

Did Germany Incite Austria in 1914?

New Evidence on the War Guilt Controversy

The continuing importance of the controversy over the complex problem of war guilt in 1914, with all its varied ramifications and interrelations, and its effect upon the post-war psychology of a number of the European Powers of today, and on the success of the great movement toward world peace, amply justify the publication of the symposium herewith presented.

This symposium bears on two chief questions vitally important for any adequate judgment of the charges brought against Germany and Austria as the chief culprits in the great tragedy of 1914: (1) How far was Austria-Hungary justified in her aggression on Serbia after the Sarajevo assassination, and (2) to what extent did Germany support, encourage, or even incite Austria in her anti-Serbian action?

Professor Harry Elmer Barnes, Professor of Historical Sociology at Smith College and well known as the chief exponent in the United States of the new "revisionist" school of historical interpretation of World War origins, leads the symposium with an article based on recent personal contacts and conversations with the chief actors in the great drama of 1914—with Count Leopold Berchtold, former Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister; with Count Alexander Hoyos, Chief of Cabinet of the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry in 1914; with Dr. Friedrich von Wiesner, legal counsellor of the Foreign Ministry and Austrian official investigator of the Sarajevo assassination in 1914; with the German statesmen Gottlieb von Jagow, former Foreign Minister, and Alfred Zimmermann, former German Under-Secretary of State. Professor Barnes also had lengthy interviews with the former Kaiser and the Crown Prince on the subject of the German attitude toward Austrian policy with respect to Serbia. All these Austrian and German authorities are cited by Professor Barnes in his article.

On receiving Professor Barnes's study, the editor of *CURRENT HISTORY* had it set up in type and transmitted to each of the German and Austrian statesmen quoted by the American historian. The replies and comments received follow Professor Barnes's article.

Finally, the symposium is concluded by an article by Michael T. Florinsky, associate of Professor James T. Shotwell, Director of the Division of History and Economics, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Dr. Florinsky in this study takes the view that the "new evidence" presented by Professor Barnes in no way diminishes the implication of Germany's responsibility for not holding Austria back in the fateful days following the Sarajevo assassination and leading directly to the World War.

The group of articles herewith are the first of a series of articles on war responsibility to appear in consecutive issues of this magazine. In August there will be published an important article by Alfred von Wegerer, editor of the *Kriegsschuldfrage*, the well-known (official) German review devoted to the question of war guilt, attacking the findings of the International Versailles Commission of Fifteen, which laid before the Preliminary Peace Conference in March, 1919, a report on the authors of the World War, on the ground that the commission's report was based on inadequate evidence; this article was sent by the editor of *CURRENT HISTORY* to all the original members of this commission for comment, and when published will be accompanied by all the replies received; in addition a well-known historian will reply to Dr. von Wegerer.

Lastly, in a subsequent issue will appear a striking debate on war guilt between two eminent official spokesmen for France and Germany, respectively: Senator Henri de Jouvenel argues the case for France and her allies; Dr. Friedrich von Rosen that for Germany and Austria. Each party to the debate was given an opportunity for rebuttal of his opponent's arguments. The whole debate will comprise fully 35,000 words—EDITOR OF *CURRENT HISTORY* MAGAZINE.

I—Germany Not Responsible for Austria's Action

By HARRY ELMER BARNES

PROFESSOR OF HISTORICAL SOCIOLOGY, SMITH COLLEGE

THE exchange between his Excellency Herr von Jagow and Professor Bernadotte Schmitt in the December, 1927, number of *CURRENT HISTORY* deals with one of the most crucial problems related to the question of responsibility for the World War. The writer of the present article was able during the Summer of 1926 and 1927 to gather a considerable body of revolutionary evidence on this subject which was not accessible to either Herr von Jagow or Professor Schmitt. This information, he believes, will add much to the documentary material available in the premises and will clear up for all time the major issues involved in the relation of Germany to the behavior of Austria during the crisis of 1914. This is a matter of great importance in settling the question of war responsibility. As late as the publication of his memoirs in the Autumn of 1927, Sazonov still accused Germany of primary responsibility for bringing on the war, and based this accusation upon the assertion that Germany initiated and encouraged the Austrian policy toward Serbia in 1914. It is well-known that in 1914 Paléologue constantly insisted, in his conversations with Sazonov, that Germany was the real culprit behind the aggression of Austria. This is admitted by students of war guilt to have had a marked influence upon Sazonov's early determination for war. This article and the accompanying comments will show how little ground there is for this classic contention in the Entente apologia.

