

# GERMANY THE NEXT REPUBLIC?

BY CARL WACKERMAN

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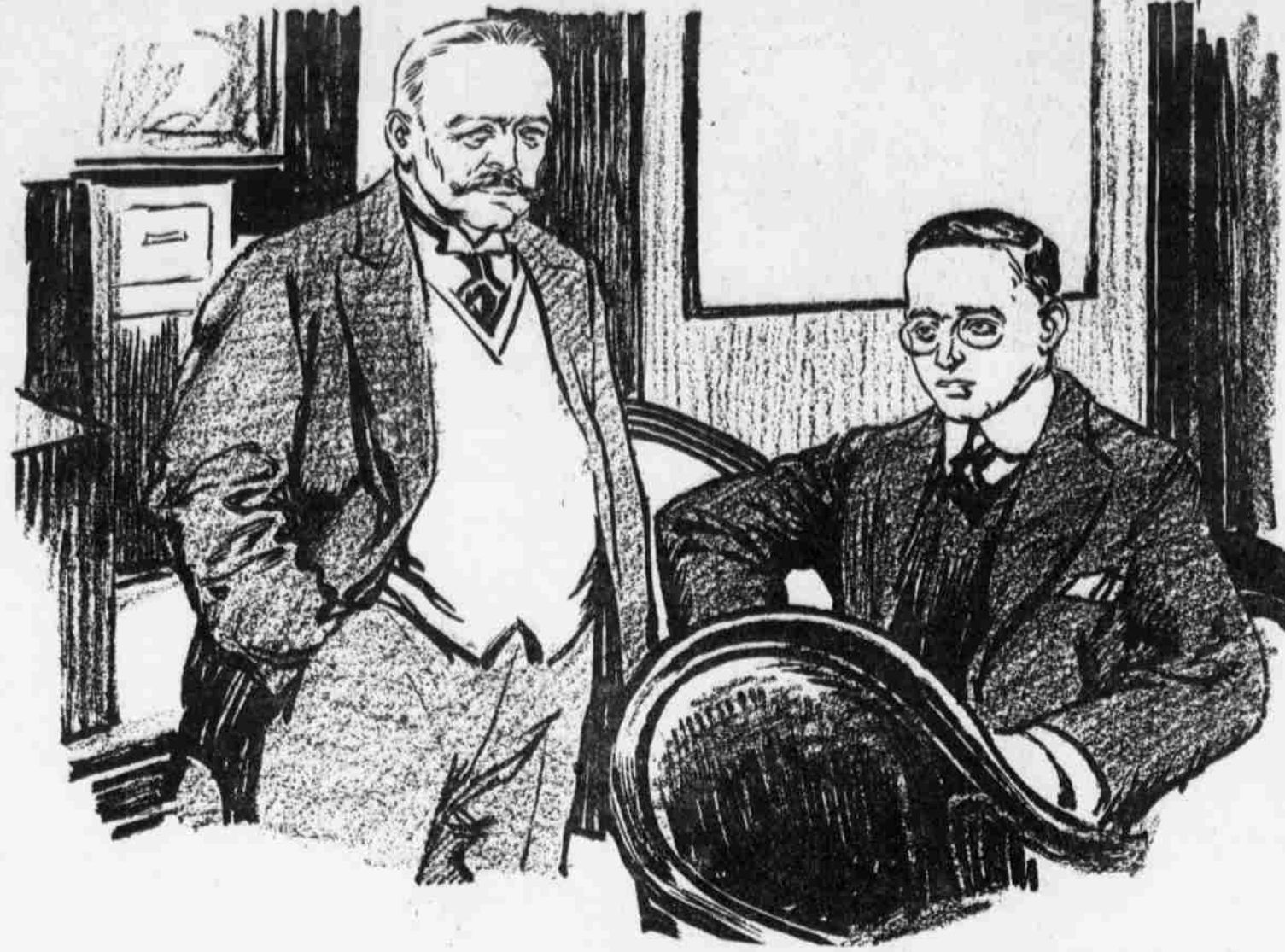
**The Industrial Barons and Munitions Profiteers Were the Chief Allies of the Unlimited Submarine Warfare Advocates and Exerted All Possible Influence to Hinder the Conciliatory Work of Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg**

**Nevertheless, the Socialists Were a Factor to Be Considered, and When These Radicals Met in a National Convention the Country Watched Expectantly for Some Definite Outcome—The Socialists Represented Real Public Opinion**

