So far as we can ascertain, peace with amnesty is the policy which the emigrés—at least the more level-headed ones—are now urging. Many of them would welcome an opportunity to return to Russia, to serve their country even under the Soviet government which they disapprove and distrust, as General Kuropatkin and a long list of distinguished anti-communists are serving it, in both military and civil offices.

**BRITISH** opinion and French are drifting apart on three important issues: Russia, the demand upon Germany for the men accused of war crimes, and the question of the revision of the peace terms. The British, having already abandoned all idea of armed intervention, are now visibly preparing the ground for peace with the Soviet government. France cannot keep up the fight alone, but she is far from reconciled to the peace. The British, it is understood, wished to limit the demand for those to be tried for war crimes to a few men against whom a strong prima facie case could be made. The French made out a long list, knowing that Germany would demur, and perhaps refuse, thereby laying a moral basis for French retention of the left bank of the Rhine as a permanent possession. The British view apparently has prevailed in the decision to permit the Germans to try the war criminals themselves, with the right to determine whether the trials are fair and the penalties adequate.

**I**N the matter of revising the peace terms, while the British government has a strong majority in Parliament against such action, the movement for reducing the indemnity and giving Germany a

chance to work it off is growing in England. Opinion in Paris is that the original peace terms were already too lenient. *L'Eclair*, edited by Briand, says: "To revise the treaty is a very good thing if the corrections are to be made in favor of the conquerors; but we greatly fear that such a procedure would result in advantages for the conquered." England in each of the cases of disagreement inclines more toward peace, France to prolonging the regime of force. It is difficult to predict which tendency will be the more powerful if the proposed Anglo-French-American military alliance ever becomes a reality.

WHAT has become of that alliance, anyway? Occasionally one encounters references to it in French political discussion, as if it were an existing fact. President Wilson agreed to submit such a treaty to the Senate in part consideration for French acceptance of the League and technical renunciation of the Rhine as a frontier. It must be submitted to the Senate for ratification as soon as the League is disposed of. What are its chances? The American Senate will be putting the interests of the country in jeopardy if it lets us in for such an entanglement. A vast majority of Americans will agree that if France, doing her best to live at peace with Germany, is wantonly attacked, America ought to go to her relief straightway. But suppose that France decides to prolong indefinitely the retention of the Rhine frontier or to juggle the Saar Valley plebiscite: what then? Shall we find ourselves bound to send our armies to defend her in such an enterprise?

FOR the relief of the starving in the new states of Central Europe and Armenia at least \$125,000,000 is imperatively needed, according to the most conservative expert estimates. There is grave danger that Congress will refuse to appropriate this sum, or anything near it. Retrenchment in public expenditures is one of the reasons why Congress is reluctant to vote liberal relief funds, but another and more creditable reason is the fear that much of the relief given will be diverted, directly or indirectly, to the furthering of military enterprises. The testimony of General Bliss that the Poles are holding a line from 280 to 380 kilometers east of the boundaries fixed by the peace conference, thus in effect inviting attack from the Russians, dampened considerably the ardor of those Congressmen who favored relief for Poland. General Bliss proposed that if we gave the Poles food we should require France and England to give them arms; but neither was that proposal reassuring. The way out was indicated by the proposal of Representative Green, that as a condition

of relief for Poland, the Poles should retire within their proper boundaries.

WHILE England and France are debating whether or not the border states are to fight Russia, there are signs that in the border states themselves there is growing opposition to the continuance of hostilities. Estonia, of course, has already made peace with Soviet Russia, and commerce has been begun. What Latvia intends doing is not certain. An Associated Press dispatch from London says that no peace offer will be accepted pending a Baltic conference to be held in April. But Soviet troops have been withdrawn, and the American State Department has unofficial news of the signing of an armistice. Meantime the government of Poland is reported by the Associated Press to be preparing an outline of its peace conditions. The Socialists and labor groups threaten a general strike unless peace is made; and the Premier, replying to a delegation of their representatives, declares the government is considering peace "in all seriousness."

THE southern front of the anti-Bolshevist forces in Russia seems to have collapsed entirely; and for Denikin's failure, as for Kolchak's, we are beginning to get explanations that blast the myths of last summer's propaganda. Lieutenant Leslie Harkness of the American Red Cross returns to Paris after three months with the anti-Bolshevist armies in the south and attributes the collapse of Denikin to four causes. For the spread of typhus Denikin can not be held responsible; and certain strategic military mistakes were perhaps bound to happen. But the other two causes cited by Lieutenant Harkness are significant. The peasants, he says, were indifferent to Denikin's venture—those same peasants who were to rush enthusiastically into the Holy Crusade. And then, besides, Denikin made the mistake—a serious mistake for the crusader—of permitting his Cossacks "to sack each captured city for three days."