In the first place, it is doubtful if any one can get far in this problem merely by calling attention to minor falsifications and misrepresentations by diplomats in 1914, which is the procedure followed for the most part by Professor Schmitt. There can be little doubt that Herr von Jagow may have misrepresented many details, such as dates of the receipt of information, though it would appear certain that his general contentions in his article in *CURRENT HISTORY* are thoroughly sound and well substantiated by the documents. Yet this is not a charge which can be made against Herr von Jagow alone. We would only need to call attention to Poincaré's falsifications in his appeal to Great Brit-

ain at the end of July, 1914; to Viviani's flagrant falsifications of the dates of the mobilizations, to Sazonov's falsifications in his reports to the Czar, and to Sir Edward Grey's complete misrepresentation of Germany's proposals in regard to Belgium and France in his speech of Aug. 3, 1914, to have compelling evidence that Sir Henry Wotton's definition of a diplomat as "an honest man sent abroad to lie in the interests of his country" still held good as a description of foreign secretaries and ambassadors in the great crisis of 1914.

We shall lay aside in this article all personal incriminations and try to set forth clearly and briefly the salient facts in the situation. In the period preceding the Sarajevo murder Austria had captured and decoded a large number of important diplomatic telegrams revealing the plots and machinations of Russia and friendly Balkan States against the interests of Austria-Hungary in this area. The Austrians in June, 1914, were almost as well aware of Hartwig's intrigues against the dual monarchy as we can be today from a study of the relevant documents in the Moscow archives. The statesmen of the dual monarchy had become convinced by the Summer of 1914 that Rumania could no longer be trusted as the chief ally of the Central Powers in the Balkans, and decided that she must be supplanted by Bulgaria. It was, of course, recognized that Russia's chief ally in these subversive schemes was Serbia, and the Austrians were particularly disturbed over the fact that the German Minister in Belgrade was decisively pro-Serb and had been able to convert the Kaiser to at least a benign attitude toward the Serbian cause. Such was the situation when the Archduke Franz Ferdinand was murdered at the end of June, 1914.

A few days after the murder of the Archduke, Count Leopold Berchtold, the Austrian Foreign Minister, sent his trusted associate, Count Alexander Hoyos, to Berlin to request a promise of German support in the impending crisis with Serbia. Count Hoyos arrived in Berlin on July 5 and the Austrian request for German support was presented to the Kaiser at Potsdam by

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Count Ladislaus von Szögyény, the Austrian Ambassador to Germany. Hoyos himself presented the Austrian case to Acting Foreign Minister Zimmermann and Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg. The Austrian plea boiled down to this: The Serbian menace had reached a point where it must be suppressed, in all probability by physical force; if allowed to go on unchecked, it would inevitably produce the destruction of Austria-Hungary and in this way lose for Germany her chief ally. Hoyos and Szögyény further emphasized the fact that it would be much safer to face the Serbian challenge by war in 1914 than at any later date. They held that delay meant better preparation on the part of Russia and a tightening of the Franco-Russian alliance and the English-Russian understanding. In a few years the forceful punishment of Serbia would be almost certain to entail Russian intervention and a European war. In 1914, particularly in view of the atrocious murder of the Archduke, this chastisement of Serbia might be achieved without the calamity of a general European conflict. Szögyény added to this practical argument in his interview with the Kaiser on July 5 a special personal and sentimental plea of dynastic loyalty of the Hohenzollern to the Habsburg—of the virile Wilhelm to the aged and venerable Franz Josef.

The German authorities all agreed without hesitation as to the justice of Austria's case and as to the logic with which it had been presented to Germany. Accordingly, Germany made her famous promise to support Austria in whatever policy she found it necessary to undertake in order to insure her safety against Serbia and Russian intrigues in the Balkans. Bethmann-Hollweg and the Kaiser felt certain that an Austrian war on Serbia would not be likely to produce a European war, but Zimmermann was rather more pessimistic in this regard, though he believed Germany and Austria quite capable of defeating any potential enemies in the event of a European war.

THE DUAL MONARCHY'S PERIL

The following is the core of the whole issue: Austria contended that she could not continue to exist without decisively suppressing the Serbian menace. Germany accepted this interpretation and concluded that her interests made it necessary for her to support Austria rather than to take the risk of the ultimate disintegration of her one and only powerful ally. In long and frank interviews during the Summer of 1927 with Count Berchtold, Count Hoyos



HARRY ELMER BARNES

and Dr. Friedrich von Wiesner, the three most important Austrian diplomats of 1914, the writer was assured by each of these men personally and independently that Austria must rest her case before the bar of historical judgment solely upon the accuracy of her major contention that the Serbian menace threatened the very integrity of the dual monarchy and could not be successfully withstood except through a punitive war against the Serbs or complete Serbian acquiescence in the ultimatum of July 23, 1914. They admitted frankly that they foresaw the possibility of a European war arising out of such action, though they did not believe such complications probable. But they felt it better to accept the chance of a European war than to face what seemed to them certain ruin if they failed to accept the Serbian challenge. This is a view which further evidence seems to have subsequently vindicated as reasonable and just when viewed from the Austrian angle.

