

GERMANY THE NEXT REPUBLIC?

BY CARL W. ACKERMAN

Bitter Internal Strife Among German Leaders, Military, Naval and Civil, Marked Very Beginning of the Great War—Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg Delayed Mobilization of Army Three Days in Hope of Peace

General von Kluck Confirmed Zimmermann's Statement That the Defeat on the Marne Was Due to the Shortage of Ammunition, Which Created a Scandal in Germany, and the Necessity of Sending Reserves Against Russia

THE German explanation of why they lost the battle of the Marne is interesting not alone because of the explanation of the defeat, but because it shows why the shipment of arms and ammunition from the United States was such a poisonous pill to the army. Shortly after my arrival in Berlin Dr. Alfred Zimmermann, then Under Secretary of State, said the greatest scandal in Germany after the war would be the investigation of the reasons for the shortage of ammunition in September, 1914. He did not deny that Germany was prepared for a great war. He must have known at the time what the Director of the Post and Telegraph knew on the second of August, 1914, when he wrote Announcement No. 3. The German army must have known the same thing, and if it had prepared for war, as every German admits it had, then preparations were made to fight nine nations. But there was one thing which Germany failed to take into consideration, Zimmermann said, and that was the shipment of supplies from the United States.

Then, he added, there were two reasons why the battle of the Marne was lost: one, because there was not sufficient ammunition; and, two, because the reserves were needed to stop the Russian invasion of East Prussia.

I asked him whether Germany did not have enormous stores of ammunition on hand when the war began. He said there was sufficient ammunition for a short campaign, but that the Ministry of War had not mobilized sufficient ammunition factories to keep up the supplies. He said this was the reason for the downfall of General von Herrigen, who was Minister of War at the beginning of hostilities.

Von Kluck Talks of Marne

After General von Kluck was wounded and returned to his villa in Wilmsdorf, a suburb of Berlin, I took a walk with him in his garden and discussed the Marne. He confirmed what Zimmermann stated about the shortage of ammunition and added that he had to give up his reserves to General von Hindenburg, who had been ordered by the Kaiser to drive the Russians from East Prussia.

At the very beginning of the war, although no intimations were permitted to reach the outside world, there was a bitter controversy between the Foreign Office, headed by the Chancellor, Von Bethmann-Hollweg; the Navy Department, headed by Grand Admiral von Tirpitz, and General von Moltke, Chief of the General Staff. The Chancellor delayed mobilization of the German army three days. For this he never has and never will be forgiven by the military authorities. During those stirring days of July and August, when General von Moltke, Von Tirpitz, Von Falkenhayn, Krupp and the Rhine Valley industrial leaders were clamoring for war and for an invasion of Belgium, the Kaiser was being urged by the Chancellor and the Foreign Office to heed the proposals of Sir Edward Grey for a peace conference. But the Kaiser, who was more of a soldier than a statesman, sided with his military friends. The war was on, not only between Germany and the Entente, but between the Foreign Office and the army and navy. This internal fight, which began in July, 1914, became Germany's bitterest struggle and from time to time the odds went from one side to another. The army accused the diplomats of blundering in starting the war. The Foreign Office



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replied that it was the lust for power and victory which poisoned the military leaders which caused the war. Belgium was invaded against the counsel of the Foreign Office. But when the Chancellor was confronted with the actual invasion and the violation of the treaty, he was compelled by force of circumstance, by his position and responsibility to the Kaiser, to make his famous speech in the Reichstag in which he declared, "Emergency knows no law."

But when the allied fleet swept German ships from the high seas and isolated a nation which had considered its international commerce one of its greatest assets, considerable animosity developed between the army and navy. The army accused the navy of stagnation. Von Tirpitz, who had based his whole naval policy upon a great navy, especially upon battleships and cruiser units, was confronted by his military friends with the charge that he was not prepared. As early as 1908 Von Tirpitz had opposed the construction of submarines. Speaking in the Reichstag when naval appropriations were debated, he said Germany should rely upon a battleship fleet and not upon submarines. But when he saw his great inactive navy in German waters he switched to the submarine idea of a blockade of England. In February, 1915, he announced his submarine blockade of England with the consent of the Kaiser, but without the approval of the Foreign Office.

