

OUTLINES GERMAN POLICY

CHANCELLOR ANSWERS PEACE TERMS BY WILSON.

Von Hertling Says He is Still Optimistic Regarding Negotiations With Slavs.

Amsterdam, Jan. 25.—In his address before the Reichstag main committee yesterday Chancellor von Hertling referred to the negotiations with the Russians at Brest-Litovsk saying he held fast to the hope that a good conclusion would be arrived at. He continued:

"Our negotiations with the Ukrainian representatives are in a more favorable position. Here, too, difficulties have yet to be overcome but the prospects are favorable. We hope shortly to reach conclusions with Ukraine which will be in the interest of both parties and also economically advantageous.

"One result, gentlemen, might be recorded as you all know. The Russians last month proposed to issue an invitation to all the belligerents to participate in the negotiations. Russia submitted proposals of a very general character. At that time we accepted the proposal to invite the belligerents to take part in the negotiations, on the condition, however, that the invitation should have a definite period for its acceptance. At 10 o'clock on the evening of January 4 the period expired. No answer had come and as a result we were no longer under the obligations and had a free hand for separate peace negotiations with Russia. Neither were we longer bound, of course, by the general peace proposals submitted to us by the Russian delegation.

Wilson and Lloyd George.

"Instead of the reply which was expected but which was not forthcoming," Chancellor von Hertling continued, "two declarations were made by enemy statesmen—Premier Lloyd George's speech and President Wilson's speech. I willingly admit that Mr. Lloyd George altered his tone. He no longer indulges in abuse and appears desirous of again demonstrating his ability as a negotiator, which I had formerly doubted. I cannot go so far as many opinions which have been expressed in neutral countries which would read in Mr. Lloyd George's speech a serious desire for peace, and even a friendly disposition. It is true he declares he does not desire to destroy Germany, and never desired to destroy her. He even has words of respect for our political, economic and cultural position. But other utterances also are not lacking, and the ideal continually comes to the surface that he has to pronounce judgment on Germany, charging her with being guilty of all possible crimes. That is an attitude with which we can have nothing to do, and in which we can discover no trace of serious purpose to attain peace. We are to be the guilty ones over whom the Entente is now sitting in judgment. That compels me to give a short review of the situation and the events preceding the war, at the risk of repeating what long ago was said.

End of Dismemberment.

"The establishment of the German empire in the year 1771 made an end of dismemberment. By the union of its tribes the German empire in Europe acquired a position corresponding to its economic and cultural achievements and the claims founded thereon. Bismarck crowned his work by the alliance with Austria-Hungary. It was purely a defensive alliance, so conceived and willed by the exalted allies from the first. Not even the slightest thought of its misuse for aggressive aims ever occurred in the course of decades. The defensive alliance between Germany and the Danube monarchy, closely connected by old traditions and allied to us by common interest, was to serve especially for maintenance of peace.

"But Bismarck had even then, as he was often reproached for having an obsession in regard to coalition, and events of subsequent time have shown it was no vision of error. The danger of hostile coalitions which roused the central powers often made its appearance. By King Edward's isolation policy the dream of coalition became a reality. The German empire, progressing and growing in strength, stood in the way of British imperialism. In France lust of revenge and Russian aspirations of expansion this British imperialism found only too ready aid. Thus future plans, dangerous for us, were formed.

War on Two Fronts.

"The geographical situation of Germany in behalf of itself had always brought nearer to us the danger of war on two fronts, and now it became increasingly visible. Between Russian and France an alliance was concluded whose participants

were twice as numerous as the population of the German empire and Austria-Hungary. Republican France lent the Russia of the czar billions to construct strategical railways in the kingdom of Poland in order to facilitate an advance against us. The French republic drew on its last man for three years of service. Thus France, with Russia, built up armaments extending to the limit of the capabilities of both, thereby pursuing aims which our enemies now term imperialistic.

"It would have been a neglect of duty had Germany remained a calm spectator of this game and had we not also endeavored to create an armament which would protect us against future enemies. I may, perhaps, recall that I, as a member of the Reichstag, very frequently spoke on these matters and, on the occasion of new expenditure on armament, pointed out that the German people, in consenting to these, solely desired to pursue a policy of peace and such armaments were only imposed on us to ward off the danger threatening from a possible enemy. It does not appear that any regard was paid to these words abroad.

Wrong Done in 1871.

"And Alsace Lorraine of which Lloyd George speaks again? He speaks of the wrong Germany did in 1871 to France. Alsace Lorraine—you need not be told but abroad they appear still to be ignorant of things—Alsace Lorraine composes what is known for the most part purely German regions which by a century long of violence and illegality were severed from the German empire and until finally in 1779 the French revolution swallowed up the last remnants. Alsace and Lorraine then became French provinces.

"When in the war of 1871 we demanded back the districts which had been criminally wrested from us that was not a conquest of foreign territory but rightly and properly speaking what today is called disannexation and this disannexation was then expressly recognized by the French national assembly, the constitutional representative of the French people at that time, March 29, 1871, by a large majority of votes.

"And in England, too, gentlemen, language quite other than is heard today has been heard. I can appeal to a classic witness. It is none other than the famous British historian and author, Thomas Carlyle, who in a letter to The Times in December, 1870, wrote: 'No people has had such a bad neighbor as Germany has possessed during the last 400 years in France.'

Frontier Wall.

"Germany would have been mad had she not thought of erecting such a frontier wall between herself and such a neighbor when opportunity offered.

"Observe that I have not repeated a very hard expression which Carlyle used about France. I know of no law of nature, no resolution of heavenly parliaments, whereby France alone of all earthly beings was not obliged to restore stolen territories if the owners from which they had been snatched had an opportunity of reconquering them. And respected England press organs expressed themselves in a like sense. I mention, for example, The Daily News.

"I now come to President Wilson. Here, too, I recognize that the tone appears to have changed. The unanimous reception of Mr. Wilson's attempt in reply to the Pope's note, to sow discord between the German government and the German people has had its effect. This unanimous rejection might of itself lead Mr. Wilson on the right path. A beginning to that end has perhaps been made, for there is now at any rate no longer talk about oppression of the German people by an autocratic government and the former attacks on the house of Hohenzollern have not been repeated.

Wilson's Peace Programme

"I shall not enlarge upon the distorted representation of German policy which is contained in Mr. Wilson's message but will deal in detail with the points which Mr. Wilson lays down there, not less than fourteen points, in which he formulates his peace programme; and I pray your indulgence in dealing with these as briefly as possible.

"The first point is the demand that there shall be no more secret international agreements. History shows it is we above all others who would be able to agree to the publicity of diplomatic documents. I recall that our defensive alliance with Austria-Hungary was known to the world from 1888 while the offensive agreement of the enemy States first saw the light of publicity during the war, through the revelations of the secret Russian archives. The negotiations at Brest-Litovsk are being conducted with full publicity. This proves that we are quite ready to accept this proposal and declare publicity of negotiations to be gene-

(Continued on page 7, column 1.)

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