There are some who admit that the Austrian case is a strong one in the light of the knowledge we possess today, but they contend that the Austrian action in 1914 was not justified by the knowledge possessed by the Austrian Foreign Office at

the time of the outbreak of the World War. Such writers base their position primarily upon the allegation that all the information which Count Berchtold had in his possession in July, 1914, was Dr. von Wiesner's brief telegraphic report on the Sarajevo murder, which, they allege, Berchtold suppressed lest Germany and the world should discover how little evidence existed of Serbian complicity in the assassination of Franz Ferdinand. Indeed, many support this view on the assumption that the only knowledge possessed by Berchtold was the brief passage of the Wiesner report which was torn from the context by James Brown Scott and Robert Lansing at Paris and gives the impression that Dr. von Wiesner believed Serbia utterly innocent in 1914.

As an actual matter of fact, the Austrian case against Russia and Serbia in 1914 was far stronger than even most scholars imagine. In the first place, the complete Wiesner report shows that in 1914 Austria was certain that the assassins came from Serbia into Bosnia, had been trained and armed by Serbian officers and had been able to pass into Bosnia with the connivance of the Serbian guards on the border. Further, Wiesner's real report to Berchtold in 1914 was not this brief preliminary telegraphic summary, which was designed only to serve pending his return, but a very thorough and complete oral statement presented to Berchtold and his associates after Wiesner came back to Vienna from Sarajevo. Berchtold did not suppress the Wiesner report at all, but merely examined it, noted its contents and then filed it awaiting the return of his commissioner with the full oral report. So complete and convincing was Wiesner's oral report that it was the chief thing which converted Count Tisza to the support of a much more vigorous policy toward Serbia than he had been willing to sanction a week earlier.

RUSSO-BALKAN PLOTS

But Austria was not even limited to the full verbal report of Dr. von Wiesner. For several years before 1914 the Austrians had captured and decoded a great many very important telegrams revealing Russian intrigues in the Balkans and the development of the Serbian plots against Austria. In particular, they had thorough knowledge that Hartwig, the Russian Minister in Serbia, was pursuing an authorized policy in directing the Russo-Balkan plots at the expense of Austria. Count Berchtold informed the writer in the Summer of

1927 that the material in these decoded telegrams was regarded by the Austrian Foreign Office in 1914 as more vital and more incriminating with respect to Serbia than the report of Dr. von Wiesner, but for reasons which are apparent he could not make public the sources of such information in the Summer of 1914. It was also the writer's privilege during the same Summer to have a long conversation with Dr. M. Bogitschevich, the courageous Serbian publicist who has done so much to clear up the facts about the Sarajevo plot and the activities of the Black Hand. He had just come from a complete examination of the Russian Archives containing the pre-war dispatches between Serbia and Russia, and he stated that this material thoroughly confirmed Count Berchtold's suspicions in regard to the policies and activities of Hartwig. Therefore, those who condemn Austrian action in 1914 on the ground that all she knew at that time about Serbia supported the theory of the complete innocence and benevolence of Serbia are sadly ignorant of the actual facts. So much for the case of Austria.

We may now consider that much debated issue as to how far Austrian policy and activities in the crisis of 1914 were affected by the attitude of Germany. It is essential to remember at this point that the chief element in the Franco-Russian charges against Germany is the allegation that Austrian policy in regard to Serbia was originated by and forced upon Austria by Germany. The writer questioned Berchtold, Hoyos and Wiesner in detail upon this point. It will be conceded by all reasonable persons at the outset that the Austrian statesmen of 1914 would not be likely to go beyond the facts in clearing Germany of essential responsibility for Austrian procedure. If they were to distort the facts, they would certainly be likely to do this for the purpose of making the ultimate responsibility seem that of Germany rather than Austria. When they accept the responsibility themselves, any one but the most persistent Hun-baiter is likely to admit that they are keeping well within the bounds of truth.

The Austrian statesmen above referred to frankly admitted that the appeal taken to Germany by Count Hoyos had been formulated by the Austrians quite independent of any German participation. Germany made no effort to dictate any new elements in Austrian policy, but simply consented to support the plan which Austria submitted and whatever subsequent additions Austria

felt necessary to make in the light of added information and changed circumstances. In fact, in Germany's answer to Hoyos's appeal it was explicitly stated that Austria must decide what procedure would be necessary and desirable in eliminating the Serbian menace. As Hoyos explained the matter, the Austrian Foreign Office after his return in no sense felt that Germany was dictating the policy of Austria. The dominant feeling in Vienna was that, after Austria had stated to Germany that her case against Serbia was a desperate one and after she had received the German promise of support on the basis of this assertion, she must take decisive steps against Serbia and refrain from backing down in her demands. Otherwise she would be likely to lose the respect of Germany, and perhaps even place in jeopardy the Austro-German alliance. Indeed, Tschirschky, the German Ambassador in Vienna, once stated to the Austrians that if they did back down Germany would find it necessary to secure a stronger and more determined ally elsewhere. But, as Berchtold and Hoyos admitted, this in no way affected the Austrian program in 1914, as Austria had no intention of backing down in her Serbian policy.

