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PEACE OPPORTUNITIES, 1914-1917

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CHAPTER I

Europe was able to pass successfully through the danger periods, 1904-5, 1908, 1911, 1912-13 without recourse to a major war. It is curious that the Powers could muddle through a decade of friction and not be able to do the same in 1914 when they met with a crisis of no greater intensity. It is especially interesting and rewarding to compare Britain's behavior from 1905-1914, and Germany's from 1909-1914 because of the continuity of office of two men: most of the time during those years, Sir Edward Grey, as Foreign Minister, and Bethmann-Hollweg, as Chancellor, formed the foreign policies of those states. It would seem reasonable to conclude that the policies of Britain and Germany should resemble their predecessors, but this was not to be the case.

In the early 1900's there were two primary issues at the seat of the friction; a larger issue was apparent behind the French-German disputes in Morocco -- what position was Germany to assume on the Continent? The second issue lay in the disposition of the Balkans, an issue to be determined by Austria-Hungary and Russia.

In 1905 after Germany had protested to French infiltration into Morocco, the bellicose French Premier, Delcassé, intimated that France was ready to fight and that England would stand behind her. The British quickly denied the statement and the Delcassé Government fell. The matter was resolved at Algeciras in 1906 when Britain and France recognized German interests in Northwest Africa while
France emerged with the lion's share of the profits.

In 1911, Britain again made her position clear, stood behind France, though not fully, and forced a humiliated Germany to retire from Agadir. This was accomplished only with British direction of French foreign policy. Britain had stood by France when that country could not afford a diplomatic defeat. Germany profited most by peace. Grey had perceived the German intent for a diplomatic victory only in the Moroccan disputes.

Meanwhile, Germany and Austria tangled with Russia in the Balkans. The danger of the problem of Central Europe was that while Bismarck recognized its existence, he failed to solve it. He built a strong German State which survived even the holocaust of the World War, but no one can deny that the German Empire was designed only to strengthen Prussia and the Hohenzollerns. Bismarck's solution to the problem was purely a diplomatic one which bound Austria and Germany together by treaty. Had he tried to solve the Central European problem, perhaps through a strong federation, the history of 1914 might have been different. In Austria the Treaty meant support in her Balkan difficulties. From the first, therefore, it meant different things to the two partners. This refusal to cope with common problems gives a key to the situation. All depended on whether leadership resided in Berlin or in Vienna as to what the union would accomplish. Under Bismarck, Berlin was the leader, but this policy was not adhered to by his successors. The Treaty of 1879 was neither German nor Austrian; it was Austro-German, which meant it had to solve the
Central European problem.

Count Bülow continued Bismarck's subtle and devious method of handling Austria. Bethmann-Hollweg tried to do so and succeeded at first. The Balkan wars of 1912-13 confused the alignment of States but a settlement was eventually reached. Though in the nature of a compromise and an unstable one at that, the Treaty of Bucharest nevertheless tided the powers over a tense period. The reason for Bethmann-Hollweg's early success in mitigating these Balkan quarrels was Germany's leadership of Austria-Hungary. Bismarck's alliance with his neighbor had always presupposed German leadership of the two. Von Bülow has since written, "In 1908, I had Austria well in hand. I had made quite certain that Vienna would not overstep the limits imposed on her." It was Grey's error that he did not see the changes between Austro-German relations under Bülow and those under Bethmann-Hollweg.

The spring of 1914 was calm enough. Britain was occupied with the Home Rule Bill. France was withstanding a flux of ministers and a scandalous trial. Russia was engrossed in peasant unrest and a rectification of her deficiencies, so glaringly exposed in her late war with Japan.

"With skill and clarity of vision, peace could have been kept in 1914, as we had managed to keep it in 1888, in 1905, in 1909." Hindsight is better than foresight. By August 1, 1914, the war had begun. What were the moves made to realize peace and why were they so rewarded?
The first peace move was initiated by the United States before war was declared, even before the climax of events was reached at Sarajevo. Though the first Wilson Administration had primarily concerned itself with domestic issues, Colonel Edward M. House, as unofficial advisor to the President, had interested himself in foreign affairs.

Edward M. House had been well schooled in Texas politics. Successfully guiding four men to the governorship, he had attained considerable political recognition. Just as he was later to know Woodrow Wilson, he was a close personal friend as well as political associate of these men. Because he accepted the nominal chairmanship of only one campaign, the House name was not known to the general public. However, his appearance upon the national scene was no surprise to politicians. Wilson may or may not have heard of him before the Governor became interested in the Presidency. It is certain though that House had already decided upon Wilson as Democratic candidate for the 1912 election before the two met. On November 24, 1911, House and Wilson met at the Gotham Hotel, New York City. The nature of the friendship begun at this date was clearly revealed with the publication of the House papers in 1926. House wrote in 1916, "From that first meeting and up to today, I have been in as close touch with Woodrow Wilson as with any man I have ever known. The first hour we spent together proved to each of us that there was a sound basis for a fast friendship. We found ourselves in such com-
plete sympathy, in so many ways, that we soon learned to know what each was thinking without either having expressed himself."

House sensed the danger of the European alliance system and felt he correctly saw the position which the United States should assume on the continent. Even before Wilson's inauguration, House aspired to adjust the grievances between England and Germany. His plan was to visit the foreign offices, probing for a common ground on which England and Germany might meet. He seems to have had nothing more specific in mind, although he did mention that a direction of energy toward developing tropical areas and China might ease the tension between the two.

On December 12, 1913, House talked with Wilson who agreed to the trip abroad. It was decided that the Colonel should carry no credentials, placing himself in an ideal position; as an unofficial representative of the President, he could be received into the confidence of European diplomacy, while the United States remained immune to responsibility for his acts.

House wrote Wilson, "I am careful always not to involve you. Opinions and purposes I give as my own, and you come in no further than what may be assumed because of our relations."

The United States' Ambassador to Berlin, Gerard, arranged a meeting between the Kaiser and House at the Palace in Potsdam. The occasion was the celebration of the Schrippenfest when selected soldiers from all regiments were given a dinner at which white bread instead of the usual black was served, and at which the Emperor ate
and drank with the common soldier. After dinner, Wilhelm and House engaged in a half hour discussion of generalities. The tenor of the interview was pleasing enough. The Emperor seemed occupied with a fear of Japan and Russia, rather than of Britain and France. The shipbuilding program had been published and when it was completed, he said, no more keels would be laid. England had no reason to fear the building of a formidable Navy. On the contrary she should be grateful for the additional safety from Russia which a strong Navy offered. "Any peace suggestion that was compatible with German safety would be entertained." The Kaiser later added that he would be pleased to receive a report of House's findings in London. With this encouragement, Gerard and House returned to Berlin.

Except for von Tirpitz, German officials seemed sufficiently interested in an Anglo-German understanding for House to write Wilson, "I am very happy over what has been accomplished and am eager to get to London to see what can be done there."

It was impossible to begin discussion in England immediately. The social season was in full swing and the various commitments imposed upon House were irritating to a man with a purpose and limited time in which to achieve it. From snatches passed over the luncheon table, House gathered that Edward Grey was personally enthusiastic but that Britain's hands were tied. The European Alliances precluded giving a free hand to any one participant. The suggestion that Grey meet the Kaiser at Kiel at an early date was approved and promptly
pigeon-holed. The British Cabinet was concerned with the Irish crisis and the opportunity for frank discussion slipped by. This habit of delay was later to prove the undoing of several opportunities for peace. When war broke out, House wrote, "It is all a bad business, and just think how near we came to making such a catastrophe impossible. If England had moved a little faster and had let me go back to Germany, the thing perhaps could have been done."

After the assassination of Sarajevo, ironically enough, the British Foreign office responded to the suggestion of House. On July 3, House wrote Wilson, "...Sir Edward Grey would like me to convey to the Kaiser the impressions I have obtained from my several discussions with the Government in regards to a better understanding between the nations of Europe and to try to get a reply before I leave." By the time the report suggested by this message reached Berlin, Wilhelm II was cruising in the Baltic.

The newspapers carry no notions of the House visits to Berlin and London. Secrecy was probably maintained so that any German and English armament commitments which might result could be made before publication could reopen controversies to these agreements. Page wrote that publication was withheld to prevent bias against Germany if the House picture of the belligerent frame of mind in Berlin were contrasted to the "pacific frame of mind, entirely unsuspicious of Germany" that he found in London.

The peace plan, if such a nebulous thing could be called a plan, had failed. Under Sir William Tyrrell's expert tutelage, the plan
to develop waste places had grown into the mammoth idea of an Anglo-German rapprochement. It appears that the House mission was hastily undertaken anyway and had no chance of success at the outset because the "opportunity" for an Anglo-German understanding existed only in the mind of Colonel House. It seems fantastic that this slight figure could have hoped to solve the problem which many men had already attacked so unsuccessfully. House himself attributed his failure to British inaction when time was of the essence. It was curious how Grey and his colleagues could parry all of the Colonel's questions which called for a definite commitment. Most often, the stock reply was that France would have to be consulted and that she would never understand what could possibly prompt an agreement with "Militarism." This was all very true; Briand had been invited to meet the Kaiser at Kiel in the Spring of 1914, just as Grey had been, and he had refused the invitation also. Of her own volition, France could hardly have acquiesced to a rapprochement. Still, there remained a faint odor over the whole thing; that the Colonel should so frequently meet this "vagueness" of the British when matters reached the point of decision and never interpret it correctly is difficult to believe, but nevertheless true.
CHAPTER II

The first move toward peace had ended in failure. With the slaying of the Archduke on June 28, an actual crisis had been provoked. Feeling over the assassination developed slowly in every capital except Vienna. But by the last of July the peculiar inertia which had characterized the first three weeks of the month had been replaced by frenzy. No one had known of the carte blanche Germany had given Austria on July 5. Not until the 23 of July was the critical nature of the situation realized. On that date Austria sent her ultimatum to Serbia, the terms of which were clearly incompatible with Serbian sovereignty. What hope there was for a rapprochement in the last week in July lay in three distinct peace plans. The chronology of these plans may be briefly given.

The first plan was submitted when Austria refused to lengthen the forty-eight hour time limit allowed Serbia to reply to the Monarchy's note of July 23. Sir Edward Grey, on July 24, suggested that the four Powers least concerned -- England, Germany, France, and Italy -- undertake to mediate between Russia and Austria. The British Government repeated the plan twice, with no variations.

Because Berlin and Vienna could not tolerate a European conference settling an Austro-Serbian affair, Russia sought to introduce a second method of settlement. Through her Minister, Sazonov, she proposed that Petersburg and Vienna open direct negotiations. This was done on the 23rd also.
A third means was transmitted over the cables the same day. German Ambassador to London, Lichnowsky, wired certain data to his Government about a conference he had had with Sir Edward Grey. Grey told the Ambassador that the Serbian Chargé d'Affaires at Rome had said that Serbia would be prepared to comply with Articles 5 and 6 of the Austrian Note, with a few small changes. As Serbia and Austria could not enter upon direct negotiations, Grey hoped that the matter might be submitted to Serbia, the Great Powers acting with her in an advisory capacity.

In the brief period of eight days, three specific means of settlement had been proposed, two by Sir Edward Grey and the third by Sazonov. Asquith, then Prime Minister of Great Britain, has written, "the situation was not in itself more difficult, nor did it seem - after the Serbian reply on July 25 to the Austrian ultimatum, in which every essential point was conceded - less susceptible of accommodation than that which had been successfully handed by a similar procedure in 1912-13." Wherein, then, did failure lie?

Sir Edward Grey made his proposal for a conference of the same sort as had settled the Austro-Russian dispute in 1913, as soon as he knew the contents of the ultimatum to Serbia. In 1913, the Conference of Ambassadors at London had held the confidence of Europe and had saved its peace. Grey was sure that the same could be done in 1914 if the Governments would rely upon the same men to effect a compromise. His proposal met with varied reactions. In
Berlin, Wilhelm II clearly defined his position: "This is superfluous, as Austria has already made matters plain to Russia, and Grey has nothing else to propose. I will not join in it unless Austria expressly asks me to, which is not likely. In vital questions, and those of honor, one does not consult with others." Apparently, this crisis was to be handled as Count Bülow had successfully managed the Bosnian affair in 1908 — with the clanking of sabre. Many assign little importance to notations of the Emperor, like these, written in the margin of cables. Still, there is no question of his influence over the weak: Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg. It is evident that Berlin did not pass the first conference proposal to Austria at all. The time lag between Grey's initiation of his proposal on July 23rd and Bethmann's response on July 27th is inexplicable. Bethmann-Hollweg wired Lichnowsky, "Had no knowledge here up to the present of Sir Edward Grey's proposal to hold a conference, as we would not be able to summon Austria before a European court of justice in her case with Serbia." That same day, the proposal was sent on to Vienna, with the accompanying statement which materially damages the German case. Since we have already refused one English proposal, it is impossible for us to wave a limine this suggestion also. By refusing every proposition for mediation, we should be held responsible for the conflagration by the whole world, and be set forth as the original instigators of the war.... Therefore, we cannot refuse the mediator's role and must submit the English
proposal to the consideration of the Vienna cabinet, especially as London and Paris continue to make their influence felt in Petersburg." Clearly, Germany had stood by the "free hand" she had given Austria until the date of this wire. It was too late to counsel moderation, however.

