

the House of Commons, gave adequate reasons why London could not be given complete immunity from airplane attack. He said:

The first consideration before the Government was to insure that the army in France was supplied sufficiently with airplanes. They were the army's eyes, without which it was impossible to advance. To photograph the enemy's works required air supremacy, and without that supremacy it was sheer murder to allow troops to advance.

The twenty-eight fatal casualties suffered by the civilian population in the last raid were very regrettable, but unless the troops at the front were supplied with sufficient airplanes to secure proper knowledge of the German trenches and positions and to guide their artillery barrage their losses might easily be, not 28, but 28,000. . . .

Nothing could be more disastrous to military operations than to encourage the Germans to believe that they could by these raids excite such a clamor in this country that the Government would be unable to resist the demand for the withdrawal of airplanes from the front.

Such a statement as this should lend impetus to America's efforts to help our allies gain at the earliest possible moment complete supremacy in the air. The best reprisal is to win the war.

THE POLITICAL TENSION IN GERMANY

The news of the week ending July 11 relating to the political agitation and uncertainty in Germany indicates, not that a revolution such as took place in Russia is at hand, but that the less autocratic elements and leaders in Germany are making an impression on the irreconcilables in the inner circle of the German Government. These despatches come directly from the neutral countries bordering Germany (Holland, Switzerland, and Denmark), but they unquestionably have a basis of fact behind them. One statement attributed to Chancellor von Bethmann Hollweg by a correspondent at Berne, who asserts that he finds his authority in Berlin newspapers, declares that the Chancellor denied the rumor that he was about to resign, and boldly proclaimed: "The formula of peace without annexations is unacceptable to us. We cannot declare our terms of peace. We must fight and conquer."

This utterance was in all probability called out by the surprising address made just previously by Matthias Erzberger, the leader of the radical branch of the Catholic Centrists in the Reichstag. He advocated the idea of peace without annexations or indemnities, and showed little regard for the keynote of the autocratic German power—that is, the insistence on German predominance in Middle Europe from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Other signs of perturbation among those in power in Germany have been the hurried conferences between the Kaiser, the Chancellor, General von Hindenburg, and General Ludendorff, and the repeated rumors that resignations are soon to come from Herr Zimmermann, the Foreign Minister, and Dr. Karl Helfferich, the Vice-Chancellor. Herr Zimmermann's resignation will be welcomed in the United States because of his authorship of the hostile and foolish attempt to incite Mexico and Japan against the United States, and because of his utter lack of any international moral sense or care for considerations of humanity.

These things, and the comments of German papers, certainly indicate great political tension in Germany. They are more important in their ultimate possibilities than the so far abortive efforts to amend the German political constitution and to make the Reichstag more representative. As has been pointed out in this journal in articles written by Mr. Paul W. Brown and Mr. Raymond B. Fosdick and editorially, any effort to make representation in the Reichstag more democratic and fairer, while admirable in itself, would not in the least change the rigid control over German affairs, internal and external, resting in the Bundesrath (the members of which are appointed, not elected), which has an absolute veto power over the Reichstag, or the equally rigid power exercised by the Emperor and his Chancellor over the Ministry.

The peoples who are engaged in the struggle against Prussianism should be now more than ever on their guard against any plan on the part of Prussian leaders to disguise their inten-

tions by a display of acquiescence in democratic reform while holding fast to the substance of irresponsible power.

THE BRITISH LEAGUE TO ENFORCE PEACE

Within the past few weeks there have been authoritative expressions of opinion favorable to a permanent organization of nations to insure peace.

On May 14, 1917, the British League of Nations was enthusiastically indorsed in a resolution unanimously adopted at a meeting attended by some twelve hundred representative men under Lord Bryce's presidency. The other speakers were the Archbishop of Canterbury, General Smuts, Baron Buckmaster, Lord Hugh Cecil, and Viscount Harcourt. The particular feature of this meeting was Lord Buckmaster's advocacy of Germany's inclusion in the proposed League, an advocacy which was greeted by applause. He said truly that if Germany was not included the League would be only a league against Germany; and he might have added that already the civilized world is practically in league against Germany now. The British League to Enforce Peace differs from the American League to Enforce Peace in that it provides for the protection of every member of the League from military attack, whether by another member or by an outsider. This movement for international peace by international organization has had another indorsement from France, where, in the Chamber of Deputies, the leader of the Socialists has demanded of Premier Ribot that he engage immediately in concerted action with President Wilson looking to the formation of a Society of Nations, and has received the reply from the Premier, "I will consider it an honor to enter into conversation with President Wilson on that subject."