After having received this initial promise from Germany, Austria worked out her ultimatum to Serbia without any direct German knowledge or participation and submitted it in exactly the form which she desired without giving Germany adequate advance knowledge or asking her for advice on the subject. Likewise, in deciding to reject the Serbian answer and to make war on Serbia, Austria acted on her own responsibility and followed a line of procedure opposed to the views of the Kaiser on this subject.

CASE AGAINST GERMANY

There have been three major counts against Germany to support the thesis that she egged on the Austrians. One relates to the famous Szögyény telegram of July 27, in which Szögyény is purported to say that von Jagow had instructed him to tell the Austrian Foreign Office that Germany in no way sympathized with the British peace proposals and merely passed them on to Austria as a matter of form. Count Berchtold stated that this had no other effect than to confirm him in pursuing his intended action against Serbia until he learned through Berlin of the probability of British intervention. He stated that he was

never in the slightest doubt as to the sincerity of German peace efforts from this time (July 29) onward or that Germany meant what she said in her pressure telegrams.

The second count against Germany in this regard has been the charge that Tschirschky did not present the German communications of restraint to Berchtold with promptness and correctness and that he persistently urged the Austrians toward bellicose measures. Berchtold stated to the writer that Tschirschky, on the contrary, presented the German communications with promptness and accuracy, although declaring that the pacific policy which Germany suddenly adopted at the close of July—necessitated by the danger of British intervention—carried with it great peril to the success of Austrian action against Serbia. The bellicosity which Tschirschky had shown up to this time had exerted no practical effect upon Austrian policy, as Berchtold had himself decided upon his policy in the circumstances and stuck to this line of action until there was imminent danger of British intervention.

The third and final count in the indictment of Germany is to be found in the allegation that the telegrams of General von Moltke to Conrad von Hoetzendorff on the night of July 30 and the morning of July 31, urging the Austrians to mobilize and refuse mediation, were what nullified the effect of the pressure of the German civil Government upon Austria to accept mediation of the Serbian issue and to open direct negotiations with St. Petersburg. With reference to the Moltke telegrams Berchtold denied that they had a decisive influence on his action, adding that his remark involving uncertainty as to whether Bethmann or Moltke was in control in Berlin was made only as a result of irritation over the seemingly divided counsel in German circles. On the other hand, Berchtold stated that he had never broken off negotiations with St. Petersburg, and that he was led to make his well-known decision of July 31 to agree to mediation of the Austro-Serbian dispute because of the growing probability of British adherence to the cause of France and Russia.

One of the most interesting things which the writer discovered in his discussion of the diplomacy of 1914 with the Austrian diplomats was that the German pressure telegrams had almost no influence upon the Austrian diplomacy at the close of July, 1914. The Austrians had little doubt that Germany would stick by them in the event

of a European war and they were not afraid of such a war unless Great Britain came in. Hence the real reason why they consented to the mediation plan on July 31 was the conviction that Great Britain was likely to be their opponent in the event of a European war. Likewise, a main reason for their confidence in the previous weeks was the definite feeling that Great Britain would be neutral. Here, and here only, is there the basis for valid criticism of Germany. The German Foreign Office had not informed the Austrian Foreign Office up to July 29, 1914, that the Germans planned to invade Belgium in the event of war with France.

Therefore, it is apparent upon the basis of the best Austrian opinion that the Austrian statesmen reached their decisions in an independent fashion, on the basis of their conception of Austrian needs and interests and that Germany has no direct responsibility in these circumstances. As the above mentioned Austrian statesmen frequently insisted to the writer, Austria's case before the world rests upon the accuracy of the Austrian indictment of Russia and her Balkan allies, and her responsibility cannot be traced to German initiative. Germany acquiesced in the Austrian plans until very late in the crisis and the German responsibility likewise is bound up very closely with this same question as to the justice of the Austrian contentions. She based her support of Austria upon the assumption that the Austrian contentions were sound. If she believed this to be the case her attitude was, as even Professor Schmitt admits, consistent. If the Austrian case was a sound one, then Germany cannot be blamed for supporting it. If it was not a sound one, then Germany must be condemned to some degree at least for not having discovered this fact in 1914 and restrained Austria before it was too late.