TO the character of Rumanian rule in Hungary most American newspapers have been indifferent. General Bandholtz of the American army now comes out of Hungary, however, with a report that corroborates the news dispatches printed in a few such English papers as the *Manchester Guardian*. The Rumanians, he says, have never carried out their promise to leave Hungary. They have simply moved some thirty miles from Budapest and stopped there. Meantime they have robbed the country of almost everything that was movable: food, tools, seed, freight cars, animals and even Gobelin tapestries. That the Rumanians were not

out simply to replace war losses of their own is shown in the fact that they would smash two or three essential machines in a factory and thus tie up the whole plant. The Rumanians have wanted to injure Hungary. They have done it. And they have prepared the ground for another war that may rack Europe.

THERE are American Senators of both parties who believe that the controversy over Article X has become a war of words and nothing more. What is the practical difference, they ask, between Mr. Hitchcock's reservations and Mr. Lodge's? It is interesting to note the way this question is answered by twenty deans of law colleges and heads of English departments in different universities when the New York Globe asked for their opinions. Six say that the two reservations mean virtually the same thing. Six say unequivocally that they mean different things entirely. The others do not state specifically whether they believe the reservations alike or different in meaning, but make distinctions in the phraseology of the reservations and interpret them differently. The Globe's questionnaire serves to show again what real confusion there is in the American mind about reservations to Article X, about the meaning of the Article itself, and the share of responsibility to which it pledges this country.

APPARENTLY the Republicans are no more ready than the Democrats to burn their fingers on the issue of compulsory military training. Passage of such legislation, say the Republican leaders after a meeting of the Steering Committee, is impossible in the present Congress. Nevertheless, there is a good-sized body of sentiment in favor of compulsory training; and the Republicans, as usual, want to capture the pro's without losing the anti's. So a "special committee" is to be appointed, which is "to study the question" and report to the next Congress. Congressmen of both parties are now enlarging upon the "educational values" inherent in compulsory training. It ought indeed to have a few such values. Senator Wadsworth estimates it would cost six hundred and fifty million dollars a year—and that is more than the whole country spent for all public school purposes in 1915.

ON Friday the newspapers announced that Attorney-General Newton had proposed criminal proceedings against the five suspended Socialist Assemblymen at Albany. But on Saturday, faced with a threat from the Socialists to put in no defense at their trial before the Judiciary Committee, the Attorney-General's office issued what the World calls a "diplomatic disclaimer" of any intent to

hasten criminal proceedings. In the brief filed by Mr. Newton a pretense is made of summing up the evidence disclosed at the inquiry. But a large part of the public will not easily be persuaded that the evidence has shown these five Assemblymen to be plotting the forcible overthrow of the American state and "the substitution of the Russian Soviet Government." Mr. Newton should have ended his brief after his first two charges. For the evidence at Albany did show that some Socialists (not necessarily these five) have handed in undated resignations to their parties before taking office; and that most Socialists—like most Quakers, pacifists and non-resistants—do not "vote to appropriate moneys for military or naval purposes of war."

GRADUALLY the Department of Justice is being educated to the fact of difference even among revolutionaries. The twenty-nine men recently arrested at Paterson "are not like the Russian workers or communists," says a statement issued by the Department. "They are anarchists of the worst type, not philosophical anarchists, such as the Ferrer colony at Stelton, nor the so-called constructive anarchists, but these are the 'terrorists' to be compared with the nihilists of Russia." The Department of Justice might have added, these are the anarchists of the kind that Lenin suppressed with great vigor. These are the sort that issued—as a vile joke on the centralizing tendencies of the Bolsheviks—that canard on the nationalization of women still taken seriously by multitudes of Americans otherwise exhibiting a sense of humor.