WHILE these public discussions were going on the fight on the Chancellor began to grow. It was evident that when the Reichstag met again in September there would be a bitter and perhaps a decisive fight on Von Bethmann-Hollweg. The division in Germany became so pronounced that people forgot for a time the old party lines and the newspapers and party leaders spoke of the "Bethmann party" and the "Von Tirpitz party." Whether the submarines should be used ruthlessly against all shipping was the issue which divided public sentiment. The same democratic forces which had been supporting the Chancellor in other fights again lined up with the Foreign Office. The reactionaries supported Major Bassermann, who really led the fight against the Chancellor. During this period the Chancellor and the Foreign Office saw that the longer the war lasted the stronger the Von Tirpitz party would become, because the people were growing more desperate and were enthused by the propaganda cry of the navy, "Down with England!" The Chancellor and the Foreign Office tried once more to get the world to talk about peace. After the presidential nominations in America the press began to discuss the possibilities of American peace intervention. Every one believed that the campaign and elections in America would have an important effect on the prospects of peace. Theodore Wolff, editor of the Berlin Tageblatt, who was the Chancellor's chief supporter in newspaper circles, began the publication of a series of articles to explain that in the event of the election of Charles E. Hughes Germany would be able to count upon more assistance from America and upon peace. At the time the Allies were pounding away at the Somme and every effort was being made to bring about some kind of peace discussions when these battles were over.

### Hindering the Conciliatory Program

On September 20 a convention of Socialists was held in Berlin for the purpose of uniting the Socialist party in support of the Chancellor. The whole country was watching the Socialist discussions, because every one felt that the Socialist party represented the real opinion of the people. After several days of discussion all factional differences were patched up and the Socialists were ready to present a solid front when the fight came in the Reichstag on September 28. On the twenty-seventh Berlin hotels began to buzz with excitement over the possibilities of overthrowing the Chancellor. The fight was led by National Liberals and Center party groups. It was proposed by Doctor Coerting, an industrial leader from Hanover, to move a vote of lack of confidence in the Chancellor. Coerting was supported by the big ammunition interests and by the Von Tirpitz crowd. Before the Reichstag convened the Chancellor went to Great Headquarters for a final conference with the Kaiser and Field Marshal von Hindenburg. Before he left it looked as if the Chancellor would be overthrown; but when he returned he summoned the Reichstag leaders who were supporting him and several editors of Liberal newspapers. The Chancellor told them that Von Hindenburg would support him. The next day editorials appeared in a number of newspapers saying that Von Hindenburg and the Chancellor were united in their ideas. This was the most successful strategic move the Chancellor had made, for the public had such great confidence in Von Hindenburg that when it learned that he was opposed to Von Tirpitz



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the backbone of opposition to the Chancellor was broken. On the twenty-eighth, as Von Bethmann-Hollweg appeared in the Reichstag, instead of facing a hostile and belligerent assembly, he faced members who were ready to support him in anything he did. The Chancellor, however, realized that he could take some of the thunder out of the opposition by making a strong statement against England. "Down with England!" the popular cry, was the keynote of the Chancellor's remarks. In this one speech he succeeded in uniting, for a time at least, public sentiment and the political parties in support of the Government.

A few days afterward I saw Major Bassermann at his office in the Reichstag and asked him whether the campaign for an unlimited submarine warfare would be resumed after the action in the Reichstag in expressing confidence in the Chancellor. He said:

"That must be decided by the Foreign Office, the Ministry of Marine and the General Staff. England is our chief enemy and we must recognize this and defeat her."

With his hands in his pockets, his face looking down, he paced his office and began a bitter denunciation of the neutrality of the United States. I asked him whether he favored the submarine warfare even if it brought about a break with the United States.

"We wish to live in peace and friendship with America," he began, "but undoubtedly there is bitter feeling here because American supplies and ammunition enable our enemies to continue the war. If America should succeed in forcing England to obey international law, restore freedom of the seas and proceed with American energy against England's brutalization of neutrals it would have a decisive influence on the political situation between the two countries. If America does not do this, then we must do it with our submarines."

### A Trip to the Industrial Centers

In October I was invited by the Foreign Office to go with a group of correspondents to Essen, Cologne and the Rhine Valley industrial centers. In Essen I met Baron von Bodenhausen and other directors of Krupp. In Dusseldorf at the Industrie Klub I dined with the steel magnates of Germany, and at Homburg-on-the-Rhine I saw August Thyssen, one of the richest men in Germany and the man who owns one-tenth of Germany's coal and iron fields. The most impressive thing about this journey was what the men said about the necessity for unlimited warfare. Every man I met was opposed to the Chancellor. They hated him because he delayed mobilization at the beginning of the war. They stated that they had urged the invasion of Belgium, because if Belgium had not been invaded immediately France could have seized the Rhine Valley and made it impossible for Germany to manufacture war munitions and thereby to fight a war. They said they were in favor of an unlimited, ruthless submarine warfare against England and all ships going to the British Isles.

"Do you think Germany wants war with America?" I asked Thyssen.

"Never!" was his emphatic response. "First, because we have enemies enough, and secondly, because in peace times our relations with America are always most friendly. We want them to continue so after the war."