Both France and Russia agreed to the conference scheme. Sazonov argued its appropriateness on the grounds that Serbia had undertaken certain obligations toward Europe after the Bosnian crisis; therefore, with no slur on Austrian status as a great Power, the method was justified.

The second plan, of direct negotiations between Petersburg and Vienna, was the simplest and might have been the most effective. It was also the most short lived. On the 28th of July, Count Berchtold, Austrian Chancellor, not only categorically refused to discuss with Petersburg, but, by way of emphasis, declared war on Serbia. Only at this point did the vacillating Berlin office remember that it did not want war. That day Bethmann-Hollweg urged Austria to hold Belgrade as a hostage and to discuss matters directly with Petersburg. Wilhelm, after reading the Serbian reply to the Austrian ultimatum, had felt that all reason for war had vanished. It was too late. Russia was mobilizing against Austria-Hungary.

The third plan of submitting the matter to Serbia who would act at the advice of the Great Powers, showed the desperate lengths to which men were willing to go. It was unthinkable, however, that
Austria should consider such a proposition. The Monarchy waited until it was at war with Serbia before replying to England that it would be impossible to consider the Serb reply in the light of the English proposal since a state of war existed "as a result of which the Serbian note in reply has already been superseded by other events."

At the time, it seemed as if a fourth method were available. A panicky Bethmann-Hollweg tried to take advantage of it. On July 31st, Berlin thought that Britain was at last using the full weight at her command. Lichnowsky reported Grey as having said that if Germany and Austria could make a sensible proposal which Russia and France could not reasonably dismiss that Britain would support the plan and if Russia and France refused it, he would go so far as to say that Britain would remain neutral. The Emperor and Chancellor quickly conferred, called von Moltke in, and ordered that all troops in the advance toward France and Russia be turned back. What would have been the final outcome had the wire not been erroneous is doubtful of course. Wilhelm wired King George, accepting the offer. It was all useless. Lichnowsky had misunderstood a telephone message from Grey, and in his anxiety, had wired Berlin without asking the Prime Minister for his personal assurances.

At the bottom of these failures to keep out of war were two basic facts. Bülow has said that he always remembered Talleyrand's axiom - "that the relationship in every alliance is that of a horse and a
rider." Bethmann-Hollweg had clearly placed Austria in the saddle. Sir Edward Grey evidently assumed that the Austro-German relationship had remained unchanged from Bismarck's day when Germany used the Alliance for her own ends. Grey himself wondered whether he should not have dealt directly with Austria. His error in judgment may have cost the peace.
CHAPTER III

The beginning of hostilities set in motion the first of a series of "peace feelers", none of which was destined to achieve its object. The United States, as a neutral, and newly aware of her world interest, took the initiative up until her entry into the war. For three successive years Woodrow Wilson and Edward House strove to persuade the two Alliances in Europe that peace was not only feasible but also possible. In 1916 Germany tried to use her favorable military position to influence the Entente toward peace but failed on the strength of British tenacity and French hatred. In 1917 Austria tried to achieve peace but failed because of the assurance of complete victory which the United States' union with the Entente accomplished. The underlying reasons for the failures and the part which personalities played in them contributes additional information for the understanding of the War, 1914-1918.

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On August 1, Senator McCumber introduced a resolution in the Senate to the effect "that it is the judgment of the Senate that the President diplomatically approach the said countries of Europe and offer the good service of this country..."

House and Richard Olney, the Colonel's neighbor, were opposed to a formal United States' offer of mediation services at this time as they thought it would lessen United States' influence when the proper time arrived. As it was necessary to satisfy the Senate, they advised that the newspapers be given a statement "from some high
authority" to the effect that the President had done all in his power to avert the crisis. For some reason this suggestion was not followed. Elaboration of the statement might have revealed the story of House's disarmament mission in the summer of 1914 which was still publicly unknown. Since the President's issuance of a neutrality proclamation in mid-August, it was dangerous to nurture a bias which would grow of its own accord anyway.

If the President were determined to issue a mediation note, as he was, House urged then that he make absolutely certain that both Europe and the United States knew that Secretary Bryan was in no way connected with it. Bryan's pacifism would have rendered the idea of United States power standing behind peace moves as more than ridiculous. "I hate to harp upon Mr. Bryan, but you cannot know as I do how he is thought of in this connection." On August 18, President Wilson sent a notice of his good offices to each belligerent Power in response to the Senate Resolution.

Wilson was later adversely criticized for failing to take a more positive stand toward the war by expressing United States' sympathy with the Entente. This criticism was based on faulty gauging of United States' opinion which made known its position by hearty support of the neutrality proclamation. Nevertheless, in Maine, before a group of Progressives, Colonel Roosevelt was saying, "When I wanted to be sure that we would be at peace with everyone, I sent the fleet around the world."
Wilson's note was issued and received in the same spirit -- as a formal move, prompted by international etiquette. Walter Page, already under the influence of that austere individual who ruled the Foreign Office, confirmed the belief which House already held -- that there "was not the slightest chance of any result from the mediation offer." Sir Edward Grey was not so weighted down by details that he could not see the larger picture; even in the first month of the War he was obviously looking for United States' intervention not as the moderator, presiding over the council table, but as the supplier of men and material -- but only when and if the Allies could not hold their own. To Wilson, "intervention" always meant that he should call a conference in which the United States should enforce the noble purposes for which she stood; that much was very clear to Grey who hoped to retard United States' emergence as a world power by settling the dispute without her assistance. House and Wilson were naive enough to accept Grey's "honest words" without question. They continued to sincerely believe that the British would call in the "infant state" if the opportunity for waging peace arose.

In September, Colonel House busily laid the ground for future United States mediation. "I am laying plans to make myself persona grata to all the nations involved in this European war, so that my service may be utilized to advantage and without objection in the event a proper opportunity arrives."

House was on excellent terms, or so it appeared on the surface, with the representatives of foreign nations. His friendship with
Count Bernstorff, however, was more a matter of expediency than of real confidence. He was not alone in his considered opinion of the German. Wilson too felt it necessary to get corroboration from Berlin on anything he said. Bernstorff was in no way responsible for his inability to communicate with the Berlin Government, who in turn seldom informed their representative of any contemplated moves.

In September, 1915, something occurred which actually prejudiced House and Page along with him. At that time, Bernstorff made the mistake of forwarding the financial details of his propaganda activities in the United States to Berlin by way of the American diplomatic pouch. This packet of papers was opened by mistake by United States Ambassador Gerard in Berlin, who forwarded it on to Walter Page in London. The papers definitely proved Bernstorff's financial backing of German propagandists in the United States. This outright infringement of belligerent etiquette in a neutral nation never ceased to anger Page, and the British with him.

In spite of personal opinions, House dined and drank with as many influential people as was possible. His efforts seemed to be bearing fruit when his proposal of a meeting between the German and British Ambassadors met with more than a hasty dismissal.

The Ambassador from Vienna, Dumba, had confided that not until Germany had accomplished the decisive victory in France for which she was preparing, would she be in a favorable position to consider overtures. Nevertheless, the German Ambassador Bernstorff was
willing to meet the British Ambassador, Sir Cecil Spring-Rice if it were promised that only the three of them and President Wilson were informed of this unorthodox procedure. House wondered if the German Ambassador were not acting with instructions from Berlin. Spring-Rice came to New York only at the insistence of House. He could not be persuaded that any conversation between him and Bernstorff would be productive since he felt Bernstorff was so unreliable. Besides, the Allies would have to be consulted since Britain would in no way lay herself open to charges of negotiating secretly; this was the lie by which the British were always able to escape United States' intervention and the limitation of war aims which would necessarily follow. Spring-Rice, who became so emotionally on edge in 1915 that his recall was seriously considered, had such a horror of spies that he covered his New York visit on House by making a late call on Sir Courtnay Bennet, the British Consul General.

There were other indications that Germany might be well disposed toward peace. The United States' Ambassador to London, Walter Page, writing on September 3, had confidently informed the President that after taking Paris, considered accomplished by most people, Germany would herself initiate a peace drive. Almost immediately, a meeting took place at Scarboro, New York, which fulfilled Page's prophesy. It was attended by two men from New York whose backgrounds qualified them for key positions in any diplomatic exchanges between
the Allies and the Entente. Oscar S. Straus was a native German who came to the United States with his father along with other revolutionists after 1848. He had held important public posts and had fulfilled an honorable service to this government as a member of the Permanent Court of Arbitration at the Hague. He was on excellent terms with Bernstorff whom he had known in Constantinople when he was American Minister there and Bernstorff an Attaché at the German Embassy. He had known M. Jusserand and Spring-Rice over a period of years and their friendships were well cemented by his sympathy with the Entente.

Mr. James Speyer was born in New York but had been educated in Germany and trained for the family banking house at Frankfort-on-the-Main. He never tried to conceal his pro-German feelings.

Mr. Straus arrived in New York on September 4, to be met with an invitation to dine September 5, at Speyer's home. Bernstorff was a guest there at the time. Frank Vanderlip, President of the National City Bank of New York was also present at the dinner. Discussion at the table obviously turned about the war. Bernstorff protested that Germany had always stood for peace, and upon point blank questioning from Speyer, he committed his government to discuss mediation. With the Ambassador's permission, Straus took the midnight train to Washington where he related the conversation to Mr. Bryan and the French and British Ambassadors. Both Jusserand and Spring-Rice were skeptical of the motive but concluded
that the German Ambassador had come to the United States with instructions to secure United States intercession. They cabled London and Paris while Bryan himself dealt with the Kaiser. Sir Edward Grey categorically dismissed the move on the grounds that the terms which Germany would undoubtedly demand would be too high a price for peace. Berlin denied all knowledge of the meeting for the same reason.

It is possible that Bernstorff had received instructions to initiate such a move prior to leaving Berlin. Germany would have been in an exceedingly favorable position had she entered Paris as expected. It was reasonable then that the Kaiser would disclaim any knowledge of his Ambassador's move after the German defeat at the Marne. If, however, Bernstorff were acting without sanction from Berlin, as he said he was, his name adds no credit to the intellectual capabilities of diplomats. By telephone, a few minutes before the dinner at the Speyer home, he had been informed of the Marne battle, then in progress, and the way it was going. No man who had the slightest command of the ABC's of diplomacy could have expected his Government, facing a military disaster, to initiate peace.

From London, Walter Page read into Bernstorff's gesture an attempt to capture the world's sympathy for Germany as being forced to continue war by England's rejection of her peace offer. He wrote House, "the Germans of course thought that they would take Paris. They were then going to propose a conqueror's terms of peace, which
they knew would not be accepted. ...they are using Hearst for this purpose. I fear they are trying to use so good a man as Oscar Straus."

In a clear indictment of the Allies, Colonel House wrote,

"The President's judgment was that last autumn (1914) was the time to discuss peace parleys...I believe if we could have started peace parleys in November, we could have forced the evacuation of both France and Belgium, and finally forced a peace which would have eliminated militarism on land and sea. The wishes of the Allies were heeded with the result that the war has now fastened itself upon vitals of Europe...."

Along in the first month of 1915 there occurred an exchange of letters upon which no comment is readily accessible. Walter Page wrote Secretary Bryan on January 15, 1915, to the effect that General French had confided certain facts to him about a German peace proposal which had just been made. The information was that Wilson had submitted a peace proposal to England at the Kaiser's request. The basis of negotiations was to be the restoration and indemnification of Belgium. Mr. Hendrick calls this brief interchange of letters a German peace drive. House acknowledges that he knew the substance of French's remarks to Page, but goes on to say, "As a matter of fact, there has been no direct proposal made by anybody. I have had repeated informal talks with different Ambassadors and I have had direct communications with Zimmermann,
which has led the President and me to believe that peace conversations may now be initiated in an informal way."

What passed between Zimmerman and the President is closed to us now but it was certainly fallacious to say at that early date in the war that Berlin ever considered giving up Belgium. There was not even any private discussion of doing such a thing until the early months of 1916. Even in 1916 the idea of restoring and indemnifying Belgium was not considered. What the Germans meant by "restoration of Belgium" was a Belgium completely submerged in economic and military guarantees to Germany.

In December and January, 1915, House and President Wilson discussed a second mission to Europe. There were several reasons for the trip. Bernstorff was continuing in his insistence that the German Government would not be unreasonable about peace at this time. On December 17, he even agreed that Berlin would consider evacuation and indemnification of Belgium, and a disarmament plan as a possible basis. As we know, his statement was in error. On December 20, Sir Edward Grey cabled that he did not see how Britain could turn down any proposal which satisfactorily answered Belgian and disarmament demands. He mistrusted German motives, as did House, because it did not seem reasonable that any Power in such a strong military position would consent to peace parleys.

It is true that Zimmerman's and Grey's cables furnished flimsy
ground for a trip to Europe. But there was another factor which needed immediate attention. United States relations with both Britain and Germany were strained. The disputes over restrictions on neutral trade with Britain and over American export of munitions to the Allied countries with Germany were becoming critical. If the American point of view could not be introduced quickly, the United States role as mediator would be lost. Nothing could be done by cable; that much had become apparent.