WHEN the coal-miners took issue with their employers, a few months ago, we were accustomed to see on the first pages of the newspapers such headlines as "Miners Defy Government." The President's settlement commission is now at work: what happens when the commission decides that the 14 per cent wage increase in the Kentucky fields shall be retroactive to October 1st, and the Kentucky operators refuse to accept that decision? Do the New York newspapers announce in first-page headlines: "Operators Defy Government"? No. None of them have room for more than a three inch item and in each case, that is tucked away far from the front page. The claim of the Kentucky miners to a retroactive wage increase was based on the fact that throughout the strike the Kentucky mines were operated on practically a 100 per cent basis. This latter fact, incidentally, the Times deletes from the short account it publishes.

ASSISTANT Postmaster-General Blakeslee informs the Senate that among the farmers of the country there is a temper "disquiet-



ing and portentous of disastrous consequences." This opinion he bases upon a review of 40,000 replies to a questionnaire recently sent out by the Post Office Department. Dissatisfaction among the farmers, as shown in these replies, is due to three major causes: inability to obtain labor, objection to high profits taken by middlemen, and lack of proper agencies of contact between the farmer and consumer. However difficult it may be to turn workmen back to the soil, there are at least ways of meeting the second and third causes of discontent. Taxation will touch the high profits of middlemen; development of cooperative sale and purchase will bring the farmers in closer touch with their markets. Will the Republicans and the Democrats go to the farmers with this program?

TWO weeks ago we published the appeal of a Hungarian war prisoner in Siberia in behalf of several hundred thousand fellow sufferers who have almost abandoned hope of seeing their homes again. Word reaches us now that the American Y. M. C. A. is ready to help repatriating these prisoners, but that the permit of the American government is needed before any action can be taken. The case of these unfortunate men surely deserves the granting of such a permit. There are perhaps a hundred thousand prisoners east of Lake Baikal, and double that number to the west. Most of them have been prisoners in Siberia for four years. They are performing no useful service. They are without money and proper clothing. Cholera and typhoid have carried away many of their comrades. And now, for a year and a half, all communication with home and family has been denied them. If the Y. M. C. A. can help any of them reach their homes again, it deserves the gratitude of every humane government.

## Mr. Lansing and the Cabinet

FOR many months the office of President has been filled by a man so dangerously ill that he has been allowed to know only what his wife and his doctor and perhaps his secretary thought it wise to tell him. The members of his cabinet have had no access to him. The leaders of his party have been out of touch with him. He has lain there unadvised, uninformed, wilfully alone, unfriended by men who could save him from himself, shrouded in secrecy, amid the wreck of the highest hope ever indulged by a statesman. Remembering all this it is not easy to discuss plainly the incoherent correspondence with Mr. Lansing. For the ordinary

standards of public criticism do not apply to the chance exposure of what is really an incident of the sick room.

Yet in those pitiable letters is written the morbid exaggeration of Mr. Wilson's theory of government. "Is it true, as I have been told" that the chiefs of departments have conferred without me? If it is true, as I have been told, then I have to remind you "that no action could be taken without me by the cabinet, and therefore there could have been no disadvantage in awaiting action with regard to matters concerning which action could not have been taken without me?" Thus sharply and unconsciously revealed is the doctrine of personal government. The President has not been too ill to be told some disturbing things about the government. But the members of his cabinet have not been permitted to tell them to him. Between him and them have been interposed his real confidants. The cabinet are an external group to whom orders are given, and not the intimate and responsible stewards of the vast powers which have accumulated in the Presidency.

Too ill to discuss affairs of state with his Secretary of State, he has not been too ill to discuss them with others. He has made up his mind, not on the advice of those who are officially his advisers, but after hearing what those who were about the sick room found advisable to repeat. There is nothing new in this. Illness and disappointment have merely emphasized it. The President has never had a cabinet in any substantial sense, and it is a measure of the compensating power of the human mind that he should lecture Mr. Lansing about the development of constitutional systems. Having himself perverted healthy constitutional practice, he picks a quarrel with his leading cabinet member for attempting somewhat to restore it. In these letters is set down for the first time the theory of an irresponsible and impotent cabinet.

Only the bad judgment of a sick man could have induced Mr. Wilson to put this theory into cold print. It has actually been the working theory of his administration. On one side a maze of public questions. On the other a glut of power in the Presidency. Elected to the Presidency a man subject to the persistent delusion that the enunciation of a policy was the execution of a policy. This delusion inhibiting his relation to men and making him careless in their selection. Having selected them badly, having watched his policies go wrong in practice when administered by them, the moral he drew from his experience was not that he must choose other men, but that he could not trust those he had. Thus he was confirmed in an obstinate loyalty to men to whom he was not loyal. He did