Thyssen's remarks could be taken on their face value were it not for the fact that the week before we arrived in these cities General Ludendorff, Von Hindenburg's chief assistant and co-worker, was here to get the industrial leaders to manufacture more ammunition. Von Falkenhayn had made many enemies in this section because he cut down the ammunition manufacturing until these

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men were losing money. So the first thing Von Hindenburg did was to double all orders for ammunition and war supplies and send Ludendorff to the industrial centers to make peace with the men who were opposed to the Government.

Thus from May to November German politics went through a period of transformation. No one knew exactly what would happen—there were so many conflicting opinions. Political parties, industrial leaders and the press were so divided it was evident that something would have to be done or the German political organization would strike a rock and go to pieces. The Socialists were still demanding election reforms during the war. The National Liberals were intriguing for a Reichstag committee to have authority with the Foreign Office in dealing with all matters of international affairs. The landowners, who were losing money because the Government was confiscating so much food, were only criticizing Von Bethmann-Hollweg, but holding back as much food as they could for higher prices. The industrial leaders, who had been losing money because Von Falkenhayn had decreased ammunition orders, were only partially satisfied by Von Hindenburg's step, because they realized that unless the war was maintained the Government would not need such supplies indefinitely.

America und der Vatikan



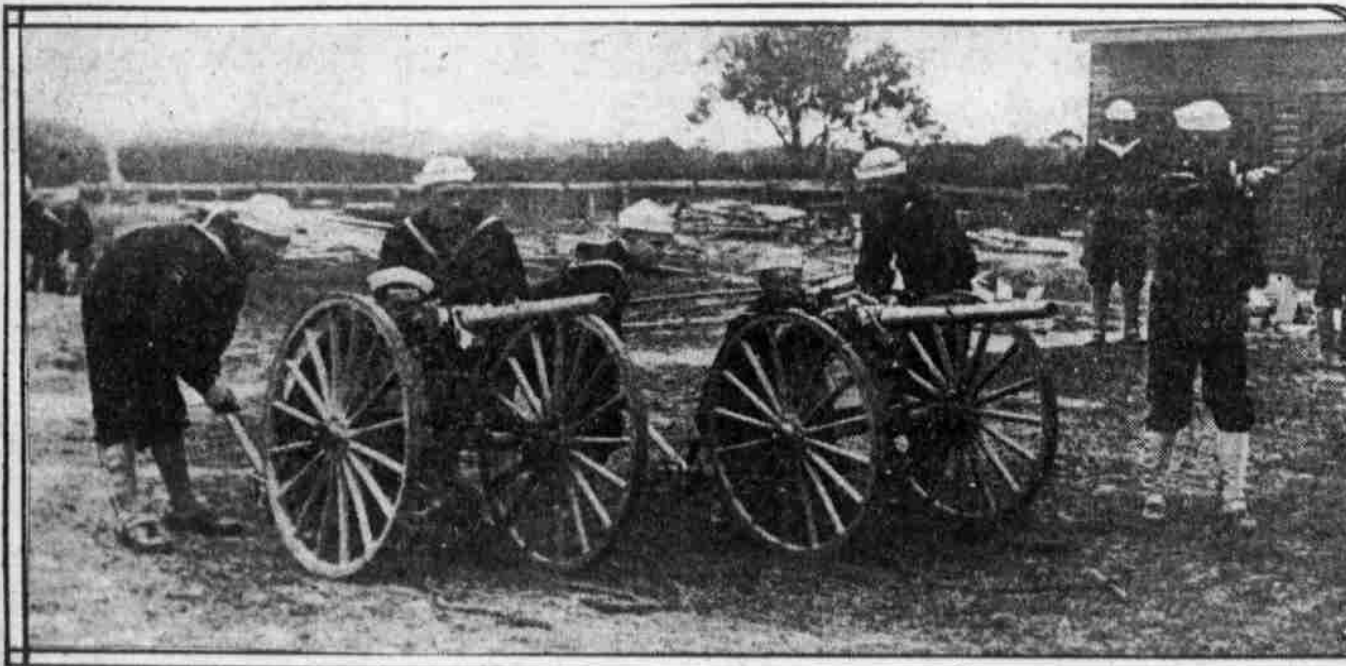
"Simplicissimus," a leading German comic magazine, printed this cartoon in which Pope Benedict is represented as asking President Wilson, "How can my angel fly, Mr. President, when you always put shells in her pockets?"

saw, too, that the attitude of President Wilson had so little standing they still had in the neutral world that when Germany won the war in a decisive way, their world commerce would disappear forever and they would be forced to begin it over after the war.