House sailed January 30, on the Lusitania, on one of her last trips before she was sunk. The purpose of the visit was concealed as it was certain that the British people would never have permitted the association of a peace move with their Government. "There were far fewer pacifists amongst them on January 1, 1915 than on August 1, 1914." The Colonel fought a delaying action in London, waiting for a direct invitation from Germany. Meantime, he and Grey discussed military fronts at length, Grey freely giving top secrets to his confidant. At the time, both Italian and Rumanian neutrality hung in the balance. Sir Edward was anxious to see how those diplomatic fronts would develop. He consistently returned to the idea of a plan for permanent peace, which the Colonel specifically did not want introduced at this stage. The development of such a program would take months. What House wanted, and it was not forthcoming, was a concrete proposal upon which to base negotiations. Once again the Veteran diplomat had escaped the hazardous meddling of the
United States.

Meantime, on February 4, Germany announced that the submarine blockade of Great Britain would begin on the 18th. This announcement certainly increased the difficulties already present. In its wake came floods of letters and newspaper articles which made the mention of peace anathema in London.

About the 8th of February Gerard writes, an American, well acquainted with the General Staff, came to him with the statement that Germany was ready to begin with peace negotiations. As part of the terms, this American wished to go to Paris and to Petersburg to inform them of the overwhelming strength of German armies. Gerard was secretly led to see von Tirpitz in the Navy Department at midnight. The Admiral would neither deny nor confirm the truth of the mysterious American’s information. Gerard, of course, cabled the State Department of these activities. Their implications may well have prompted his cable to Sir Edward Grey on February 15, which otherwise is inexplicable. "Germany will make no peace proposals, but I am sure that if a reasonable peace is proposed now (a matter of days, even hours), it would be accepted. (This on my authority)."

No matter how urgent the Ambassador felt the matter was, quick action was hardly possible. Communication with Russia was especially difficult and England was in no position to begin
negotiations without the consent of her Allies. Although Britain would accept a peace which included Belgian evacuation and indemnification and a future plan for permanent peace, even these two cardinal points would not have been agreeable to France and Russia. The two Allies wanted Alsace-Lorraine and the Straits included. Though Grey consistently tried to keep the Allied peace wishes free from selfish motives, he failed in the purpose. The consensus was that House should delay his German visit until the outcome of both the Russian movement in the east and the intended Dardanelles venture were known.

House left for Paris and Berlin on March 11. As futile as it might otherwise be there was something to be gained in knowing first hand how the ground lay. Paris was just as he had expected; Delcasse let him know that France was not interested in peace. Though he did not say so, it was obvious that he, for one, was not going to lessen French claims to see Germany remain in the driver's seat. De Casenave, the head of the Press Bureau, frankly admitted that the French viewed the United States as interested only in filling the coffers of F. R. Knox. The United States was in a peculiar position; it was a condition of sending food and armaments to the Entente that she make money. Still, would the Entente have preferred that she ceased to send materiel? In particular, the French mistrusted Wilson whom they felt to be pro-German — probably because he wanted that 15% of the voting public.
Discouraged by everyone, House still felt that he might get the Germans interested in the "Freedom of the Seas" doctrine and that peace negotiations might grow out of this interest. This name was applied, originally by House, to the rule that all materiel except that expressly meant for war machinery would be struck from the contraband list. A neutral could continue her trade during war, a belligerent could continue the war without fear of being starved out and navies could be reduced to use in a defensive capacity only. Both Britain and Germany were still subject to blockade but nothing could prevent Germany from buying materiel across her borders and from any neutral ports. Britain would gain even more; she would be released from all the hazards of her island position, and her colonial trade would be secured without the expense of a great fleet. The introduction of submarine warfare had completely changed the numbers of merchantmen necessary to feed the islands. Bethmann-Hollweg and Zimmermann fell in with the idea immediately. In it they could see a way in which the Government could make good the evacuation of Belgium to the German people since the holding of that part of the coast would no longer be necessary to protect German trade. What House wanted from Germany was silence until he could get back to London and confront Grey with German acceptance of a doctrine which was more to Britain's advantage than to Germany's. Had Germany quietly acquiesced, the outcome of the second European trip might have been different. Instead, the Germans showed such enthusiasm, both in Europe and in the United States where Mr. Dernberg widely
publicized it as an original German idea, that the British public and Government would have none of it. The doctrine became anathema in Britain where it was counted that anything to Germany's advantage must be subversive to Britain. Nevertheless, House had just begun to direct the education of the British public to the idea when the Lusitania was sunk. Focus now shifted from bringing peace between the Entente and the Allies to keeping the United States neutral. Colonel House felt that Wilson needed him in this new crisis by which the United States was being forced into war. His last written thoughts before embarking ship were in marked contrast to the optimism which he had felt upon arrival: "I have concluded that war with Germany is inevitable and this afternoon at six o'clock I decided to go home."
CHAPTER IV

By Autumn of 1915, the position of the United States toward the war had materially changed. In August of 1914 it was impossible to think that the United States would enter the war; in June, 1915, it seemed improbable that the United States would fight; by September of that year, it seemed improbable that the United States would not fight. The Allied blockade and the submarine took their turns in keeping the United States on diplomatic tenterhooks. Her policy which had been largely defensive, protecting the invasion of her neutral rights, must necessarily be changed. In October, Wilson began to take a more positive line. An American peace note must be a demand, not an appeal, and must have that force behind it which might easily lead to participation. To be forceful and not ridiculous, an American peace program had to be re-enforced by some semblance of military and naval preparedness. Colonel House, on intimate terms with General Wood, had advocated a United States' preparedness program when the first war clouds threatened. Wilson was not interested then. The first notice of the Presidential change in policy occurred in the Fall of 1915 with his support of military preparation and his guidance through Congress of the largest naval bill of United States' history.

With the President's transfer to a more decisive policy, the way in which the United States might next throw her weight could have mapped "a priori. Just as the two previous United States' peace
efforts had been sponsored by House, so this one was to be. Though certainly not insincere in his desire for peace, House was admittedly sympathetic to the Allies. Even the most independent thinker could not have resisted the pressures of many letters from old friends.

His close friendship with Sir Edward Grey and the siphoning of the tenor of the British thought through the pen of such an Anglophile as Walter Page were influences to which the rest of the United States was not subjected.

House submitted a plan to Wilson which in itself was fair to both Alliances; its success depended, however, on a radical departure from neutrality. In a simplified form the scheme was not new as Page had written a letter to Wilson, October 6, 1914, containing the essential points of the program. The plan was this: a peace conference should be proposed, the terms of which would outlaw militarism; the United States would enter the war against that Alliance which would not accept; if both accepted, the job was accomplished, and the war was over. In a memo of a discussion with Wilson, House wrote, "My suggestion is to ask the Allies, unofficially, to let me know whether or not it would be agreeable to them to have us demand that hostilities cease.... If the Allies understood our purpose, we could be as severe in our language concerning them as we were with the Central Powers. The Allies, after some hesitation, would accept our offer or demand and if the Central Powers accepted, we would then have accomplished a master-
stroke of diplomacy."

This "master stroke" was not only Machiavellian but also stupid. Had the Colonel never heard of Congress? Wilson approved House's first draft but it would have been well had he stated the obvious to his good friend, that "intervention" implied the peace table, not American troops. This idea never became clear to the Colonel, though it was the beginning of a rift between the two minds which usually were so well coordinated.

For security reasons, the letters to Grey containing this fantastic plan were coded, split into two parts, complete with a key for fitting them together and mailed at different post offices. House said it was "...one of the most important letters I ever wrote." He repeated what had been his understanding with Wilson: "I would not let Berlin know, of course, of any understanding had with the Allies, but would rather lead them to think our proposal would be rejected by the Allies. This might induce Berlin to accept the proposal, but, if they did not do so, it would nevertheless be the purpose to intervene." He also made clear that the United States would not be able to intervene in the event that the Allies delayed their appeal until their military position had become untenable.

The letter must have made Grey a very happy man; here was what amounted to an admission that the United States could not afford
to let the Entente lose. The only stipulation was that the Allies should not wait too long. On the basis of this promise, Grey could afford to watch the war scene less apprehensively, hoping that the British could settle Germany themselves and avoid United States' usurpation of Britain's international position; if the Central Powers continued to win the war, as they obviously had so far, then the British could fall back on the United States and hope to whip them later over the conference table.

Grey's reply was greatly disappointing. He was filled with doubts, of United States sincerity, of Wilson's sincerity in particular, and of French, Russian, and Italian willingness to forego mass annexations. Evidently, none of these suspicions could be dissolved through Ambassadors. Page had no sympathy for the Administration. He was better able to interpret British views to the United States than to be the Administration's spokesman to London. That brilliant editor had lost confidence in Wilson after the sinking of the Lusitania and the Arabic when he felt that the President had failed in his handling of those two situations. From May on, Page's friends always wondered why he was not recalled. In spite of this open divergence of views, he was one of Wilson's most frequent correspondents. His journalistic abilities were not lost on the President who occasionally read some of his letters to the Cabinet. Wilson remarked to Laughlin, a secretary in the American Embassy at London, "I could never resist him - I get more information from
Wilson often spoke of him as "more British than the British", but never seriously entertained the idea of recalling him.

There was difficulty in Washington too; Spring-Rice was not the person calculated to soothe the Capitol's fevered brow. Any discussion with him over contraband and the blockade had to be conducted so delicately that little or no business could be transacted through him.

For these reasons, House undertook his third trip to England with the intention of going on to Berlin if Gerard's letters were encouraging. Again Bernstorff, consistently and inaccurately the optimist, reported that his Government would be willing to discuss peace on a disarmament basis. What would that Ambassador have said had he known that Gerard had just had an interview with the Kaiser in which Wilhelm indicated that Wilson's role as mediator was over?

Arriving at Falmouth, January 5, the Colonel was relayed through disembarkation formalities and on to London with a speed foreign to the British. He met with Grey and Balfour, whom House said "spoke your language" (House to Wilson), the following day and was gratified to learn that these two, at least, had cautiously accepted the Freedom of the Seas doctrine which he had submitted to Grey fully twelve months before! Lloyd George, a year after he should have known the facts, was just learning that House had made the
proposal and that it was not German in origin. In keeping with the British reputation, Balfour said he would have to see what concessions his colleagues would be willing to make to American opinion.

In each meeting, Lloyd George went straight to the crux of the issue. He wanted a definite statement of the terms on which a conference would be based. Reasonably, he pointed out, that without such terms, a conference would quickly become a fiasco when one considered the favorable military position which the Central Powers held. In spite of himself, House wished that this man were Prime Minister.

The rest were just as British as ever; "They will delay discussion as long as they can, even as they delayed the proposal I made in June, 1914, looking toward a better understanding with Germany. I have always felt that the war might possibly have been avoided if they had acted with expedition." Delay, at this juncture, was more dangerous than it had previously been. Though Wilson was doing what he could to stay its hand, the Senate might compel him to take steps against the British in retaliation for interference with American commerce. And, if a new submarine crisis were provoked, the matter would fall entirely out of House's hands. With time against him, he went on to Germany.

On January 26, House arrived in Berlin to remain only three days. The picture he gained there was that the situation was in
no way favorable to peace at the terms suggested by "reasonable". Further, he believed the Germans were less afraid of war with the United States than of the British blockade. In both conjectures, he was more correct than he could know until the publication of certain German documents in 1923. As was revealed, Germany and Austria did not themselves reach any agreement on the terms of peace agreeable to them until November, 1916. The terms reached then must necessarily have been more demanding had they been quoted nearly a year earlier when the war was going so well for the Central Powers. As to the second point, also covered in testimony given after the war, Germany had weighed United States' participations against the advantages accrued from unrestricted submarine warfare to find Germany could win the war against the additional weight of the United States, if the war lasted only five to six months longer. By January, 1916, then, Colonel House had arrived at two conclusions which were popular only a posteriori.

In Paris, on his way back to London, House met with Briand and Clemenceau on a surprisingly frank basis. As Grey seemed unreasonably afraid to communicate anything which smacked of peace to the French, House laid the plan before these two men. The outcome was an agreement whereby the United States would join the Allies should there be no victories in the Spring and Summer of 1916.

Back in London, February 9, House found Grey personally dis-
posed to accept United States' assistance, but pessimistic over its reception by Cabinet members. Lloyd George, whose acquiescence was necessary, liked the assurance of winning the war through American participation but opposed the preliminary condition that Wilson call a conference. "Public opinion here would condemn any minister who would dare endorse such a proposal...." However, on February 14, a meeting with Asquith, Lord Reading, Lloyd George and Grey, House managed to secure, in principle, the approval of a conference at the Hague. House and Grey decided between themselves that the Americans would cable the conference plan to Britain at regular intervals, to be ignored until Sir Edward thought the opportune time for its acceptance had arrived. In this way, Britain would be free from attacks on raising the peace issue from the French and British public.

By February 23, Grey had prepared a memorandum of the understanding reached to be submitted to President Wilson. Thorough as he was, House wanted it understood that Lord Reading would be sent to the United States to carry back the underlying reasons for any changes in the agreement which the President might make. As has been noted, the two Ambassadors were singularly untrustworthy for any such delicate mission.

On March 7, President Wilson formally acknowledged the offer of United States' assistance when he himself typed the memorandum which Grey and House had drawn up in London. Wilson made one change in
the draft, inserting the word "probably" so that a sentence read, "should the Allies accept this proposal, and should Germany refuse it, the United States would probably enter the war against Germany."

Lloyd George has since said the obvious - that the insertion of the word "probably" changed the whole character of the proposal. Further he has said that he cannot recollect that there was ever any effort made to restore the original meaning, as had been agreed upon in London. One wonders, (but not seriously), if House had sent for Lord Reading to interpret the President's relation to the Congress to his fellow Cabinet members whether the United States might not have entered the war a year earlier. One also wonders whether House himself could not have profited from some reading on the Executive's powers.

