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Personal file

Translation (from French original)

For Mrs. Melba -

Conditions in Germany According to German Catholic Sources, with Suggestions from these Sources for Peace Terms

Authoritative evidence indicates that in Germany there is daily increase in lassitude, moral depression, desire to see the end of the war, opposition to the Nazi Party, belief that the war, if not lost, at least cannot be won. This sentiment is apparent not only among the civil population, but also in a large part of the Army. The causes of this frame of mind are: the unexpected prolongation of the war; the great loss in human life; the enormous number of war wounded; the call to the colors of practically the whole male population; the physical and moral exhaustion; the worsening of the food situation; the increasing and almost complete lack of all commodities; and, last but not least, the terrible Allied bombardments. According to Army opinion as well, the losses seem exaggerated; doubts are spreading; means of transportation are insufficient; supplies of war materials are decreasing; the war is lasting too long, contrary to every prediction; the High Command changes too often. Hitler is perhaps the only one who still says he is convinced of victory. But the German people see catastrophe ahead and long to get out of it all.

Why continue under these conditions? Isn't it more sensible to seek a timely arrangement?

Several groups of Germans (both military and civilian) are taking the initiative, insisting that the German people are ready to accept an honorable (in their eyes, not in the eyes of the Regime) peace; that winter threatens with all its sufferings; that the great crisis of November 1941 promises to be even worse this year. What's to be done?

Some groups are saying: it is necessary to put a stop to the increasing destruction of material and moral values, to check the growing hatred; it is necessary to forestall the Bolshevization of Germany. A peace of appeasement is what is wanted which, after the innumerable sacrifices of war, leaves neither hatred nor the spirit of revenge in its wake, especially in the hearts of the youth. In short, it is necessary to be magnanimous in fixing the peace conditions,

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to practice a policy of peace.

If Germany were to be driven to desperation as she was after the last war, it is absolutely certain that this time she would go over to Bolshevism completely; all the more so because the S. S., having the same ideas and same methods as the Bolsheviks, are seeking to get into touch with the latter in order between themselves to bring about peace.

What would be needed, according to these groups, is a neutral personality, acceptable to both parties in strife—for example, the King of Denmark—who would be informed by President Roosevelt of the conditions under which the Allies would accept an armistice, and be ready to take steps looking toward peace and to confer directly with Hitler. The German people at the same time should be informed of what was going on in order that they ^{would} grasp the possibility of an honorable peace, take over the movement themselves, and exert pressure. The first condition, naturally, would be the departure of Hitler and his principal collaborators and the surrendering of power into the hands of generals who hold the confidence of the Allies. In order to avoid civil war in Germany, it would be necessary not to lose sight of the great power of the S.S. formations; they should not be suppressed immediately, but, instead, be taken over as an instrument for the maintenance of order, it being understood, of course, that they would be disbanded later.

What would become of Germany in the opinion of these gentlemen? The answer is: a federal state on the pattern of the Germany of 1914, that is to say, a Germany including Alsace-Lorraine, Danzig, Silesia, Gnesen-Posen, her former colonies, plus Austria, with a portion of the South Tyrol. Bohemia, Slovakia, Croatia, Slovenia would be autonomous States, which might become federated with the German State. Hungary might return to a personal union with Vienna, the capital of the new German State.

Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Russia, and Poland (with revised frontiers) would be as before, free and independent States.

Yugoslavia, under no circumstances, can return to her pre-war status, experience having shown that it was a bad combination, breeding continual disorder. But Serbia, with Cattaro, Montenegro, and old Serbia, would again become an independent kingdom with her northern frontiers the same as in 1914 (Save and the Danube Rivers).

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Naturally, in this federal state complete religious and cultural freedom should prevail. No war indemnities, but a European economic accord with European bank and currency under the control of and financed by the United States.

The establishment of a Jewish state remains a question mark.

The foregoing is the thesis of the first groups.

Other groups also have ideas for a federal state and the prevention of Bolshevism, but they insist above all on the quickest possible winding up of the war and, in order to gain this end, they believe that in addition to the intensive bombardment of Germany, pressure should be exerted on Italy, a country much more vulnerable and tired out than Germany.

Politically, Italy should be told that if it should withdraw from the conflict it would receive favorable peace terms and there should be a time limit set for the reply to these overtures. Militarily, a landing should be made in Italy which could quite easily be successful and certain important Italian centers should be vigorously bombarded. It is probable that the people would rise up against the regime and welcome the arrival of the Allies. The Germans would no longer be in a position to occupy Italy or to defend that country against invasion. Even the Italian Army would have no trouble in driving the Germans back over the frontiers. A landing on the Dalmatian coast, or in the South, would just as easily cause Germany to totter.

Once Italy were eliminated, Germany would fall within the next four weeks.

Cardinal Faulhaber of Munich would like to inform the Americans of the following:

Innumerable German families have heard absolutely nothing from their soldiers who are prisoners of war in Russia. The Russians simply refuse to give out any news. The Red Cross itself is not even allowed in Russia. For this reason His Eminence would make the following proposal: the nomination of a Swedish committee to go to Russia and bring back some news that would be consoling to these families. In this way they would at least know that some one was looking after the wretched prisoners. This would be an act of true Christian charity.

September 15, 1942.