

VIEW FROM THE WATCH TOWER

WAR MAY END IN EXHAUSTION

THE renowned German Socialist paper Vorwaerts calls on warring nations to announce their aims and makes the following stirring appeal:

"Premier Asquith's exposition of the objects of the war last Fall was lacking in clearness and full of phrases, but at any rate, it was more specific than his assurance now that England is determined to continue the war to a successful end and to exhaust all her resources to attain the common highest goal. Less hazy is France's new man, Briand, in stating the object of driving the enemy out of the occupied provinces, including Alsace-Lorraine; but Briand, too, soon loses himself in clouds of rhetoric when he says that France will not make peace till justice is reestablished by victory and all the guarantees of a lasting peace obtained.

"One would think that after fifteen months of the world's most terrible war, statesmen would be able to give a more specific answer to the question, and make it clearer to the peoples for what purpose they are shedding their blood – what goal has been set, and for what prize they are struggling. The defense of the Fatherland, freedom, justice, kultur – all that no longer suffices today. These are words which each may interpret as he likes, and it is really high time to speak more intelligently and to the point.

"It seems almost as though both parties to the war feared to betray their plans to each other, for it is not only France and England that shroud their war goal and peace conditions in fog; the German Government is no less reticent; and still more, whenever expressing itself as to the purposes of the war, confines itself to generalities which may be in place in firing soldiers with

courage before a charge, but which do not serve to disseminate the necessary clarity as to Germany's final intentions, either at home or abroad.

"Stories about peace wishes and peace efforts of the German Government are being officially branded as false. Von Bulow is in Switzerland for rest and recreation, and Solf [the Colonial Secretary] only wants to visit his dear friends in Holland and once again eat good white bread. It isn't true, either, that the imperial Chancellor, in presence of Tom, Dick, or Harry, named the acquisition of Belgium to the Meuse line, the annexation of Courland, and 30,000,000,000 marks indemnity as peace conditions. Well, for the past twelve months we have heard what isn't true; can they take it badly of us if we would like for once to hear what is true, what the German Government really does consider its object in the war game?

"It cannot be the case forever that battle after battle is fought, that great armies are led against one another in new theatres of war, without the people learning what has been attained, and what still must be achieved in order that the peace bells may ring.

"The others, they tell us, must sue for peace, for we are the victors; but unfortunately the others don't consider themselves vanquished, and no result is reached. The war continues indefinitely because both parties fear to place limits to their demands and speak them out for fear that the announcement of the object for which they are fighting will be interpreted as a sign of weakness. It may go so far that this war will end with the complete exhaustion of all parties, because no one cared to say under what specific conditions it was prepared to end it. If this is to be prevented, then all the Governments must at least leave the realm of rhetorical generalities, and confess their concrete programs, and if, confused by the changing fortunes of war, they are not able any longer to picture to themselves clearly the objects

of the war, let them open up the floodgates of public discussion. Then we shall soon have clarity and, we hope, peace."

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Too much courage, too much pride, is surely leading those in control of the world's affairs – in harmony with the Divine prediction – on to exhaustion. We behold the ripe manhood, the flower of Europe, going down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat – the Valley of Death – the cemetery valley of Jerusalem. (Joel 3:2,12.) And while we see the wealth of the world being wasted, our hearts would be so very, very sick if we did not have the assurance of God's Word respecting the grand outcome of universal blessing through Messiah's Kingdom, which is to follow the great turmoil of Armageddon! Well did Jesus predict that men's hearts would be failing them for fear and for looking after the things approaching! Well did He say to us as His followers, "When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your deliverance draweth nigh!" (Luke 21:25-28.) We rejoice not in the trouble, which surely saddens every tender heart. But we do rejoice that, since the world will be prepared for the grand change of government in no other way than through "a Time of Trouble such as never was since there was a nation" (Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21), Messiah is about to stand forth, clothed with Divine power, to take to Himself His great power and reign for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

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