By this time the cry, "Gott strafe England," had become the most popular battle shout in Germany. The Von Tirpitz blockade announcement made this battle cry real. It made him the national hero. The German press, which at that time was under three different censors, turned its entire support overnight to the Von Tirpitz plan. The Navy Department, which even then was not only anti-British, but anti-American, wanted to sink every ship on the high seas. When the United States lodged its protest on February 12 the German navy wanted to ignore it. The Foreign Office was inclined to listen to President Wilson's arguments. Even the people, while they were enthusiastic for a submarine war, did not want to estrange America if they could prevent it. The Von Tirpitz press bureau, which knew that public opposition to its plan could be overcome by raising the cry that America was not neutral in aiding the Allies with supplies, launched an anti-American campaign. It came to a climax one night when Ambassador Gerard was attending a theatre party. As he entered the box he was recognized by a group of Germans, who shouted insulting remarks because he spoke English. Then some one else remarked that America was not neutral by shipping arms and ammunition.

The Foreign Office apologized the next day, but the navy did not. And, instead of listening to the advice of Secretary of State von Jagow, the navy sent columns of inspired articles to the news-

papers attacking President Wilson and telling the German people that the United States had joined the Entente in spirit, if not in action.

The Gulf Between Kiel and Berlin

At the beginning of the war even the Socialist party in the Reichstag voted the Government credits. The press and the people unanimously supported the Government because there was a very terrorizing fear that Russia was about to invade Germany, and that England and France were leagued together to crush the Fatherland. Until the question of the submarine warfare came up the division of opinion which had already developed between the army and navy clique and the Foreign Office was not general among the people. Although the army had not taken Paris, a great part of Belgium and eight provinces of northern France were occupied and the Russians had been driven from East Prussia. The army was satisfied with what it had done and had great plans for the future. Food and economic conditions had changed very little as compared to the changes which were to take place before 1917. Supplies were flowing into Germany from all neutral European countries. Even England and Russia were selling goods to Germany indirectly, through neutral countries. Considerable English merchandise, as well as American products, came in by way of Holland because English business men were making money by the transactions and because the English Government had not yet discovered leaks in the blockade. Two-thirds of the butter supply in Berlin was coming from Russia. Denmark was sending copper. Norway was sending fish and valuable oils. Sweden was sending horses and cattle. Italy was sending fruit. Spanish sardines and olives were reaching German merchants, and there was no reason to be dissatisfied with the way the war was going. And, besides, the German people hated their enemies so that the leaders could count upon continued support for almost an indefinite period. The cry of "Hun and Barbarian" was answered with the battle cry of "Gott strafe England."

Optimism at Front

The latter part of April, on my first trip to the front, I dined at great headquarters (Grosse Haupt Quartier) in Charleville, France, with Major Nicolai, chief of the intelligence department of the general staff. The next day, in company with other correspondents, we were guests of General von Moehl and his staff at Peronne. From Peronne we went to the Somme front to St. Quentin, to Namur and Brussels. The soldiers were enthusiastic and happy. There was plenty of food and considerable optimism. But the confidence in victory was never so great as it was immediately after the sinking of the Lusitania. That marked the crisis in the future trend of the war.

Up to this time the people had heard very little about the fight between the navy and the Foreign Office. But gradually rumors spread. While there was previously no outlet for public opinion, the Lusitania issue was debated more extensively and with more vigor than the White Books, which were published to explain the causes of the war.