AUSTRIAN DIPLOMATS' OPTIMISM

While Berchtold made it clear that Austrian policy was decided upon primarily by the Austrians without serious influence from outside, nevertheless he threw much new light upon the reasons for Austrian optimism in July, 1914, and for the Austrian persistence in adhering to a vigorous policy against Serbia. Here the encouragement given by the representatives of Russia, France and Great Britain in Vienna was infinitely more potent than any information or promises forwarded from Berlin. On July 22, 1914, Alfred Dumaine, the French Ambassador in Vienna, had a long

conference with Berchtold, in the course of which Dumaine told Berchtold that he had just been talking with Schebeko, the Russian Ambassador in Vienna. Dumaine stated that both he and Schebeko had agreed that there was very little probability indeed that France and Russia would go beyond diplomatic protests in the matter of the prospective Austrian policy in regard to Serbia. [See also *Austrian Red Book*, Vol. I, No. 53.] Coming on the eve of the transmission of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia, this had a profound effect upon Berchtold and made him feel much more secure in submitting the ultimatum in its final form. Still further, Sir Maurice de Bunsen, the British Ambassador in Vienna, had been extremely friendly to Berchtold and had made him feel very confident that Great Britain would not intervene. Grey's indifference to the Austro-Serbian dispute still further confirmed this view of things. Even more significant, shortly after Austria submitted her ultimatum to Serbia, a member of the staff of the British Embassy in Vienna, received a reporter from the Vienna *Neue Freie Presse*, told him that he had read the ultimatum and thoroughly approved of it in both spirit and letter, asserted that Great Britain would never forget the friendly attitude of Austria during the Boer war, and assured the reporter that Great Britain would certainly not intervene to support France and Russia.

Count Hoyos confirmed quite independently the above assertions of Count Berchtold as to the French, Russian and British assurances of the improbability of war in the event of Austrian action against Serbia. Berchtold, Hoyos and Wiesner all expressed the belief, in all probability correct, that these French, Russian and British representatives were thoroughly sincere in what they said, but were very badly informed as to the secret policies of their respective Governments. It is obvious that these French, Russian and British assurances of non-intervention had as much influence upon the Austro-Hungarian diplomats in 1914 as did the alleged encouragement of Austrian action by Germany.

The writer also had an opportunity to consult at length the Kaiser, the Crown Prince and Herr von Jagow, the German Foreign Minister in 1914, with respect to the German attitude toward the Austrian policy with respect to Serbia. These German authorities asserted that they were convinced after the murder of the Archduke that Austria must act decisively against Serbia. They felt that such action was ab-

solutely essential if Austria was to succeed in maintaining her integrity, and Germany believed that she could in no sense afford to contemplate in a passive fashion the disintegration of her chief ally. Being convinced of the necessity of vigorous Austrian action against Serbia, they believed it would be far safer for the peace of Europe if undertaken in 1914 than it would if initiated at a later time when the Russian military preparations would be near to completion and when the French opinion would be more adequately brought around to the support of Russia by the subsidized French press. Therefore, they felt no hesitation whatever in urging the Austrians to go ahead with their plans and in promising German support in their execution. Neither Jagow nor the Kaiser approved of the Austrian ultimatum in detail, but the Kaiser did not see it until too late to protest and Jagow did not feel that he could very well protest in the light of the previous German assurances. The Kaiser, as is well known from the documents, decisively disapproved of Austria's rejection of the Serbian reply to her ultimatum, but once again he did not feel like open protest because of his earlier commitment. It is highly unlikely, however, that any of the prominent Germans felt any very deep concern over the risks involved in the Austrian policy until it began to look as if Italy might desert the Triple Alliance and Great Britain might go to the aid of France and Russia.

GERMAN DISAPPROVAL OF DELAY

Another thing which was very clear from the conversations of the writer with these eminent Germans is that they very greatly disapproved of the Austrian delay in taking decisive steps against Serbia. They felt that the quicker Austria struck the less the danger of a European war as a result of Franco-Russian intervention. Quick and decisive action on the part of Austria would, it was believed, give France and Russia far less time to lay plans for intervention and a European war. Further, every day of delay provided so much more time for Europe to recover from the first shock of the horrible crime at Sarajevo and would thus reduce the universal sympathy which Austria might exploit in her action against Serbia. Hence, Germany suggested to Austria that she move promptly against Serbia, but such advice was not for the purpose of bringing on a general European war. The real aim was exactly the opposite, namely, to induce sufficiently prompt Austrian action as to reduce nota-

bly the possibility and probability of the Franco-Russian intervention which would be the sole cause of a European conflict.

There is only one observation which the writer desires to make which is directly related to Professor Schmitt's article. It can scarcely be regarded as consonant with candor and directness to refer to the early Austrian consideration of the possibility of territorial partition of Serbia without calling attention to the fact that the Austrians later decisively abandoned this scheme, repeatedly assured the Russians that they would respect the territorial integrity of Serbia, and received a confession from Sazonov that he was satisfied upon this point. On this point the writer is able to offer new and first hand information. In a letter to the author of this article, Count Friedrich von Szápáry, Austrian Ambassador in St. Petersburg in 1914, shows clearly that Austria gave Russia adequate assurance that she did not contemplate a war of aggression against Serbia and that she would respect the territory and sovereignty of Serbia. This is also compatible with the documents in the *Austrian Red Book* and No. 223 of the Russian *Orange Book*, as well as with Count Szécsen's article in the *Kriegsschuldfrage* for February, 1926. We quote the relevant portion of Count Szápáry's letter:

"I can assure you most decidedly that, knowing the actual decision of the Austro-Hungarian Council of Ministers, all my conversations with Sazonov were conducted in a manner which showed from the beginning that our action against Serbia was not intended as a war of conquest or for the purpose of the establishment of a protectorate, and my German colleague, Count Pourtales, spoke to him in a similar vein. Fully aware of the importance of this point and knowing exactly the formal decisions of my Government, I laid particular stress on this aspect of the question from the very day of the communication of the ultimatum to Russia, even before I had any formal instructions to do so. I can offer most decisive confirmation that this declaration was given in a manner which could not be surpassed in clearness or definiteness.