In May, Grey penned the Allied answer to House. It was impossible, he said, to call the Allies to a peace table. If the terms were not previously specified France would suspect Germany at the bottom of it all because her military position was strong enough for her to dismiss a negotiated peace.

The charge that the Allies, by their "silent response" to the United States' offer of assistance, were not fighting for the highest motive was, of course, not unfounded. President Wilson went to the peace conference with no precise knowledge of the formal treaties which carved up Europe; but, he did know that there was some trading going on. He was fully aware that the Allies had made some "arrangements"
regarding certain areas. Wilson and House are equally re¬
ponsible for their failure to attribute importance to the settle¬
ment of territorial questions which was to loom so large at
Versailles. House readily dismissed the Treaties, of which he
was partially informed; Wilson, too, seemed to take them very lightly,
for he wrote House, "I agree with you that we have nothing to do with
local settlements, -- territorial questions, indemnities, and the
like, -- but we are concerned only in the future peace of the world
and the guarantees to be given for that."\(^{55}\)

Grey naturally encouraged this disinterest. In August, 1915,
he wrote House, "If I could feel that your people were sure to say,
sooner or later, 'though we have no concern with territorial changes
between belligerents themselves, who must settle things of that kind
by themselves, there can be no peace till the cause of Belgium is
fairly settled... I should be content." But Grey knew that
sometime the two Americans were bound to realize the significance of
territorial questions. No wonder he was afraid of his Allies, afraid
that they would reject a Wilsonian peace, and compromise Britain
in such a fashion as to lose all United States' support for her.

With full knowledge of these agreements, Lloyd George felt that House
was far too optimistic in his appraisal of the impression his offer
of intervention had made upon Briand and Cambon. On the contrary,
House knew that Briand was bent upon an absolute victory. Bernstorff
corroborated House's pessimism when he testified in 1919 that
House, upon his return to the United States, had implied that France was the major opposition encountered.

Looking back on this American peace move, of the Winter and Spring of 1915, Grey felt that both the Allies and the Central Powers missed an opportunity. "Two years of war, in which expenditure of life and national strength and treasure were at their maximum, would have been avoided. European markets and trade might have recovered quickly, for the impoverishment and exhaustion would have been much less. Prosperity and security might be today more fair in prospect for us all than the victory of 1919 have made them."
CHAPTER V

In December 1916, Wilson took the initiative from House's hands and delivered an appeal for peace to the belligerents. From April to November of that year, the President, anxious to play the role of mediator, had watched for a signal from his confidant, which never came. It is true that House had managed to change the text of the peace message and to delay it even after Wilson's determination was fixed. However, considering the degree to which Wilson had previously followed House, these influences may be counted almost negligible on what could be termed the first 'Wilsonian' peace drive. That it proved to be the last one only shows the strength of the President's desire for peace right up to the United States' entry into the war.

Why had House opposed Wilson for eight months? There were a number of considerations upon which his refusal rested. Germany felt sure that Wilson's peace note would not be issued until the Entente had secretly been informed of and had accepted the terms of the peace. But, contrary to German reasoning, it was House, not Wilson, who wanted to be certain of British acceptance before the message was delivered. In December, Wilson's and House's differences of opinions became outdated. The British Government changed hands and by the change in personnel virtually repudiated any previous negotiations toward peace.

The fall of the Asquith Government was due in a large measure
to the Lansdowne Memorandum, distributed to the Cabinet in mid-November by one of its most respected members, a man who had drawn up the Entente Cordiale in 1904, and had been an advocate of its strict support at all times.

This memorandum asked the question, "Have we adequately balanced the cost of the continuation of the war against the peace terms which could be effected later and the peace which might be gained now?" Lansdowne had before him reports from the Departments of Government, analyzing their respective spheres. Mr. Runciman, Board of Trade President, had concluded that there must be an even greater reliance upon neutral shipping because of the disproportion between the number of ships built and the number sunk. He forecast a complete breakdown of shipping by June, 1917. Lord Crawford of the Board of Agriculture pointed out world-wide deficits as well as the acute shortages of insular production.

Military and naval resources were pictured just as gloomily. The Admiralty showed that the number of capital ships could not be increased nor could the necessary number of destroyers and light cruisers be built to meet the needs of extended anti-submarine war-fare. At the same time, men eligible for military service could only be secured through further depletion of industry's resources.

In addition, Lansdowne wondered whether the Allies could be relied upon politically. Sir Rennell Rodd sent disquieting news
of the Italian temper from Rome. Though Lansdowne did not specifically mention it, he probably was also referring to Sazonov's dismissal in mid-July and his replacement by Sturmer who was decidedly pro-German.

The writer reached the conclusion that any offer of mediation, from whatever source, should be thoroughly investigated. In the face of the circumstances he had outlined, he hoped that Britain would not espouse M. Briand's attitude, "The word peace is a sacrilege."

This thoughtful paper, written when Allied war fortunes were discouraging, caused the British to take stock of themselves again a month later. Sir Edward Grey, on a matter preeminently affecting his department, had nothing constructive to suggest. Lloyd George said that this "contribution was characteristic". Grey, in his memorandum on the Lansdowne proposal, devoted pages to an explanation of his diplomatic failures to the neglect of the real issue -- peace or continued war. George comments, "All very interesting but having no bearing on the momentous issue raised by Lord Lansdowne...." It was enough for Grey to admit that peace would be premature if the Military and Naval staffs were able to promise an improvement of the Allied position, without a promise of the complete defeat of Germany. These promises were forthcoming; it was the consensus of military opinion that complete victory was assured if men and materiel were used efficiently under the stronger and more concentrated
supervision of the War Committee.

With military victory uppermost in his mind, Lloyd George knew that Asquith lacked the drive required of a Prime Minister. The position called for accurate perception of problems and action to supplement decisions. He and Balfour were of the opinion that Asquith should retain his position to prevent disunity but that he should be stripped of any power over the War Committee by reorganisation within his Government. With this plan in mind, the War Committee was reorganized and it was here that differences over functions and personnel led to the uncontemplated fall of the Asquith Government and its replacement by that of Lloyd George. For all intents and purposes, Sir Edward Grey had lost his eyesight and took the opportunity at hand to tender his resignation. Friendlier to Lloyd George than he was after the Armistice, nevertheless, Grey felt relieved to learn that his Department had passed to two such capable men as Robert Cecil and Arthur Balfour.

The crisis in London, directly due to inadequacies in the conduct of the war, was one of the reasons Colonel House urged Wilson to delay his appeal for peace. The Lansdowne proposal had been rejected and a new Government formed under a militant exponent of "the knock-out blow". If Germany should accept the Presidential offer, the Allies' position would be morally untenable if they refused to negotiate. Both House and Wilson agreed that Germany might be willing to confer if she felt reasonably certain that Britain would be unwilling. With a British refusal to negotiate,
Germany could justify the reopening of unrestricted submarine warfare. Though the unrestricted use of the submarine had been decided on prior to the fall of the Asquith Government, there could be no proof of British determination to demolish Germany than that Lloyd George should succeed as Prime Minister.

As it happened, such concern over the reception of the President's offer was academic; when the German peace note of December 12 was published, the matter was temporarily taken out of American hands.

President Wilson was well aware that Germany would be interested in a peace compatible to her war successes. This desire was conceived long before it culminated in the message of December 12. As early as April, 1916, Count Bernstorff had communicated to Berlin that the President would probably send out a peace feeler "within a few months." Promptly, Berlin answered to the effect that she was in accord with this desire. This reply was apparently not empty as it was followed by other moves which looked suspiciously as if Germany were ready to conclude a peace if it were cognizant of her war successes. In the Summer of 1916, Ambassador Gerard was urged by the Chancellor to return to Washington with this end in mind. Both Bethmann-Hollweg and von Jagow pressed upon Gerard the necessity of Wilson's intervention. The months rolled by, months in which Wilson was listening to House's insistence that the United States should not intervene just yet. From the Continent, American hesitation to
act did not look promising. Bernstorff cabled of the imminence of a Presidential offer more than once but was forced to dismiss its imminence by succeeding cables. By October, the German Foreign Office had cabled Bernstorff that if an offer from the United States were not soon forthcoming, it would be necessary to avail herself of the advantages of reopening unrestricted submarine warfare. An anxious Bethmann-Hollweg further suggested that Wilson assure himself of re-election by combining the powers of the Pope, the King of Spain, and other European neutrals in asking for peace; the Entente scarcely could refuse such a joint effort. Apparently, Lansing told Bernstorff that the American people would never permit United States' participation in such a coalition.

Meanwhile, Wilson had determined to act. On November 21, he wrote House that he was convinced that the moment was at hand for his peace move. Four days later, House went to Washington to see the draft of the note which the President had just completed. "I did not yield a point in my opinion that he would make a mistake if he finally sent it, nor did he yield in his argument that it might be effective." Unfortunately, Wilson did yield a point in not sending the message immediately, for his would have anticipated the German note and unrestricted submarine warfare would not have been reopened until negotiations had run their course.

On November 22, von Jagow confidently informed Bernstorff of Germany's intention, acting in conjunction with her Allies and only
if the military situation seemed favorable, to announce her interest in peace negotiations. President Wilson's offer would be given precedence if the Central Powers could be certain that it would be made before preparations for Spring campaigns were under way and before acceptance had become impossible to the military party. It was established, in this way, that Count Bernstorff knew of the proximity of the German note.

On December 12, 1917, the German peace note was presented. The reasons for anticipating the President lay not solely in the time element. In October, Baron Burian, Austro-Hungarian Privy Councillor, had posed questions very similar to those which Lord Lansdowne asked a month later: "If the war should continue, we would, in the following year, be confronted with a still greater offensive on the part of our enemies than that of this summer. Even if we should defend ourselves victoriously against it, by doing so, we should not force our enemies to sue for peace, but we ourselves would be approximating the state of exhaustion, that is, we should be in a worse position than we are now." Von Tirpitz had stated, as early as February, 1916, "We shall not be able to defeat England by a war on land alone." General von Falkenhayn, Minister of War, corroborated this conclusion with a similar statement.

With these considerations in mind, Germany issued a peace note on December 12. That morning, Bethmann-Hollweg sent his note to Spain, the United States, and Switzerland, to forward to
the hostile Power in whose interests they were acting. An emergency meeting of the Reichstag was summoned and the Chancellor made his announcement to a crowded House. Even members serving in the army at the front were recalled for the occasion. It was a short speech that he gave, containing the text of the official note delivered earlier in the day which asked for a conference without pre-stated peace terms.

Testimony given after the war gives proof of the dissension and confusion which lay behind the issuance of this note and the events which led to the re-opening of unrestricted submarine warfare on February 1, 1917. We know now that the Foreign Office was definitely not in favor with the public. Its disrepute rested on charges of laxity and vacillation. Von Jagow was a sickly little man who had passed through one Government office after another, fortunately leaving no impression on any one office. "With a Chancellor who could keep him up to the mark, little Jagow might have made a tolerable assistant. As an understudy to the timid and hesitating Bethmann, he doubled all his faults and weakness." In October of 1916 von Jagow was replaced by Zimmermann, a more striking personality, but one who was overimpressed by his own background, and unfortunately, totally ignorant of foreign affairs. As the new Secretary of State, he had called in several "trustworthy gentlemen" from the press and had told them, "confidentially", that the Foreign Office desired to anticipate Wilson's peace move which was expected
momentarily. Zimmermann later denied the charge of executing a policy disloyal to Wilson: the interview was all a ruse, intended to dissipate the Department's bad reputation. He could not possibly have said, "We are doing this, trying to avoid the dangers of U-boat warfare" or anything similar without losing even the moderate amount of confidence which those men reposed in him. This explanation seems a little shaky, especially in the light of further evidence that Zimmermann was in favor of anticipating Wilson's peace note. He suspected that Wilson would play his hand only when the Allies beckoned. On December 23, 1916, the day after Wilson's note had been issued, Zimmermann cabled the Ambassador to Vienna: "It is possible that the peace activities of President Wilson are the result of an understanding with Great Britain in order to make it easier for the Entente to find a way out of the cul-de-sac in which it has gotten as a result of the public announcements of its statesmen. We have all the more reason for not allowing the initiative in the peace question to be again taken away from us....an Answer, say, of the following import would also eliminate intervention by President Wilson."

While Zimmermann was following this course, Bethmann-Hollweg was acting on opposite assumptions. The party leaders had not been informed of any German representations to Washington on the subject of a prospective peace move. Any leakage of this information would have resounded unfavorably both in the United States and in
Germany. As late as December 11, in a conference with the party leaders, the Chancellor noted that the majority were disinclined toward Wilson as mediator. The Social Democrats agreed to Wilson as moderator but by their agreement only increased the opposition of the other parties. So it was not with the purpose of deceiving the Reichstag that Bethmann-Hollweg had not informed them of the nature of his cables to Bernstorff, and through him, to Wilson. Bethmann-Hollweg wanted to anticipate Wilson but not for the purpose of eliminating the President from the peace table; rather did he hope to complement Wilson's efforts through a statement of Germany's peace desires. The Roumanian defeat offered a favorable juncture and there had been no word from Bernstorff that Washington would look unfavorably upon a German note. In this instance, Bethmann-Hollweg was careless in his judgment of the completeness of the data cabled to Bernstorff; continuing in error, he misjudged the implication of Bernstorff's replies. If he had examined them closely, he would have found that his cable of November 22, announcing Germany's willingness to enter negotiations soon, was superseded by the cable of November 26, to the effect that Wilson's note would be given precedence if offered quickly. Bernstorff replied that Wilson would act probably at the opening of Congress and matters were left at that point -- or so the German Ambassador thought.