Doubtless the energies of the Allies should be concentrated on their joint plans to defeat Germany, and they should not allow anything to divert them from that purpose. But agreeing upon terms of peace is necessary to a prosecution of the war to its conclusion, since terms of peace are necessary to any conclusion of the war. And the world will not, and ought not to, be satisfied with any terms which do not involve at least some hope of a peace that will be permanent. Moreover, the cordial co-operation of the Socialists, especially those of France and Russia, can be secured only by an agreement to consider with them plans for providing against a recurrence of a world war. A legitimate parallel to the apothegm, "In time of peace prepare for war," is, "In time of war prepare for peace."

THE CONTROL OF EXPORTS TO NEUTRALS

As our draft of soldiers is called a selective draft, so the proposed embargo on exports to neutrals may be called selective. What the President has done is to proclaim that hereafter all exports from the United States of grain, meat, fuel, steel, and other commodities of use in warfare shall be controlled by means of licenses to be issued under regulations to be made by the Secretary of Commerce. The long list of countries to which this applies includes our allies, but naturally the important bearing is as to neutral nations, and especially to Holland and Scandinavia. By the licensing system the embargo may be varied as to extent, and changed from time to time so as to avoid unreasonable hardship.

In explaining the purpose of the proclamation the President points out that it is aimed primarily at conserving our food and other fundamental supplies (particularly before the new crops come in), and then makes this excellent statement about our duty as regards exports to other countries:

It is obviously the duty of the United States in liberating any surplus products over and above our own domestic needs to consider first the necessities of all the nations engaged in war against the Central Empires. As to neutral nations, however, we also recognize our duty. The Government does not wish to hamper them. On the contrary, it wishes and intends, by all fair and equitable means, to co-operate with them in their difficult task of adding from our available surpluses to their own domestic supply and of meeting their pressing necessities or deficits. In conserving the deficits of food supplies its Government means only to fulfill its obvious obligations to assure itself that neutrals are husbanding their own resources and that our supplies will

not become available, either directly or indirectly, to feed the enemy.

Whatever view is taken of the trade rights between neutral countries, it can hardly be questioned that, now that we are at war, the principles above stated are sound and just. Much as we sympathize with the deprivation and even distress which exist in Holland and Sweden, not the United States, but the lawless German warfare, is responsible for that condition. The only way out is to use every legal method to put down that world tyranny, and thereby restore free seas and free commerce.

Nothing is clearer than that a promise by a neutral country adjoining Germany not to sell to Germany war material received from the United States is of not the least avail provided the neutral country continues to sell her own product of the same kind. For instance, a recent report to our Government points out that Sweden, which has always been a large exporter of iron ores, is now selling more ore to Germany than she used to sell to the whole world, and is meanwhile importing iron ore from the United States. So with wheat; if Holland imports abnormal quantities from this country, she may sell her own product to Germany. That some neutrals abused their trade privileges was shown conclusively a year ago or more in the British official statements quoted at the time in *The Outlook*. An improvement has been made—partly voluntary, perhaps, but chiefly due to the British repressive measures. Assurances of still greater restrictions over trade with Germany have been promised by neutral countries, unofficially, and it may rest largely on the course they take whether licenses may be expanded or closely limited. The Dutch Minister in the United States, the Chevalier van Rappard, urges that Holland needs grain sorely, as it has to take care, not only of its own population, but of thousands of interned soldiers and thousands of Belgian refugees. Formerly Holland raised large quantities of wheat, but economists argued that it was better to buy wheat and raise more profitable perishable crops. But when the war came both the wheat supply and the sale of the perishable crops by export were all but cut off. The Minister adds: "We are suffering a great deal and shall go on suffering, but even this is better than war." Perhaps it is if economic reasons only are considered; but there are higher reasons which may yet prevail in Holland if the opportunity to strike a good blow for the world's liberty occurs.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Senator McKellar, of Tennessee, favors adding to the Food Control Bill a provision prohibiting, under penalty of a \$10,000 fine or five years' imprisonment, or both, any sale to the Government of supplies by Government agents or advisers if they have a personal, financial interest in the supplies.