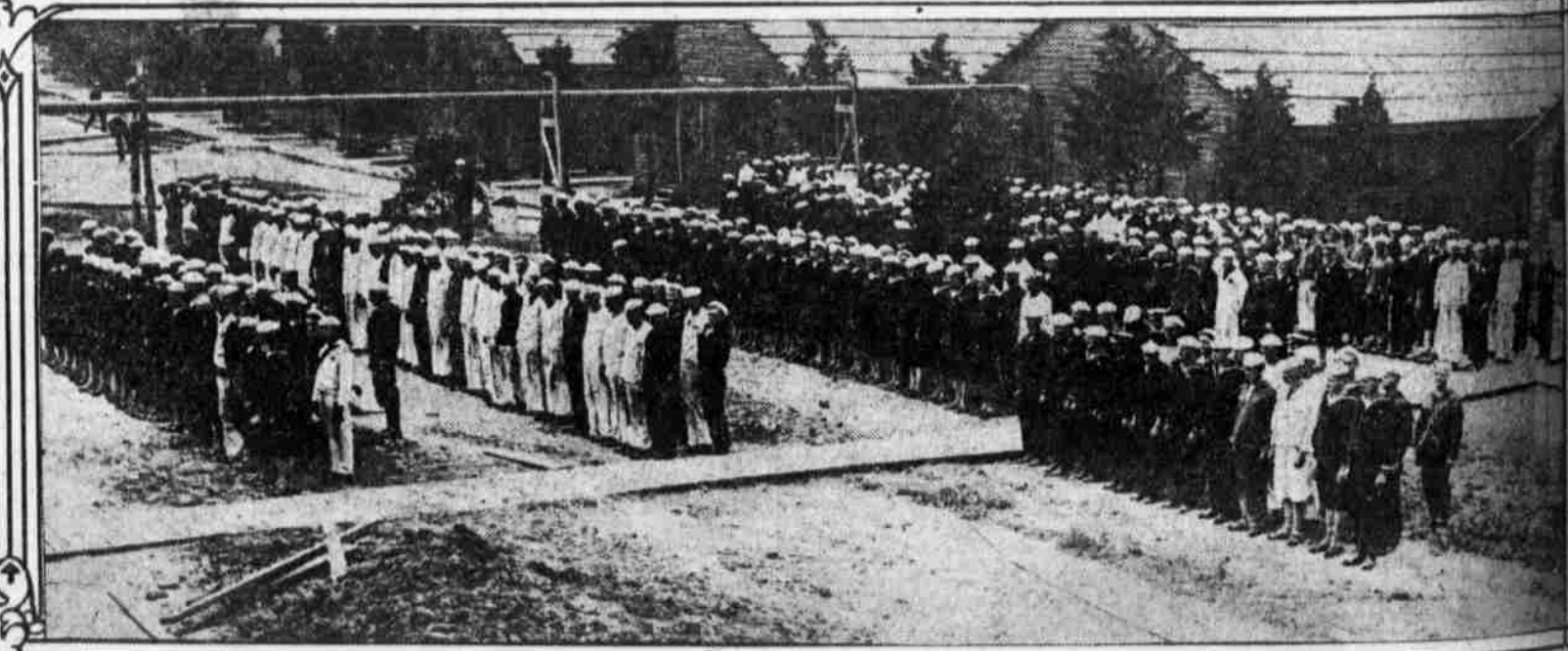
Faced by this predicament, they demanded a ruthless submarine warfare against all shipping in order that not only England, but every other Power should suffer, because the more ships and property of the enemies destroyed the more their chances for the rest of the world would be equalized when the war was over. The conditions were becoming worse, the people were becoming more dissatisfied; losses on the battlefield were touching nearly every family. Depression was growing. Every one felt that something had to be done and done immediately.

(CONTINUED TOMORROW)

## THESE ARE STRENUOUS DAYS FOR THE NAVAL COAST DEFENSE RESERVISTS NEAR CAPE MAY



RESERVISTS AT DAILY DRILL WITH ONE-POUND RAPID FIRERS  
Thorough acquaintance with these guns is required for defense of the coast against a hostile landing party. The reservists shown are stationed at the Wissahickon barracks on the old Ford Farm at Sewell's Point.



OCCUPANTS OF THE WISSAHICKON BARRACKS IN BATTALION FORMATION  
The training of the Naval Coast Defense Reservists is as varied as it is interesting and ranges from the seamanship drill to practical parade formations. In the background are the barracks.



RESERVISTS BUILDING OBSERVATION HOUSES FOR THE RIFLE RANGE  
And making a good job of it, too. A few months ago these lads were book clerks, salaried men and the like. Before enlisting most of them were unused to manual labor.



"HEAVING THE LEAD"  
A task more strenuous than it looks performed from one of the many platforms used in lieu of ships.



AN OUTDOOR CLASS IN THE MYSTERIES OF KNOTS AND SPLICES  
The seamanship drill is one of the most interesting experiences of the erstwhile landlubbers who have enlisted to protect our coast lines.