As a matter of fact, the German peace note did not interfere
with Wilson's plan to the extent that he did issue a peace note. Wilson had followed House's advice and let the message remain in his desk in its final form except for the addition of a paragraph for one month. That Wilson followed his program through, even to the extent of using the same text after the German note was issued, does not alter the fact that chances of his success were negligible after Germany had anticipated him. There were two reasons why the German note was premature: it caused an Entente rejection of peace before Wilson could intervene, and it caused Britain to suspect Wilson of conniving with the Central Powers. Success lay not in any peace gesture but in one issued by a powerful neutral, free from selfish motives, who could ask for a permanent peace on the highest moral basis. It is difficult to see how the Entente could have refused to negotiate, whether anything came of the bargaining or not. Wilson and House tried to make Lloyd George delay reply to the German note but failed. Page certainly did nothing to implement Wilson's request: of the German note, he told Robert Cecil, "...it was an offer to buy a 'pig in a poke'... and he thought his Government would fully anticipate a reply in this sense." On December 30, the Entente rejected the German note, destroying any hope for reaching peace through political means and at the same time eliminating any possibility of a favorable result from any mediation which Wilson was undertaking. The German note also put Wilson into the unpleasant position of
defending himself against rumors of connection between his note and the German one.

Nevertheless, Wilson delivered his message on December 21. It was not a demand for the cessation of hostilities but an appeal for an exchange of terms by the belligerents which might possibly culminate in a conference. He asked that "soundings be taken in order that we may learn, the neutral nations with the belligerent, how near the haven of peace may be for which all mankind longs with an intense and increasing longing." Again, Wilson's phraseology was bound to be misinterpreted by the British and French: "The objects which the statesmen of the belligerents on both sides have in mind in this war are virtually the same...." The British were enraged and vocally so. Page wrote House, "but his remarks accompanying his suggestion are interpreted as placing the Allies and the Central Powers on the same level.... A luncheon guest at the Palace yesterday informs me that the King wept while he expressed his surprise and depression." The King was not alone in his weeping; House was bombarded by letters and visitors, among whom were Sir Horace Plunkett, Lord Bryce, and Sir William Wiseman.

On December 30, and on January 10, the Entente replied to the Central Powers and Wilson's note in just such a brusque manner as Wilson had anticipated. Both replies were such complete rejections that they destroyed any remnant of illusions which might have been entertained of British and French readiness for peace.
Germany applauded Wilsonian principles but did not like his method. They wanted a direct exchange of views between belligerents, not a conference presided over by a neutral. "... the experiences of Portsmouth teach us that American indiscreetness and intermeddling makes it impossible adequately to conduct negotiations." Gerard, who always was coming up with information from "a good authority", again rose to the occasion when he wrote House that Germany wanted to initiate direct exchanges to split the Entente, make peace with France and Russia separately and then go after the scalps of Britain and Japan. He had this "on good authority".

Wilson tried to conceive of another way by which the United States might assert her strength toward peace. Inspired by a suggestion from House, he decided to write a message to be delivered to Congress which would state the basis of a stable peace in such general terms that no belligerent would be offended. If the Senate were to debate what should comprise a post-war international organization, Wilson could give his speech at their request without being accused of further meddling in European affairs. Before the President left the White House, Senator Stone alone knew that Wilson was going before the Senate. The New York Times submitted that the reason for secrecy was to minimize the chances of further stock exchange scandals. The President tried to be inoffensive, but he achieved the opposite effect: from this speech, Germany based her claims that no peace could be hoped for through Wilson. In the Senate
message, the President established certain principles necessary
to reach a stable world order. These principles were later elaborated
into his "Fourteen Points". Allied desires to annex and partition
parts of the world were squarely met in the announcement that
the United States would only recognize the policy of self-determina-
tion. There were other parts of the speech, however, which the
Germans thought were aimed particularly at them. One wonders how
their reactions could have been anything but academic, however, since
the re-opening of submarine warfare on February 1 had been decided
upon as early as January 9 at Castle Fless. Nonetheless, these
points received particular attention in Berlin: "The Central Powers
united in a reply which stated merely that they were ready to meet
their antagonists in conference to discuss terms of peace. The
Entente Powers have replied much more definitely and have stated...
with sufficient definiteness to imply details, the arrangements,
guarantees, and acts of reparation which they deem to be indispensable
conditions of a satisfactory settlement." From Berlin, it looked as
if Wilson were determined to kill any peace effort: he assumed that
all statesmen were agreed upon an autonomous and independent Poland;
he spoke of the necessity of giving all great nations access to the
sea if not through cession of territory, through neutralization of
direct rights of way under an international guarantee. These two
points were absolutely irreconcilable to the territorial integrity
of Germany. With this speech, Helfferich and Bethmann-Hollweg
definitely ruled Wilson out as a mediator. However, had they examined the text of Wilson's message without any preconceived notions of Wilson's bias, they would have found that Wilson had rejected fundamental conditions of the Entente and accepted fundamental conditions of the Central Powers. The Entente had announced that Germany must be conquered but Wilson had stated that peace must be concluded without the existence of a conqueror. The Entente denied that Germany was entitled to equality in peace negotiations. Wilson announced that only a peace between equals could be a lasting peace. From Gerard, House, and Bernstorff there is complete evidence that Wilson did not wish to meddle with territorial questions. Germany herself had first suggested the independence of Poland in November, 1916. There is no question but that the idea of an independent Poland was aimed at Russia as well as Germany. Neither is there any basis for the contention that Wilson, by his speech, had accepted the Entente terms as capable of being discussed. On the contrary, there is evidence that Wilson considered the Entente terms only as a starting point for bargaining between the two Alliances. Lansing asked Bernstorff why the Central Powers did not make their peace terms public. When Bernstorff said they were too moderate, and would show weakness in the face of Entente demands, Lansing said, "I do not understand it; I cannot conceive it. Why do you not demand as much as the rest do? For, after all, a middle point will be agreed upon...do just as the other side does, and then we shall meet upon a middle ground." Bernstorff had notified Berlin of this impression but the cable must have been lost.
in the files. On January 27, he asked Berlin to transmit peace terms: "House revealed to me the following ideas of the President. Our enemies had openly put forward impossible peace terms. Thereupon President had developed his program as a direct contrast to these." Bernstorff learned the German peace terms on January 29 for the first time. They were submitted to Wilson and House on the 31st at the same time Lansing was informed that Germany would resume submarine operations the following day. On February 1st, the United States broke off diplomatic relations with Germany.

According to the evidence given before the Commission of the National Assembly in 1917, the chief reason for German rejection of mediation was distrust of Mr. Wilson. It is hard not to believe that ignorance and underevaluation of America were not stronger influences. Had the British permitted Bernstorff to travel to Berlin several times during the war, it is possible that he might have been able to do a lot of good. If any confidence had been placed in Mr. Wilson, Bethmann-Hollweg would have opposed the adoption of the U-boat war and would have allowed the President's efforts for mediation to pursue their course. As the Chancellor himself later admitted, "there can be no doubt, now that we can look back upon events, that we should have done better had we placed our fate in President Wilson's hand, and accepted his offers of mediation." It can be pointed out that the Entente would have rejected Wilson's efforts anyway. Nevertheless, had Germany accepted Wilson's offer and publicly published her terms, she at least would have immeasurably improved her diplomatic position when she determined to act on the last resort, U-boat warfare.
CHAPTER V

The Spring of 1917 saw the first attempt by a Power associated with one or the other of the Alliances to bring about a separate peace. It should not have come as a surprise that Austria was the Power suing for peace. The feudal structure of the Dual Monarchy was such as to preclude the successful waging of war. A conglomeration of Poles, Czechs, and Southern Slavs who had never been permitted to assume any responsibility under a rotten manorial system could scarcely turn into patriotic soldiers over night. Furthermore, with the death of Franz Joseph, the one tie among men, loyalty to the dynasty was gone. On November 7, it was announced in Vienna that within a few days the Archduke Karl, heir to the throne, would "have charge of the affairs of the realm conjointly with the Emperor". The old Monarch, suffering from a cold which settled in his lungs, died about nine o'clock on the evening of November 21 at Schönbrunn. The heir to the throne was young Karl Franz Joseph, grand nephew of the old man who had held the crumbling state together for so many years. The Monarchy's peace move, however, might never have been undertaken had not Karl been so inextricably surrounded by relatives, who, for one reason or another, wanted peace. Karl's wife, the Princess Zita of Bourbon-Parma, loved France even though she entertained no ill-feelings toward Germany. His mother-in-law, the Duchess of
Parma, hated all things German. His mother was a Saxon Princess who similarly destested the power of the Hohenzollerns. These three women took the inexperienced Karl in hand and controlled the Viennese court from the time Franz Joseph died. Freiherr von Tucker, the Bavarian Minister to Vienna, has left his impressions of the ladies: "Maria Josephine is an idiot; Zita, a little intriguer; and her mother is simply a malicious cow." Zita had two brothers, Sixtus and Xavier, who because of their Royalist connection were exempted from French service of any kind. These two boys finally emerged as officers in the Belgian artillery after service with the Red Cross in that country. They were to play an important role in the Monarchy's dickerings with the Entente in the first peace move of 1917.

In December 1916, Baron Burian, successor to the aristocratic Berchtold, had been replaced by Count Czernin, the decided intellectual superior of the three, a man who had successfully handled the somewhat difficult position of Austro-Hungarian Minister to Bucharest. He was thoroughly familiar with the conglomerate quality of the Dual Monarchy, composed as it was of a miscellany of people who lacked even the basic ties of a common religion and language. He was to figure in the Austrian Peace move as a sort of Lansdowne, a man who was loyal to the Dual Alliance but courageous enough to take accurate stock of the Austrian role in the combination. Even if the Alliance did win the war, Austria's
division of the spoils would be negligible. German military power alone had maintained Austrian ante bellum borders. The most that she could hope for was to become a vassal of Germany. If the Central Powers lost the war, or if the war continued as late as the spring of 1918, it could be assumed that the Hapsburgs would fall. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Duchess of Parma, her son Karl, and his wife Zita, should look wistfully toward a peaceful world in which the most hallowed court in Europe might regain its ascendancy. There was this in their favor: the Allies, with the exception of Italy, felt no real antipathy toward the Monarchy. While it is true, as we now know, that Austria actually led Germany into the war, the full facts were not then available and it was popular to sympathize with the ramshackle state that had been forced into war by her Prussian partner.

As early as December 5, 1916, the Duchess had informed her sons of the Emperor's desire for peace. While there were still possibilities of peace through German and American initiative, this information went no further than Sixtus and Xavier. The reopening of unrestricted submarine warfare on February 1 indicated that Germany had crossed the Rubicon; peace through political means was no longer attainable. For this reason, the Emperor Karl renewed his effort to initiate negotiations with the Entente. On January 29, the Duchess of Parma met her son Sixtus in Switzerland. Nothing seems to have passed between them except a letter from the
Princess Zita to which Karl had added a few lines indicating his desire for peace. On February 13, Sixtus again went to Switzerland to meet Count Erdödy, Karl's envoy. Erdödy had a copy of Karl's peace terms with him:

1. A secret armistice with Russia.
2. Belgium and Alsace-Lorraine to be restored.
3. The formation of a Southern Star Monarchy to be composed of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Albania, and Montenegro.

It was obvious that such a plan had to be negotiated with utmost secrecy. Italy was totally ignored by these terms. The Treaty of London, April 26, 1915, guaranteed her Trieste, the Tyrol, the Italian Trentino, plus "compensations" in the Near East and a rectification of the African frontiers. Nothing less than these terms would have been acceptable. If either Germany or Italy learned of these negotiations, they would fail. Prince Sixtus told Erdödy that he would have to bring him an official statement from Karl without which the French could not begin negotiations.

On February 21, Count Erdödy was once more in Switzerland with the required papers. Drawn up by Count Czernin, they included a set of terms which were certainly not capable of discussion:

1. Austria could not make a separate peace.
2. If Germany wanted to relinquish Alsace-Lorraine, Austria would not stand in her way.
3. All belligerents were responsible for the restoration and indemnification of Belgium.
4. Austria-Hungary would retain Roumania until the integrity of the Monarchy was guaranteed.
(5) Austria is fighting a war of non-aggression; she only wants to be assured of the right to develop the Monarchy freely.

(6) Austria-Hungary disclaims all charges that she has subjugated various races. The Slavs are actually very loyal to the Monarchy.

The first point could have been written to protect Austria if Germany should have got wind of the negotiations; such was the French interpretation. However, Count Czernin was undoubtedly sincere in his desire to remain attached to Germany. As later became known, his peace policy stemmed from his love for the Hapsburgs, whose fall he felt was implied if the Allies won the war. The final point was evidently an answer to Wilson's policy of self-determination as set forth in his January 22nd speech to the Senate. Apparently in order to strike a friendlier tone, Karl had enclosed a personal note commenting upon each point as if it permitted of some bargaining. He concluded with "our sole object is to maintain the Monarchy in its present dimensions."