"Sazonov tried from the beginning to diminish the value of these assurances by arguing that the intended action of Austria instituted in itself a state of 'vassalage' for Serbia, as he expressed himself, and he always recurred to this argument without being able to give a plausible reason for this point of view. It is clear that Russia was to such a degree responsible for Serbia's

policy toward Austria-Hungary, and that she had encouraged Serbia in such a decided manner against her neighbor, assuring her of absolute protection in case of whatever consequences of this behavior, that Russian intimidation of Austria-Hungary seemed the only way out of the *impasse* created thereby.

"Unfortunately, the Western Powers

joined Russia in this attempt at intimidation, instead of trying to calm Russia, which, it is my firm conviction, a clear and determined word of Sir Edward Grey would have brought about. This seems to me to be the fundamental reason why war between the Great Powers—which is to be sharply distinguished from war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia—became inevitable."

II—Austria's Challenge Justified by Serbian Menace

'By COUNT LEOPOLD BERCHTOLD

FORMER AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

FAR from the political activities of the European Continent, a few eminent scholars in America have in recent times taken on themselves the praiseworthy task of attacking, *sine ira et studio*, the question of war guilt, with the object of forming an objective, independent judgment on this complicated question through study of the pertinent documents as well as through personal discussions with the leading statesmen of the critical period of 1914 to obtain their point of view. One of these gentlemen—Professor Harry Elmer Barnes—I met last Summer and I was able to give him some clarifying information on the salient lines of the policy followed by us [Austria] during this period. His article, now published in *CURRENT HISTORY*, shows that he has used some of this information as a basis for his exposition, with the result that many one-sided, tendentious and false interpretations which have gradually won credence among the general public have now been revealed in their true light. This applies particularly to the motives which forced us to the steps which we took against Serbia in the Summer of 1914.

Quite rightly Professor Barnes emphasizes in this connection our conviction at that time—a conviction in no way weakened by the subsequent course of events—that the continuance of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was unthinkable without a definitive elimination of the Serbian menace. The view that the assassination of Sarajevo constituted the only motive of our action has been widely spread. Nothing could be more erroneous. When in 1903 the Karageorgievich Dynasty came to power in Serbia through the horrible and bloody

deed of which King Alexander of the House of Obrenovich and his Queen were the victims, the new Dynasty was bound to further the Greater Serbia program of the organization of officers to which it owed the throne—a program the realization of which was based on the destruction of the neighboring Monarchy and had this for its object. Then began upon our territory the underground activity which, emanating from secret Serbian organizations under the benevolent patronage of the Belgrade Government, made its influence felt in irredentist, subversive action and progressively prepared the way for the secession of all territories of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy inhabited by Southern Slavs.

The danger of this movement to the life of our nation was bound to be enhanced by the fact that Russian diplomacy immediately assumed its moral direction and thus assured it a powerful backing. That this sprang less from altruistic motives—the favorite demand for the independent national development of the Balkan States—than from what was the true aim, to win the hegemony over the Balkans and later control of Constantinople and the Straits, I shall not go into further here. The fact is that the former Russian Ambassador in Belgrade acted as the *spiritus rector* of this subversive policy, partly in accordance with the thoroughly considered formula given him from the Pevchesky Most [Foreign Office] at St. Petersburg, partly under the local influence of the chauvinistic atmosphere of Belgrade. In this connection we do not have merely to refer to our information service, through which we were constantly informed of this situation;

Sazonov, in his recently published memoirs, says:

Only the control of the Croatian and Dalmatian (i. e., Hungarian and Austrian) Coast, and further, an outlet to the Aegean Sea, could bring that satisfactory solution of the economic question of which the Serbian people had dreamed so many years, and for which the Serbian Government had prepared from the moment when the realization of the Greater-Serbia idea began gradually to penetrate into the field of political possibilities.

And under date of April 23, 1913, Sazonov wrote to his Belgrade Ambassador, von Hartwig: "Serbia's promised land lies in the domain of present-day Austro-Hungary." "Energetic work" should be "devoted to preparing for the future inevitable conflict. Make this clear to the Serbs." How deeply the loyal servant of his master took these instructions to heart may be learned from Sazonov himself, who admits that the Ambassador sometimes went further in his agitation activities than his superior intended.

