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April 28, 1945

Dear General O'Dwyer:

I am writing to you and sending you the attached reprint because of our common interest in seeing that this time Germany stays defeated.

Between 1913 and 1917 I was America's Ambassador to Berlin. I saw the Germans at first hand -- about to lose a war, but preparing for a peace they were to win. Two years later, I saw Americans victorious in war, but unprepared for the peace they were to lose.

In my opinion, it was lack of public thinking which lost that peace for our country. Public opinion was woefully uninformed on the nature of the German people, the German General Staff, the economics of reparations, the punishment of war criminals, the partition of Germany. Nor did many people bother to inquire into these matters. Echoing from coast to coast were prejudices and shibboleths which had not the slightest bearing on the real question of what to do with Germany and how to do it.

Today, we have been given another chance.

Our leaders are again trying to plan a lasting peace. But this peace will not "stick" either, unless we, the people, can intelligently support it or constructively criticize it. We must attain, as we never have before, a level of thought and understanding on the basic problems of the peace which shall be so high that it can have no other result but wise action on the part of our leaders.

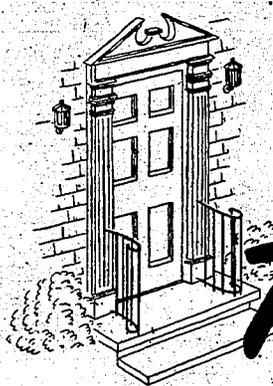
In the attached message, appearing in the nation's newspapers this week, TIME Magazine's writers have, in my opinion, selected a group of the significant problems at stake and have stated them with clarity and fairness. I urge you to read this message, think about it, discuss it with your friends and associates.

Yours very sincerely,

James W. Gerard
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This problem is
RIGHT ON OUR DOORSTEP



You'll soon have eighty million Germans on your doorstep.

What's to be done with them?

When the Big Three met at Yalta they did what they could to blueprint the reformatory in which the German people will live after the war.

Now, during the San Francisco Conference, you have the *duty* as well as the right to make your opinion known—provided you have earned that right, kept yourself informed, nourished your thinking on the raw material of the news—so your opinion will make the greatest, long-term, enlightened sense.

Of course nobody has the complete

► We will eliminate or control all German industry that can be used for military production.

After the first world war we forbade Germany to manufacture arms—set up the best control system we could think of to enforce the ban. For years the midget German army drilled with wooden tanks, dummy

► And what of the idea to split up Germany into two or three small, separate, individual states?

Has partition of a defeated nation ever been a real peace-keeping success? Would it make more sense to turn Germany into an international area under the management of the new world organization?



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You'll soon have eighty million Germans on your doorstep.

What's to be done with them?

When the Big Three met at Yalta they did what they could to blueprint the reformatory in which the German people will live after the war.

But a blueprint will house no Germans. The reformatory itself is yet to be built; and meanwhile thinking on what constitutes the "right" peace for Germany will swing back and forth across a wide arc.

Some will wonder if a "tough" peace isn't just what the Nazis want—to drive the German people back into their arms again.

Others will ask if a peace as hard as Germany richly deserves can ever be enforced—will suggest that a milder, enforceable peace may be a wiser choice.

Still others will say "Germany is rubble. She is devastated as no nation has ever been devastated; she knows now what it means to lose a modern war. Let us not be vindictive."



In any case, it will take more than just our leaders to write the peace and the punishment. It will take millions of men—and you are one of them. You have a great stake in this peace-to-come—and you will have a greater voice in its making than the citizens of any other nation.

Now, during the San Francisco Conference, you have the *duty* as well as the right to make your opinion known—provided you have earned that right, kept yourself-informed, nourished your thinking on the raw material of the news—so your opinion will make the greatest, long-term, enlightened sense.

Of course nobody has the complete answers yet—not even the experts. But perhaps these are the big questions you ought to be chewing on so you can be better prepared to "sit in" when the first decisions are submitted to you.

The Big Three said at Yalta:

► **We are determined to bring all war criminals to just and swift punishment.**



But who *are* the war criminals? Those who can be convicted of actual crimes? Or the whole Nazi leadership, SS and Gestapo, those legions especially trained for torture and brutality? And under what international laws (if any) can they be tried?

► **We are determined to break up for all time the German General Staff.**



But Napoleon thought he had uprooted these professional war-makers forever; Wilson, Clemenceau and Lloyd George thought so—but the Junkers: outsmarted them all. You can't get older men like these—who have practiced war all their lives—to begin to think like peaceful lawyers, doctors, tradesmen—overnight. What *can* be done?

► **We will eliminate or control all German industry that can be used for military production.**



After the first world war we forbade Germany to manufacture arms—set up the best control system we could think of: to enforce the ban. For years the midget German army drilled with wooden tanks, dummy guns. But off came the mask in 1935—and we found Germany had been making arms right under our noses all along . . . How did we fail in 1918? How can we succeed today?

► **In reparation for the damage caused by Germany, Germany will be obliged to make compensation in kind, to the greatest possible extent.**



But how? Do we agree with the Russians that the best way is to force masses of the German people into labor battalions to rebuild the cities they destroyed? Or can greater reparation be made with money earned by Germans working in Germany?

► **And what of the idea to split up Germany into two or three small, separate, individual states?**



Has partition of a defeated nation ever been a real peace-keeping success? Would it make more sense to turn Germany into an international area under the management of the new world organization?

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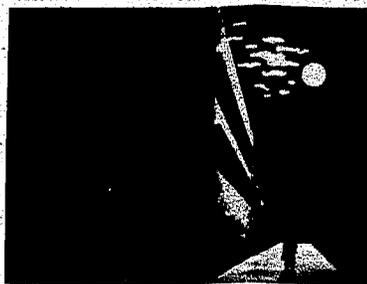
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