On March 5, Sixtus and his brother Xavier presented these minutes to President Poincaré. They met again on March 8, but the French President was no more disposed to accept the document as a beginning for pourparlers than he had been three days earlier. Sixtus sent Karl the terms which might form a favorable basis for negotiating with the French. We do not know whether Poincaré actually approved these terms or whether Sixtus got them from him by implication.
(1) Restoration and independence of Belgium

(2) Alsace-Lorraine and the Saar Basin to France.

(3) Restoration and independence of Serbia.

(4) Constantinople to Russia.

Still there was no mention of Italian claims. The two brothers paid a secret visit to the Emperor's Castle at Laxenburg, a few miles out of Vienna. Count Czernin was the only other person present. Karl was quite willing to agree to all the French terms though he had some reservations on a point or two. Willing enough to consent to Serbian independence and even to an outlet on the Adriatic, he nevertheless would agree to it only on the condition that the secret Pan-Slavic societies be actually suppressed. He refused to comment on Constantinople until a legal government were set up in Russia. These ideas were incorporated into a letter which Sixtus carried to President Poincaré.

While Karl was thus negotiating with France through his brother-in-law, his Foreign Minister, Czernin, was meeting with Bethmann-Hollweg only a few miles away in Vienna. German Main Headquarters knew of the Chancellor's presence in Vienna but were not informed of the purpose of the visit or of what transpired there until February, 1918. They learned then that the two men had drawn up a declaration of peace terms: both Powers agreed to evacuate the territories occupied by their armies in Russia, Poland,
Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, and Roumania if they could return to the status quo ante bellum; in the event that the close of war were more favorable to the Central Powers than then anticipated, each Power would incorporate territory proportionate to its respective military achievements. It seems fantastic that while Vienna could guarantee German territorial integrity and even was not averse to the idea of annexations, she could also be promising Alsace-Lorraine to France and asking only for a return to the status quo ante; yet this was exactly what she was doing.

On April 3, Emperor Karl and Count Czernin were in Hamburg visiting Wilhelm. The Kaiser was absolutely opposed to the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine; in fact he gave no hints of a willingness to arrive at peace through any concessions by the German Empire. As a result of this interview, which proved to Karl and Czernin the necessity of Austria's securing a separate peace, Karl wrote Wilhelm, enclosing a letter from Czernin with which the monarch personally identified himself. Czernin wanted peace before the enemy became fully conscious of the state of exhaustion felt within Germany and the Monarchy. "Here I cannot leave on one side, however painful it may be, the theme on which the whole structure of my argument is based. It is the danger of revolution which is appearing on the horizon of all Europe, and which is supported by England and represents her latest method of warfare.... Your Majesty is familiar with the secret reports of the state authorities. Two things are clear. The Russian revolution is having a greater
effect on our Slavs than our Germans, and the responsibility for continuing the war is far greater for a Monarch whose country is held together solely by the hand of the dynasty than for him whose people are themselves fighting for their national independence.... I am firmly convinced that Germany too, exactly like ourselves, has reached the end of her resources..."

Wilhelm tried to dispel all of Czernin's fears in his letter in answer by appending a report by Bethmann-Hollweg. The Chancellor reviewed the military situation and found it in good shape; activity on the war fronts was progressing much as predicted; the upheavals in Russia considerably relieved the Eastern Front and thereby the Western Front; there was enough raw material for munitions production in both Allies; the successes achieved by submarine operations greatly exceeded all calculations. Because of this favorable picture, Bethmann-Hollweg agreed that the two Allies should make a fresh peace step while the military initiative was still in their hands. But the time was not imminent when the Central Powers could expose their military position to the charges of weakness which had greeted their last step in that direction (December, 1916).

Karl must have decided to take his chances in negotiating a separate peace with the hope that no leak of the proceedings would reach German ears. Sixtus had gone back to Paris, carrying Karl's peace terms in an autograph letter to Poincare and Ribot (who had just replaced Briand). As Austria had acceded to all French terms,
they were justifiably excited and anxious to relay the history
behind those terms together with the terms to Lloyd George. Ribot
was preoccupied with the duties of his new job and was not able to
accomplish the meeting until April 11. Lloyd George's pencilled notes
of the conference at Folkestone run as follows:

"Wants separate peace—

Allies can prosecute war against Germany alone to complete victory-

Alsace-Lorraine — French Revolution boundary — and get reparation,

indemnity and guarantees on left banks of Rhine.

(78)

Suggests Cilicia for Italy instead of Trentino"

Lloyd George considered the entire series of conversations
and letters serious enough to warrant immediate attention but he
hesitated to participate in discussions without Italian knowledge of
them. He proposed, and Ribot half-heartedly agreed, that they
should meet with Baron Sonnino, Foreign Minister, to try to sound
him out without betraying the Emperor's confidence. Perhaps they
could base their meeting on various rumors which were now current in
Switzerland to the effect that Austria wanted peace. When
Prince Sixtus heard of this conversation, he was naturally alarmed
at the suggestion of confiding in Sonnino. Austrian aristocrats
despised the Italians for betraying the Triple Alliance to join
the Entente. "Italia Irrdenta" raised such claims against the
Monarchy that a negotiated peace between the two was out of the
question. Sonnino was reliable enough but Sixtus feared that he
would feel himself bound to disclose the matter to some of his colleagues for whom the same could not be said. If Italy thought that there were any danger of being left in the lurch, a whisper to Germany would have sufficed to end all discussions. Ribot and Paul Cambon assumed the same argument but gave way to Lloyd George’s persuasive stand on Sonnino’s integrity.

On April 19, the British and French Premiers met Baron Sonnino at St. Jean de Maurienne in a railway carriage drawn up beside the station. Sonnino would not compromise with Austria in any way.

"Born... of an Israelite father and a British mother, he was a mixture of Jewish acumen...with dogged English tenacity, even stubborness." Sonnino’s greatest desire was to see an enlarged Italy. He had been mainly responsible for bringing Italy into the war on the side of the Allies; for this reason, the Allies had to attach great importance to his views. Lloyd George tried to dissuade the Italian by weighting the discussions with the results which the Allies could achieve if Austria were eliminated as a participant. Still Sonnino resisted. It would be hard, he said, to get Italians to continue in the war if Austria were eliminated. Certainly they would never consent to sending troops to another war front.

It was discovered later that Italy had made a secret peace offer to Austria only a week before this meeting on the basis of the cession of the Italian portion of Trentino. The offer came from Italian Headquarters, not from the Foreign Office, but was
made with the knowledge of the King of Italy. An Italian
Colonel, upon arrival in Borne, communicated the terms to the
Austrian and German Ministers there. Karl turned the offer down
because he already had one iron in the fire; that is, he was already
working through France. On May 8th and 9th, Sixtus was again in
Vienna. Karl refused to negotiate directly with Italy. He wanted
France and England to mediate and secure some compensation for the
Italian Trentino, perhaps at the expense of Roumania.

As after the first visit of Sixtus to Vienna in March, Bethmann-
Hollweg went to Vienna once more, on May 13. Ludendorff said,
"The Imperial Chancellor, von Bethmann, was told about the negotia-
tions, but how much I should not be able to say!" Count Wedel, the
German Ambassador to Vienna, has given his picture of what happened
there. Apparently Czernin asked Sixtus if Paris would object to
discussion of a general peace with Berlin. When Sixtus replied
in the negative, Czernin sent for Bethmann-Hollweg. It was agreed
that envoys of the warring powers should meet in Switzerland to
initiate negotiations. Sixtus took this information back to Paris.
In the words of Count Wedel, "even Herr von Bethmann and Count
Czernin were hopeful. But disappointment was in store. The
Entente did not spin the threads any further. We must assume that
what was intended was a separate peace with Austria, and not a
(80)

What actually happened was this: Sixtus arrived in Paris,
armed with written statements from Karl which were further amplified
by statements from Count Erdöy. Karl wanted compensation for the
Trentino fixed, perhaps in Greece or some of the Italian colonies
in Africa before entering negotiations. Sixtus was unable to
see Ribot or Poincaré until the 20th of May when Ribot managed to
squeeze them in among other appointments. Neither Ribot or Poincaré
could see anything but the "difficulties" in any arrangement.
Nothing was satisfactory in any way. What of Poland, Rumania, and
Serbia? How could Italy be happy with less than the Central Powers
could have guaranteed her had she adhered to her pact? Sixtus
has characterized Poincaré as a man who would "hesitate, procrasti-
nate, suspect, withdraw, and then stand still." Poincaré
finally came up with the idea of asking the King of Italy to visit
the French war front. The arrangements would consume time but
could be handled so that no one would suspect the real reason for
the visit. Lloyd George, when he was informed, wanted to meet
Poincaré and make some definite attempts to iron out the "difficulties".
"The impetuous Celt", as Jules Cambon called him, was again going to
the crux of the issue. Instead, Poincaré arranged that Sixtus
should meet the British Prime Minister in London. Sixtus arrived
in London on the evening of May 22nd and went to Downing Street
the following day. Lloyd George wanted to arrange discussions among
persons capable of making responsible decisions. With this in mind
he wrote Ribot suggesting a meeting between the two Kings and Pres-
ident Poincaré and their Ministers. Ribot answered promptly,
which was unusual in itself; he also agreed to the meeting. The invitation was sent to the King of Italy but Sonnino was never persuaded to come with his Monarch. Lloyd George entreated with Sixtus to stay in London until he had secured some satisfaction from Sonnino. Still nothing was heard from Italy. The Prince went back to Paris to interview Paul Cambon again. It was obvious, even from across the Channel, that the communications were stopping at the Quai d'Orsay and going no further. Cambon gave his reasons for not pressing the Italians: disagreement had just come to the surface between the two nations over their respective demands in Asia Minor and their policies in Greece. Both Poincaré and Cambon refused to admit that Italy could have the Trentino until Alsace-Lorraine was restored to France. This program meant that a separate peace with Austria could never be negotiated until Germany was completely defeated. The truth was that France was not willing to see her neighbor achieve her claims even if such expansion eliminated Austria from the war and thereby added a needed military advantage.

Unfortunately, in June, just when these considerations were being made in Paris, the French Chamber accused Bibot of dealing secretly with his Allies. These accusations were all that were necessary to scare the spineless Ribot into absolute refusal to negotiate. Preceding the Inter-Allied Conference in Paris by a month, the debate in the Chamber had the added effect of eliminating any remaining chance of negotiating within the sessions of
that meeting. In washing his hands of the whole matter, Ribot showed Sonnino all the correspondence in which the French had figured. This revelation only increased Sonnino's resistance to Allied meddling in an issue which had by now become a domestic question.

France had been in responsible charge of negotiations. It was in Paris that the negotiations were nipped in the bud and therefore failed to mature. Ambassador Count Bedel attributes their failure to the reason that Czernin's report, drawn up for the Austrian and German Emperors only, was revealed to the Entente. This was the report in which Czernin claimed that Austria was in no state to go on fighting. It is true that the Entente saw the report. It is almost proved that the Duchess of Parma, who was aware of all the proceedings, had showed a copy of the paper to a certain Herr Erzberger. This "rather common little Swabian" had taken the liberty of reading it out to a large meeting of Centre Party delegates at Frankfort who had been sworn to secrecy. The delegates were forbidden to take notes but some of them managed to get the paper in shorthand whence copies shortly appeared in Switzerland and then in Paris. There can be no doubt, then, that the Entente knew of the Austrian Chancellor's report. Accounts of the paper were published in Le Temps and must have filtered through to Lloyd George. It is similarly inexplicable that the Prime Minister nowhere has referred to the report which must have had a bearing
on French policy. In April, 1913, the letters of Emperor Karl to Prince Sixtus were published in Paris. They caused great indignation in Vienna, particularly in the army. Count Csernin handed in his resignation and Emperor Karl traveled to Spa to explain the facts. Main Headquarters dubbed the visit "The Canossa visit". By April 19, the news of Csernin's resignation was in the British papers. On the same date a telegram was released from Vienna in which Karl was purported to have said, "the French Prime Minister, driven into a corner, is endeavoring to escape from the net of his lies in which he has entangled himself by piling up more and more untruths, and he does not hesitate now to make the completely false statement that I recognized that France had a just claim to the reacquisition of Alsace-Lorraine."

For those who were in possession of the Sixtus letters, this denial must have encouraged nothing but pity for the Emperor Karl, whose desire for peace must have been sincere. A story became current in Vienna that Karl had been betrayed by the Confessor of the Empress. Karl had hastily written a draft of a message to Sixtus. He was so uncertain of his French that he entrusted the translation of the document to his erstwhile friend. This Priest changed the text of the message by inserting the word 'just' before 'claims', making the sentence read, "I will submit France's just claims relative to Alsace-Lorraine to my Allies, and endeavor to
the best of my ability to support them."

In May, Prime Minister Balfour was submitted to questioning in the House of Commons by Mr. Runciman. These questions were put to Mr. Balfour:

1. Why at the time of the receipt of the letter did our Government not communicate it to the American Government?

2. Did our Prime Minister inform the Foreign office at the time that the communication had been made and shown to him?

3. Were the negotiations dropped because a demand was made by France, not only for Alsace-Lorraine, but for the 1814 line or even the 1790 line?

Balfour answered each question slowly and convincingly. He was in the United States at the time and knew nothing himself of the negotiations until his return. The American government was therefore not informed. Lloyd George had not informed the Foreign office as the negotiations had originated with Prince Sixtus and the French who were bound to secrecy. Britain had never encouraged France to hope for the 1814 boundary. Balfour finished his statement by saying that it was obvious that the whole maneuver had been an attempt to divide the Allies.