With the universal feeling of self-confidence, it was but natural that the people should side with the navy in demanding an unrestricted submarine warfare. When Admiral von Bachmann gave the order to First Naval Lieutenant Otto Steinbrink to sink the Lusitania he knew the navy was ready to defy the United States or any other country which might object. He knew, too, that Von Tirpitz was very close to the Kaiser and could count upon the Kaiser's support in whatever he did. The navy believed the torpedoing of the Lusitania would so frighten and terrorize the world that neutral shipping would become timid and enemy peoples would be impressed by Germany's might on the seas. Ambassador von Bernstorff had been ordered by the Foreign Office to put notices in the American papers warning Americans off these ships. The Chancellor and Secretary von Jagow knew there was no way to stop the Admiralty, and they wanted to avoid, if possible, the loss of American lives.

The storm of indignation which encircled the globe when reports were printed that more than a thousand persons lost their lives on the Lusitania found a sympathetic echo in the Berlin Foreign Office. "Another navy blunder," the officials said—confidentially. Foreign Office officials tried to conceal their distress, because the officials knew the only thing they could do now was to make preparation for an apology and try to excuse in the best possible way what the navy had done. On the seventeenth of May, like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, came President Wilson's first Lusitania note.



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"Recalling the humane and enlightened attitude hitherto assumed by the Imperial German Government in matters of international life, particularly with regard to the freedom of the seas, having learned to recognize German views and German influence in the field of international obligations as always engaged on the side of justice and humanity," the note read, "and having understood the instructions of the Imperial German Government to its naval commanders to be upon the same plane of humane action as those prescribed by the naval codes of other nations, the Government of the United States is loath to believe—it cannot now bring itself to believe—that these acts, so absolutely contrary to the rules and practices and spirit of modern warfare, could have the countenance or sanction of that great Government. * * * Manifestly, submarines cannot be used against merchantmen, as the last few weeks have shown, without an inevitable violation of many sacred principles of justice and humanity. American citizens act within their indisputable rights in taking their ships and in traveling wherever their legitimate business calls them upon the high seas, and exercise those rights in what should be a well-justified confidence that their lives will not be endangered by acts done in clear violation of universally acknowledged international obligations and certainly in the confidence that their Government will sustain them in the exercise of their rights."

And then the note which Mr. Gerard handed Von Jagow concluded with these words:

"It (the United States) confidently expects, therefore, that the Imperial German Government will disavow the acts of which the United States complains, that they will make reparation as far as reparation is possible for injuries which are without measure, and that they will take immediate steps to prevent the recurrence of anything so obviously subversive of the principles of warfare, in which the Imperial German Government in the past so wisely and so firmly contended. The Government and people of the United States look to the Imperial German Government for just, prompt and enlightened action in this vital matter. * * * Expression of regret and offers of reparation in the case of neutral ships, by mistake, while they may satisfy international obligations if a loss of life results, cannot justify or excuse a practice the necessary effect of which is to subject neutral nations or neutral persons to new and immeasurable risks. The Imperial German Government will not expect the Government of the United States to omit any word or any act necessary to the performance of its sacred duty of maintaining the rights of the United States and its citizens, and of safeguarding their free exercise and enjoyment."

(CONTINUED TOMORROW)

THE AMERICAN SOLDIER RESORTS TEMPORARILY TO THE CRAYON TO "TRIM THE KAISER"



LESE MAJESTE HAS NO FEARS FOR THIS SOLDIER-CARTOONIST

If beating "Fritz" were as easy for the American army as it is for this Sammie, that feat would be speedily accomplished. Of course, before the Kaiser gets his trimmings as per these specifications, some one will first have to capture him, and that is the coup the boys in khaki are setting out to perform in effect, if not literally.



AN ANGEL IN RED CROSS GUISE

Like her sisters in the famous "Battalion of Death," Mme. Ida Rubinstein, famous Russian dancer, is doing her best to stem the tide of German imperialism. While not so martial in nature, the duty of conducting a war hospital in Paris, which she has taken upon herself, is just as valuable to the Allies as that performed by her sisters in arms.