The annexation, which occurred in 1908, of the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, occupied and held by us previously on the ground of a European mandate, meant, as is well known, nothing else than the legalization of an actual state of possession which had existed for decades and to which we were forced by the introduction of the constitutional régime in Turkey. The declaration made at that time by Serbia at the end of the crisis conjured up by her and fanned by Russia, to the effect that she [Serbia] would unconditionally recognize the new legal status and would continue to live in friendly and neighborly relations with the Monarchy, became a dead letter. Instead of fulfilling the agreed obligation, the incitive propaganda now really began, so that the British Minister at the Court of Vienna, Sir Fairfax Cartwright, certainly an impartial observer, was able to remark as early as 1910 that he did not understand how the Monarchy could endure this for any great length of time; that the first favorable moment should be seized to remove the menace of this restless neighbor and that then we should act quickly.

Another widespread historical untruth, not to say a propaganda lie, is combated by Professor Barnes with well-justified sharpness, viz., that the deliberately shortened dispatch of Wiesner of July 13, 1914, constituted the sole basis of our action against Serbia. Apart from the fact that the essential part of this telegraphic com-



Drawing by Kenneth Grove

COUNT LEOPOLD BERCHTOLD

muniqué was passed over in silence in 1919 by the American delegation [to the Paris Peace Conference], namely, the part establishing the relation between the attentat and individual Serbian officers and Government officials, also the tolerance of the Greater Serbia propaganda shown by the Government, it must also be pointed out that other sources of information were at our command, which, because of their character, could not be introduced into an open discussion.

Lastly, let the pregnant summary of our attitude toward Serbia be approved, wherein Professor Barnes states

that the Serbian menace threatened the very integrity of the Dual Monarchy and could not be successfully withstood except through punitive war against the Serbs or complete Serbian acquiescence in the ultimatum of July 23, 1914.

The demands made on Serbia in the note in question contained the minimum of those guarantees which under the given circumstances we considered necessary for assuring the future existence of the Monarchy. Hence, we had before us only one alternative: Integral acceptance of those demands or an appeal to the *ultima ratio* in the form of a punitive war.

Vienna, Austria.

III—Russia Chief Culprit in Precipitation of World War

By COUNT ALEXANDER HOYOS

CHIEF OF CABINET, AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN 1914; HEAD OF MISSION TO BERLIN TO BRING AUSTRIAN APPEAL FOR GERMAN SUPPORT IN JULY, 1914

PROFESSOR BARNES'S interesting study appears to me to be so lucid and convincing that I do not feel that anything I could add would throw any further light on the subject which he has studied so thoroughly.

I should like, however, to lay more stress on one feature in the situation of 1914, which so far has been somewhat kept in the background or taken for granted as an inevitable fatality. No one quite realizes yet that Austria's quarrel with Serbia might have remained a local disturbance on the Balkan Peninsula if Russian statesmen had not seized this opportunity for beginning a World War. During the war I met a British diplomatist to whom, in discussing war origins, I pointed out that our situation in 1914 had closely resembled that of the British Government before the Boer War. His answer was: "Yes, but there was no danger of a European War breaking out if we fought the Boers." This is clearly an argument that must be contested by those who know how matters really stood. No country in the world was more peaceful, no country had more reason to avoid a European war than Austria. But we could not remain neutral onlookers when a small State like Serbia began working with bombs, assassins and treacherous propaganda, with the clear intention of separating our Southern States from the Habsburg Monarchy. There were no limitations to Serbia's action as long as Serbian statesmen could shield themselves behind the belief that Austria would keep the European peace at any sacrifice.

Russia did not decide on war in order to save Serbia. There were many other far more effective ways of doing this, even had it come to an armed conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia. I personally very much doubt that this would have been the case had Russia refused help to Serbia after the Austrian ultimatum. Russia's territorial or economic interests were nowise threatened by any action on our part against Serbia. Russian statesmen would also not have had to suffer any loss of

prestige by a peaceful attitude, as they were bound to play a leading part in the subsequent settlement of our quarrel with Serbia. After a few days of fighting Russia could very well have intervened in favor of Serbia. There is no doubt that had such a line been followed, Germany would not have dreamed of shielding Austria by opposing such intervention.

The reason why such a plan of action was unacceptable to Russian statesmen was that a peaceful attitude would have meant sacrificing the strong strategical position which Russia had attained in European politics by the aid of her alliance with France, her understanding with Great Britain and Italy, and her control of Serbian and Rumanian foreign policy after the peace of Bucharest. To understand Russia's action the psychological factors must be considered. Russian statesmen had been working up to a climax of nationalistic ambition since Izvolski decided after the Russo-Japanese war that an active policy in the Near East with the aim of taking Constantinople must be again attempted. This return to active Pan Slavism or Panrussism proved successful. Russian influence and prestige gained ground in all European questions. Never again, from a Russian point of view, could the international situation be more favorable for the realization of Russia's imperialistic dreams, and Sazonov and Izvolski, though they may have wished to postpone the outbreak of the war for a year or two, in order that more strategic railways might be built, were certainly never in doubt as to the necessity, from their point of view, of beginning the World War when our ultimatum in 1914 gave them a favorable opportunity. There was never any question of any renunciation on their part in the interest of European peace.