The Paris papers came the closest to denying what was the actual truth. "Nothing could be more criminal than the endeavor of certain pacifist circles in England to insinuate that under M. Briand, under M. Ribot, and under M. Clemenceau, nothing but
French imperialism has stood in the way of a satisfactory peace, and nothing could be more ludicrously untrue."
CHAPTER VI

Within Germany, the year 1917 saw the widening of the gap between the Kaiser, the Chancellor, the Supreme Command and the deputies of the Reichstag. Bethmann-Hollweg, in trying to assume a middle position, had succeeded in losing what little faith either faction had in him. The Reichstag majority wanted a peace Chancellor; the Supreme Command wanted another Prince von Bülow; what they had was a flabby personality who wanted peace but was afraid to admit it. There is no question but that Bethmann-Hollweg knew of the Austrian peace moves. Main Headquarters was naturally kept in ignorance of them. By July, 1917 it became impossible for the unfortunate Bethmann-Hollweg to continue along the middle path he had chosen. In that month, the majority brought matters to a head when they proposed that the Reichstag should announce itself as in favor of a "peace understanding". The ministerial crisis which ensued was directly due to the peace issue.

On the afternoon of July 6, The Minister of War, von Stein, telegraphed the Kaiser who was in Vienna, asking him to call a Crown Council. Bethmann-Hollweg was informed of the step as were Main Headquarters who had pronounced themselves willing to review the military fronts for individual deputies. At Bellevue Castle where the Council met, the Kaiser decided that the meeting was concerned with political affairs with which the military authorities had nothing to do. Accordingly, Main Headquarters were dismissed.
At the Council which was held, four parties, National Liberals, Centre, Independents, and Social Democrats drew up a "program of demands" centered around equal universal suffrage in Prussia and a parliamentary ministry. The Council then adjourned until six o'clock the same evening. When von Hindenburg was informed of the forthcoming meeting, he wired that Main Headquarters must be present as changes in internal policies affected the military just as surely as did the production of munitions. The Kaiser bluntly replied that the presence of von Stein would fulfill constitutional requirements. Bethmann-Hollweg appeared to concur with this view. Since the Chancellor wanted peace, it is no wonder that the Supreme Command were not allowed to attend. It proved impossible to escape the long arm of the military; Deputy Stresemann was curious enough to ask for an explanation for the absence of von Hindenburg and Ludendorff and Bethmann-Hollweg handed in his resignation. On July 11, Ambassador Prince Hohenlohe passed on a telegram from Vienna in which Austria requested that Bethmann-Hollweg be retained, and that in no case should Prince Bülow be appointed. Bülow's comment on the telegram was, "it was indeed quite understandable that Vienna should not want me back in power.... Vienna knew that I should have got word of these attempts (to negotiate a separate peace) and opposed them with every force at my disposal.... Within twenty-four hours I could have got a tight grip on the Dual Monarchy." In accordance with Austria's wishes, Bethmann-Hollweg's resignation was
It looked as if there were to be a vacant office anyway; the following day when Ludendorff heard that the Chancellor's resignation had been declined, the General requested permission to resign. Not half an hour after sending off this letter, Ludendorff was informed that the Reichstag "is intending to make a declaration in the shape of a peace offer". Mr. Schödemann of the Social Democrats stated the consensus of the deputies: "The war cannot be decided by arms this year.... If peace does not come soon, it might mean collapse.... We must not prolong the war by demands for conquests and indemnities. If we only say so, the enemy may collapse." It was also the opinion of the majority that Bethmann-Hollweg should resign. On July 13 that vacillating Chancellor was out of a job and Ludendorff withdrew his resignation. The new selection was Dr. Michaelis, a pious man but one who was utterly lacking in any knowledge of foreign affairs. Nevertheless, he fitted the Supreme Command's requirements for Chancellor.

On July 19, the Peace Resolution passed the Reichstag by 214 Liberal, Socialist and Centre Party votes against 116 votes and 17 abstentions. This Resolution insisted that Germany wanted a "peace by understanding", a peace with no territorial annexations, and without political or economic measures of constraint. Herr Michaelis made his first speech as Chancellor in his acceptance of the Resolution. He covered a wide field of politics, beginning with
the origins of the war, and ending with Prussian franchise reform.
His tone was not that of a man who had just accepted a peace resolution:
in the course of the speech he maintained that "the frontiers of the
German Empire must be made secure for all time", and that there
ought to be no economic wars after the present war was finished.
"Those aims", he continued, "may be attained within the limits of
your resolution as I interpret it." The trend of the Chancellor's
speech was definitely more conservation than that of the Reichstag's
Majority Resolution. Since the body had no means of imposing its
will on the Chancellor and Kaiser, it was obvious to the British
that the Chancellor's opinions transcended those of the Reichstag.
Two days later, at a Belgian Independence Day Rally, Lloyd George
addressed himself to the Michaelis speech: "I intended the speech as
an invitation to the German Chancellor to clear up obscurities in
his declaration to the Reichstag." This was the beginning of a
controversy in England which culminated in a full dress debate in
the House of Commons on July 26. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, in holding
that the Reichstag Resolution came from the German people, asked for
a reciprocal declaration from the British House of Commons. Mr.
Trevelyan seconded Mr. MacDonald. "Both were heard by the House
courteously but coldly." Mr. Asquith was firm in his belief
that the Reichstag Resolution did not mean that the moderates were in
power in Germany; on the contrary, it was his interpretation that
the extremists had taken over. Mr. Bonar Law, speaking for the
Government, declared that Mr. Macdonald had no conception of the real issue which was being fought out. The proposal was rejected by a vote of 148 to 19.

The next serious peace proposal was to come from Rome. On August 16, the Pope's Peace Message reached the belligerents. The British forwarded the appeal to France, Italy and the United States since those States had no diplomatic relations with the Vatican. The Pope's peace was to be based on a limitation of armaments, the renunciation of indemnities by all parties and the evacuation of all territory not ethnically occupied. It was not at all well received in most Entente quarters where it was felt that the Vatican favored the Central Powers.

A summary of the text of the message was received in the United States on August 11. Balfour wanted Wilson to relay his private views on the subject through House who was doing as much as he could to influence Wilson toward a conciliatory reply which would leave the door open to the Central Powers. Wilson, however, was not interested in smoothing the path toward a peace with German extremists in any way. In fact the President told House to cable Balfour, "I do not know that I shall make any reply at all to the Pope's proposals..." However, the President added he would be glad to summarize his ideas on the subject which circumstances might force him to incorporate into a reply:
1. There is no intimation that the Central Powers might accept; therefore, there is too much of the "blind adventure" about it.

2. The status quo ante is not a satisfactory basis for peace.

3. Other Governments cannot accept Germany's pledges as that country has disregarded treaties and the accepted principles of international law.

The French and Russians were not as explicit in their reactions as Wilson. The French simply felt that any reply would be inexpedient. M. Jusserand saw in the Note a desperate attempt to re-assume the status quo which his people would never sanction. On the other hand, the Russians were anxious for a reasonable peace reply.

The Russian Ambassador visited House to express his concern over the note. "He believes if it is treated lightly and not in a spirit of liberalism it will immediately split Russia and will probably cause the downfall of the present ministry."

In deference to the Allies President Wilson decided to answer formally and to base his reply on a refutation of all that the German Government stood for with an invitation to German Liberals to join in a peace of reconciliation. House was enjoying a brief respite from the August heat in Magnolia, Massachusetts when Wilson completed the draft of his note. In his diary, House wrote, "This has been one of the busiest and most important days of the summer."
The President sent his reply to the Pope's peace proposal.... I did not receive it until twelve o'clock and... I succeeded in reading, digesting, and answering it in time to mail on the Federal Express.

House made one revision in the first draft and returned it to Washington by special mail pouch. Wilson was again persuaded by House to change his choice of words to spare the feelings of the Allies. On August 23, House and Robert Cecil urged that the Allies be sent advanced copies but it was too late to change the date of publication. Wilson's consent was, "the differences of opinion can be less embarrassing now than they would have been if I had invited them beforehand."

The reply was published on August 29 and at House's suggestions, which was confirmed by Balfour, was to be considered the joint reply of the Associated Powers.

Applause of the President's message was instantaneous. Walter Page wrote from St. Ives where he was resting, "The President's letter to the Pope gives him the moral and actual leadership now. The Hohenzollerns must go. ...there is an unbounded enthusiasm here for the President's letter and for the President in general."

The German-Americans saw in it a splendid assurance to the German liberals in the homeland. The New York German Herald and the New Yorker Staats-Zeitung urged those of German ancestry to stand behind the President. Bernard Ridder allowed a signed statement to
appear in the Staats-Zeitung in which he drew upon the fact that the President's reply closed the door to the German Government but left it open to the German people. A distinction between the People and the Government was one of the most fortunate ideas which Wilson over emphasized.

Wilson's reply was read to the National Council then in session in Moscow. A dispatch to the New York Times noted that this was the first and only incident that had brought complete agreement in the Convention. "The delegates rose and cheered wildly."

This reply terminated the episode of the Vatican's peace proposal, as far as the Entente was concerned: The German reply was not made until September 19 although the text did not reach the United States until the 23rd. The Vatican was somewhat upset to find that the reply was in Allied papers before the answer had been officially passed on to the Vatican. The restoration of Belgium was not mentioned; neither was Serbia or Poland mentioned. These omissions seemed more significant than anything in the text.

The general apathy concerning the German reply was the surest indication of the conviction that nothing would come of the exchange anyway. Some felt more relieved than disappointed to learn that the Kaiser had done so little with his opportunity to further peace. The German Press was almost solid in its approval of the reply. The opinion was made that by referring to the Reichstag Peace Resolution of July, the Kaiser implied the restoration of Belgium. The Vossische Zeitung thought that the very limitations of the note were
advantageous, for to register various demands would only mean "to pour oil into the flames of dispute."

The emptiness of Wilhelm's reply implied some extenuating circumstances. What those circumstances were was disclosed in August, 1919, when Dr. Michaelis, Field Marshal von Hindenburg, General Ludendorff and Secretary of State Halffterich revealed the events which delayed the German reply and the reasons for its vacuity.

Germany had become involved in a series of secret negotiations which promised to be very fruitful. The negotiations were precipitated by an effort on the part of the British envoy to the Vatican to forget peace terms out of Germany. The envoy's mission was unusual in that neither Lloyd George nor Herbert Asquith was informed of the move until Michaelis and Ludendorff published their revelations.

It seems that on June 26, Monsignor Pacelli was commissioned by the Pope to convey a letter to the Kaiser. Bethmann-Hollweg was at General Headquarters at the time and saw the letter in which the Pope assured Wilhelm that he was still devoting all his energies to secure peace. Of his interview with the Papal envoy, Bethmann-Hollweg later said, "From the way in which the questions were put, I gained the impression, which was subsequently confirmed, that I had to do with rather more than non-binding conversations on the possibilities of peace and that the nuncio was carrying out a carefully defined mission."

Accordingly, the Chancellor
answered the envoy's questions as definitely as was possible;

Germany would be willing to limit armaments and to submit disputes to an international court of arbitration; as to Belgium, "I said that we should restore its complete independence." Alsace-Lorraine, it appeared, would be no obstacle either if it were found that France was willing to reach an agreement. On July 14, Bethmann-Hollweg's resignation was accepted and he was no longer connected with the Government. The new Chancellor, Dr. Michaelis, did not take up the threads of the negotiations until September.

On September 15, 1913, the Apostolic Nuncio in Munich passed on a letter to the Chancellor in which the hope was expressed that Germany would make some statement as regards Belgium. If she should do so, the Nuncio had it in good faith that Britain would consider making peace. The Cardinal Secretary of State seconded this conviction. Michaelis conferred with von Kuhlmann, the Secretary of State, who agreed that the comments of the Cardinal Secretary carried considerable weight. On the other hand, the wording of the letter itself did not seem to justify Germany's making such a declaration. With these conflicting views, Michaelis agreed that Kuhlmann should select a man to act as an intermediary in sounding out the British. At a Crown Council on September 11, at Bellevue Castle the Kaiser approved the commissioning of a neutral person. Michaelis asked Wilhelm for the authority to declare that Germany would be prepared to restore the territorial integrity
and sovereignty of Belgium if matters should develop so far as to make a declaration of the sort expedient. The Supreme Command thought it necessary to retain control of Liège in view of the contiguity of the Rhenish-Westphalian industrial area. Ludendorff felt "we should only be absolutely safe... if we were in military occupation of the whole of Belgium and hold the coast of Flanders.... The question is whether we ought to continue the war until we reach that goal." The General concluded that if England did not retain any territory in France, the occupation of the Flanders coast would be unnecessary provided Belgium were closely associated with Germany economically. Wilhelm decided in favor of Michaelis on the condition that this declaration should bring peace within 1917 and obviate the necessity of another winter campaign.

The neutral party whom von Kuhlman was to select, was also to be informed of the other conditions which an agreement must meet if it were acceptable to Germany. These terms were as follows:

1. German colonies must be restored.
2. German frontiers must assume their pre-war proportions.
3. All indemnities must be dismissed.