This proposal, if made law, would legislate the civilian members of the Council of National Defense out of office. Those civilians, at the heads of the various boards of the Council, are men of experience in trade and transportation and are interested in business enterprises. But just because they are interested they have, we believe, been specially scrupulous in all contracts.

The other day there was an outbreak in the Senate against the president of a manufacturing concern because he is also acting in an advisory capacity in the Council of National Defense. According to the testimony read, this person's crime was that of offering contracts to the Government, for signature by department officials, for material at a third the price formerly charged to the Government. The price now charged was about two cents above the average for the last ten years, notwithstanding the great increase in the cost of labor and production. Yet the Senate was informed that "the trusts were mobilized at the headquarters of the Council of National Defense," and that "while the boys of the country are being mobilized in the military camps, these gentlemen who control products which the Government must use are making contracts for their own use, enrichment, and benefit."

As a matter of fact, with regard to price, the Council of National Defense has saved millions of money to the Government on its supply contracts, not only because of contracts in many cases self-denying, but also because of doing away, whenever necessary to save time, with the system of competitive

bidding in the open market. In this way the Council has been able to indicate where orders should be placed for quick purchases of equipment and at prices nearly always below those which the wholesale buyer would have to pay, and giving only a fair margin of profit to the manufacturer, thus eliminating the dangers of price inflation which a Government project usually brings in its wake when bids are advertised in the open market. The purchasing bureaus of the Army and Navy Departments fully appreciate this improved situation.

The result has been (1) to the Government a saving of both time and money in providing supplies for a million soldiers; (2) to the Council no well-founded suspicion of graft, and a general verdict of having done at least as much as any other agency to put the Nation in its present condition of preparedness; finally (3), to the public no material increase in price as a result of Government purchases. All this is certainly a contrast from the old slipshod days of "unloading on the Government"—the days of rotten contracts in times of National emergency.

But suppose some contracts now entered into, as being the best under the circumstances in order to avoid fatal delays, are later found to carry excessive prices. The Council has inserted into some contracts naming prices for goods to be delivered to the Government a clause making them subject to revision pending a more accurate ascertainment of costs. Thus a safeguard is established to prevent undue advantage to any contractor. Besides, Congress, by its taxing power, can recoup itself.

In our opinion, the attack in the Senate upon the business men who have been serving the Government on the Council of National Defense, without a cent of pay, gladly giving their own time and strength to the task, is to some extent the attempt to gain political advantage at the expense of a willing mobilization of the country's resources and personnel. We are glad, therefore, to learn that President Wilson does not approve of the addition proposed. In a letter to Senator McKellar the President justly declares that to lose the benefit of the expert advice of the civilian members of the Council would be a calamity.

A GOVERNMENTAL ROMANCE

The safe arrival of American troops on French soil has been a cause for tremendous rejoicing. It has also supplied cause for a widespread dissatisfaction with the manner in which this news was given to the American press.

Word of the arrival of the American troops came to the public through Mr. Creel's Committee on Public Information. Instead of giving to the press a simple paraphrase of the official telegrams (it is impossible, of course, to give out military messages in their original form because of the danger that this may help the spies who may have "listened in" on the original wireless to learn the secrets of our military code), Mr. Creel took it upon himself to issue a flamboyant, romantically worded account of a battle between our convoying war-ships and German U-boats "gathered for what they deemed a slaughter." The present situation is such that the country is still in very great doubt as to what really occurred, and as to how serious was the attack on our transports.

Mr. Creel's method of giving to the public this important item of news has impaired, if not destroyed, whatever confidence the country may have had in the statements issued by the Committee on Public Information, of which he is the head. At the time of his appointment there were many who doubted whether he was temperamentally fitted for his post. The newspapers and the writers of the country, as a whole, generously and charitably refrained from opposing his appointment in the hope, if not the faith, that he might prove to possess a sense of responsibility not previously demonstrated. Mr. Creel has had as long a trial as any man in the present situation has a right to demand.

TO THOSE REGISTERED FOR SELECTIVE SERVICE

The Provost Marshal has issued a circular notifying all registered men to hold themselves in readiness for appearance before the boards which will conduct examinations and consider exemptions.

All registration cards are to be numbered in series running