The day after the conference, Michaelis wrote Ludendorff thanking the General for upholding his views at the meeting. There is no question, therefore, but that the Chancellor and the Supreme Command were in complete agreement as to the disposition of Belgium. "Restoration" of Belgium meant a Belgium technically free but
economically so closely tied to Germany that she would have to be politically allied to her also.

While these conversations clearly indicated that the terms which Germany was willing to make would never have appealed to the Entente, von Kuhlmann had selected an old personal friend in the Spanish Ambassador to Brussels, the Marquis de Villalobar, to act as his confidant. He got in touch with the Spaniard through Baron von der Lancken, who was the head of the Political Department of the German Military Government in occupied Belgium. He was the same man who had played such a sinister role in the Edith Cavell execution in 1915.

On September 9th, the Ambassador asked Madrid's permission to meet the German Secretary of State in a secret place, perhaps Cologne. The Spanish Foreign office forbade its representative to meet with the German but the telegram came too late as the meeting had already taken place. Villalobar met Kuhlmann secretly at Cologne on the 10th. The latter confided in him to the extent of giving the impression that "Germany appears inclined to propose a peace which would meet the greater part of the Allies' desires and especially those of England regarding the independence of Belgium and other matters which are of interest to Great Britain."

Baron Lancken went to Berlin soon thereafter and upon his return gave the Spanish representative the impression that if "an absolutely private and secret conversation could be brought about between a
German and an English diplomatist, without in any way implying peace negotiations, they were confident of being able to settle the matter...."

The British were not informed of any of these maneuvers until Sir Arthur Hardinge, Minister to Spain, telegraphed Balfour that the Germans were desirous of entering peace negotiations. Balfour's summary of the events which led up to the communique was passed to the Cabinet on September 20. In the memorandum, Balfour suggested that the maneuver might have been prompted by the desire to split the Allies. For this reason, he asked that the Cabinet authorize him to call a meeting of the Allied Ambassadors at which he would inform them that a neutral power had just informed Britain of Germany's desires to enter pourparlers. Lloyd George was in Wales taking a short holiday when this matter arose in the Cabinet. Bonar Law informed him by letter and the Foreign Minister returned to London immediately. Upon his arrival, Lloyd George found that new developments had occurred. Balfour had just learned through Paul Cambon that Germany had approached the French too, but in a more devious and informal manner. It seems that von Lancken had commissioned a lady, half-French and half-German, to speak to Briand. She told the French Minister that Germany was ready for peace and gave the terms which were so adequate that the French feared trickery. The terms included the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine, the inde-
pendence of Serbia, concessions to Italy (Trentino?), the independence of Belgium, and colonial concessions to Great Britain. The Cabinet decided that Lloyd George should go to Cologne to meet Painleve, there to reach an agreement with the French Minister on the British answer to the Spanish Government. At this juncture, the British learned that the French held the German approach to them to be serious. Briand was the only one who was in favor of entering into the negotiations however. Painleve, Ribot and Lloyd George were more afraid that the offer was bona fide than that it was a fake. Ribot knew that the French would never stay in the war if Alsace-Lorraine were already secured. Lloyd George, to the satisfaction of those who blame the British for the failure of this peace effort, commented on the unity of French and British views——

"that it was undesirable to enter into any negotiations until the German military power was broken." The British were not blandly dismissing the German offer without a confirmation of their complete victory hopes without Russian assistance. Foch was confident of victory the next year and his assurance was all that was necessary.

On the 8th of October, a meeting of French, American and Japanese Ambassadors with the Chargé d'Affaires of Italy and Russia confirmed the sending of a telegram to the German Government which the British Cabinet had already drawn up. The telegram merely stated the willingness of the Allies to consider any peace proposal
which the German Government might issue.

Although no formal reply was given to this telegram, von Kuhlmann's speech, delivered on October 9, served well enough as an answer. In it, the Allies were fully informed of German intentions, for the Secretary of State made the statement: "there is but one answer to the question, 'Can Germany in any form make any concessions with regard to Alsace-Lorraine?' The answer is: 'No, never!'"

He declared that the question about which the struggle was continuing was not, primarily, the Belgian question, but "the question for which Europe is being turned more and more into a heap of ruins is the question of the future of Alsace-Lorraine." This point was the only absolute "impediment" to peace.

Why had von Kuhlmann opened the door only to close it again? He had the Kaiser's permission to announce that Belgium and Alsace-Lorraine would be restored; the Reichstag majority was also behind him; it was enough, apparently, that the Supreme Command was not. Since Bethmann-Hollweg's resignation, Wilhelm had retired more and more from the political scene; his disinterest promoted the subordination of the Foreign Office to the Supreme Command. Dr. Michaelis was scarcely the man to impose his will on the Military; yet he has officially denied that Ludendorff et al. hampered the action of the political heads in any way; the blame for the failure must fall on his head by his own admission. What could have prompted this abrupt substitution of Alsace-Lorraine in the place
of Belgium as the block to negotiations cannot be explained.

Lloyd George believed that von Kühllmann was sincere in his peace desires but his belief cannot be documented.
CONCLUSION

"As far as Europe was concerned, Diplomacy in the war counted little. When it appeared to fail most, it was when the Allies were having military reverses; when it seemed to succeed, it was because the Allies were having military success.... If Diplomacy could do little in Europe to win the war, it happily could do little to lose it. German military success, when it existed, made Allied diplomacy fruitless and would have made it so, however perfect." It is obvious that there are two points at which a nation is peace-minded: when the complete defeat of the enemy is accomplished; or when his own defeat is a fait accompli. What is not so obvious is that part played by the "imponderables"; Sir Edward Grey's conclusion relegates the human factor to an unenviable position. He who did so much to negate the American peace efforts should realize his own influence upon the course of events.

Woodrow Wilson and Edward House failed to bring the belligerents to a peace table in 1915 and 1916 because Edward Grey accurately calculated American strength and knew that its application against the Central Powers, of which he had been assured, would bring Germany to complete defeat. Colonel House was not neutral; everything of importance which he undertook failed; he did not affect French or German policy; it is very important to remember that he did affect British policy. House
was considered to be, and was, Wilson's alter ego up until their misunderstanding over the meaning of "intervention". His inferences carried weight, therefore. His attendance to details in developing personal friendships cemented Anglo-American relations. His peace efforts failed because the British were never willing to forfeit their status.

There were opportunities for peace in December and January, 1916-1917. Germany did not allow the opportunities to develop by committing herself to the use of unrestricted submarine warfare. Germany was fully cognizant of the results of such a measure; United States' entrance into the war followed the proclamation in two months. Bethmann-Hollweg must assume the responsibility for his acquiescence to the military rendered the failure of negotiations positive. The Germans claimed that Wilson's speech of January 22, 1917, caused them definitely to reject the President as mediator; there was no basis for their interpretation of the President's speech which favored the Central Powers as much as it did the Entente.

The Austrian move toward a separate peace was aborted by French desires to fulfill their revanche. Had the United States not been joined to the Alliance as an Associated Power, and thereby confirmed British hopes for complete victory, Lloyd George probably would have insisted that the French lessen their claims; he would also have discussed directly with Baron Sonnino rather than working through the French.
The Vatican and Kühlmann negotiations overlapped. Their failure rested with the political branch of the German Government which failed to take advantage of the Allies' offer to discuss terms. It is doubtful whether the Allies would have presented terms capable of being discussed after Foch had assured Lloyd George of complete victory even without Russian assistance. The "opportunity" for peace was actually non-existent, therefore, and in some measure, absolves Germany from blame.
FOOTNOTES


(2) Ibid.

(3) The Mexican question and the Panama Tolls controversy were the exceptions. For an account of these two issues, see Ray Stannard Baker, Woodrow Wilson Life and Letters, New York, 1931, vol. IV.

(4) Governor Hogg provided House with the title of Colonel when he appointed him to his staff. See Charles Seymour, The Intimate Papers of Colonel House, Boston and New York, 1926, vol. I, 37.

(5) James S. Hogg, 1892-94
Charles A. Culberson, 1894-98
Joseph D. Sayers, 1898-1902
Samuel Lanham, 1902-1906


(7) Ibid., 45.

(8) Ibid., 248.


(10) House said of the Admiral, "von Tirpitz was the most anti-English of any of the German officials with whom I talked." See Seymour, op. cit., 251.

(11) Ibid., 259.

(12) Ibid., 260.

(13) In the Spring of 1915, and in the Winter of 1916.

(14) It is interesting to note in relation to Page's reputation as the most biased of United States' representatives abroad, that he directly contradicted House's opinion by saying "...yet Colonel House's visit has great historical value, for the experience afterward convinced him that Great Britain had had no part in bringing on the European war, and that Germany was solely responsible." Hendrick, op. cit., 299.
(15) Seymour, op. cit., 271.

(16) Ibid., 242. Walter Millis cites this case as the first of a series of moves in which "the amateur diplomat" was cleverly used by the British to further their own ends. See Walter Millis, The Road to War, Boston and New York, 1935, 23.

(17) Seymour, op. cit., vol. II, 158.

(18) Sazonov maintained that this offer was a direct outgrowth of his suggestion to Sir George Buchanan, British Ambassador to Petersburg. See Serge Sazonov, Fateful Years, New York, 1927, 236.


(20) Ibid., 314.


(22) Kautsky, op. cit., 184-185.

(23) Ibid., 237.

(24) Ibid., 256.

(25) Ibid., 273.

(26) Russia's mobilization is commonly but erroneously given as one of the immediate causes of the war. For an interesting confirmation of the facts, see General Yamushkевич, "Russia's Mobilization as a Cause of War," The New York Times Current History, XIII, (Dec., 1917), 505; For an interesting variation, see Herman Lutz, "Lord Grey's Responsibility for Russia's Mobilization," Current History, XXII, (May, 1925), 265.

(27) Kautsky, op. cit., 348.

(28) Ibid.


(30) Seymour, op. cit., 282.
Alleged peace terms at this date seem to have been covered by these three demands: the restoration and indemnification of Belgium; disarmament, and a return to the status quo ante.


"I was so fearful in reporting the dangerous part of this interview, on account of the many spies not only in my own Embassy, but also in the State Department, that I sent but a very few words in a roundabout way by Courier direct to the President." Gerard, op. cit., 185.
The suggestion of using this doctrine in March, 1915, to begin negotiations did not originate with House. Actually, Grey and Tyrrell had developed the idea in its application to this War. See Seymour, op. cit., vol. I, 368-370.

Ibid., vol. II, 131.

These were the terms agreed upon:

1. Recognition of the new kingdom of Poland.
2. Return of Upper-Alsace to France.
3. Evacuation of French territory, reserving the right to strategic and economic frontier adjustments.
4. Restoration of Belgium with certain economic guarantees; if the guarantees are not satisfactory, annexation of Liege.
5. Incorporation of Luxembourg into the German Empire.
6. Restoration of German colonies including the Belgian Congo.
7. Compensation to Germany for commercial losses.


"I do not hesitate to declare that as things stand at present, England will be forced to sue for peace within five months as the result of launching an unrestricted U-boat war." (Chief of the Admiralty Staff, Admiral v. Holtzendorff to Field Marshal v. Hindenburg). Ibid., Supplements, p. T. IV, 1216; See Vol. I, 306, for confirmation of the fact that Germany realized that the reopening of unrestricted submarine warfare meant war with the United States.


On April 26, 1917, Colonel House conferred with Balfour, who was in the United States to encourage Allied cooperation. While House did not learn the details of the Treaties, he was informed of their existence and briefly, of their contents. On April 30, House and Balfour had dinner with Wilson at the White House. Of the intimate conversation which followed, House wrote as follows: "the ground we covered was exactly the same as Balfour and I had covered in our conference Saturday." See Seymour, op. cit., vol. III, 42-51.


Seymour, op. cit., vol. II, 68.
In August, 1914, Lansdowne had been in favor of going to war with Germany whether or not Belgium were invaded.


The decision to re-open unrestricted submarine warfare was decided upon at a conference at Castle Fless on August 30-31, 1916. See Ludendorff, op. cit., vol. I, 280-282.

Submarine warfare was not specifically mentioned but was implied through reference to a cable of May 4 in which it was stated that Germany would restrict the use of the submarine of the United States demanded British accordance to principles of international law; if this prerequisite were ignored, Germany reserved the right to do as she saw fit.


The New York Times, January 23, 1917, 3: Wilson's son-in-law, Secretary of the Treasury McAdoo and Bernstorff were both accused of using their political knowledge to speculate on the Exchange.
Located in Anatolia and under Turkish Suzerainty in 1917.

Count Mensdorff was responsible for most of these rumors.

Quoted in Ludendorff, op. cit., 437.

George, op. cit., vol. IV, 248.

Segnor Giolitti, the Conservative leader, and Sonnino were vying for the support of the King of Italy.


Ibid., April 26, 1918, 339:3.

Ibid., May 24, 1918, 402:1.

There was no appreciable difference between the 1790 and the 1814 lines. By both boundaries, France secured Alsace-Lorraine.


Bulow, op. cit., 298.


George, op. cit., vol. IV, 272.


Ibid., 158.

Ibid., 163.

Ibid., 168.


(98) Bernard Ridder was President of the *Staats-Zeitung*.


(100) Ibid., Sept. 24, 1917, 3:1.

(101) Ludendorff, *op. cit.*, vol. II, 481.

(102) Ibid., 497.

(103) George, *op. cit.*, vol. IV, 304.

(104) Ibid., 313.


(106) George, *op. cit.*, 317.

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