Enmities between nations are bound to exist in international politics. We can all remember the strain between Great Britain and France during the latter half of the 19th century, the excitement there was over Egypt, Fashoda and the Boer War. Also the anxiety that long prevailed in Great

Britain over Russia's advances in Asia, the Pamirs and Khyber Pass or Tibet. And yet the boundaries between possible peace and war were very clearly drawn in these international disputes. Both Russia and France knew that asking for the impossible meant war, and that the issues in controversy must be avoided as long as no real, vital interest of their respective countries was threatened.

RUSSIA'S AGGRESSIVE POLICY IN 1914

In 1914 Russia's position was a very different one. Her successful system of treaties had opened opportunities, even where no purely Russian interest was in danger. An active and aggressive element thus came into Russia's foreign policy. Sazonov knew that France and Great Britain would have to support him in any issue, that Germany could be drawn in also. He held all the trump cards in his hand, and also realized that never again would such an opportunity return for revenge against Austria and the fulfillment of secular Slav ambitions.

From a psychological point of view, no one who has read Sazonov's and Izvolski's memoirs can doubt that to those two men, war with Austria and Germany meant the opportunity of revenge for personal insults and wrongs which they felt that Aehrenthal's Bosnian policy had inflicted on them. "Russia," says Sazonov in his memoirs, "kept the peace in 1908 in order to save Europe from a general war, and because she had not recovered financially or from a military point of view from her defeats in the Russo-Japanese War." In 1914 the situation had changed, Russia had restored her finances and army, and there was no more necessity for "saving the peace of Europe."

Austria's position was a very different one. For five years following the Bosnian crisis and Izvolski's quarrel with Aehrenthal, she had been watching a situation on her southeastern frontier, that meant a greater danger from year to year. Sazonov's memoirs trace a very clear picture of the stages that marked the progress of his anti-Austrian campaign. The secret understanding with Italy, the block of the Balkan States and their war with Turkey, the Peace of Bucharest and Sazonov's friendly advances to Rumanian statesmen are vivid flashlights in a development which he realized was bound, sooner or later, to lead to war with Austria.

For Austria the moment for a settlement of her dispute with Serbia was not propi-

tious. We had had many far better opportunities for coming to blows with our unruly neighbor. We could have solved the question in 1909 by attacking Serbia during the Bosnian crisis. There is no doubt that at the beginning of the Balkan War every one in Western Europe expected Austrian demands for parts of Macedonia. Austria, however, was bound to a policy of peace and non-expansion. Our modest demand for the creation of a free and independent Albanian State after the outbreak of the Balkan War there were more in Italian than in Austrian interest. We now know that the secret understanding signed between Italy and Russia after the meeting at Racconigi had arranged for the independence of Albania. Austria was handcuffed in her Eastern policy by her wish for peace, by Germany's dread of any Balkan adventures, by Italian jealousy and by Russia's paramount control of Southeastern Europe after the peace of Bucharest. The weaker Austria's position became, the more the hopes of all those were strengthened, who looked upon the Austro-Hungarian monarchy as a dying organism and who were only waiting for it to die.

As the position presented itself to Austrian Diplomacy after the Archduke's murder at Sarajevo there was only one way of protecting our Southeastern States from Serbian aggression, and that was to prove to our neighbors that we were resolved to defend them. Though the chances for the outbreak of a European war through any action on our part were very great, they had to be risked, and under the circumstances the possibility that a European war might be avoided were certainly greater than they would have been a year or two later, when Austria's position would be still weaker and our enemies would have gained in military strength. This was one of the reasons why Germany approved our action.

INTERVENTION INEVITABLE

Many people think that the fact that Great Britain signed an agreement with Germany on Colonial matters shortly before the eventful days of August, 1914, might have brought about a change in the international situation of Europe and thus have hindered the outbreak of war later on, had Germany acted with greater caution at the time. I cannot agree with this view. Britain's safety depended on her entente with France and Russia as long as the German fleet remained a menace to British sea power. The tragic feature of the situation lay in the fact that in order to keep

this insurance against Germany intact, British statesmen had to countenance policies in Europe on the part of Russia, and also of France, that were a danger to European peace. Personally I am inclined to believe that Sir Edward Grey was thinking of a change, when he saw that war was imminent. His remark to the German Ambassador in London: "If you help us once more to maintain the peace of Europe I foresee an entire change in our relations," would

seem to indicate this. And yet it is difficult to believe that Germany would have renounced her ambitions on the high seas, or that France and Russia would have accepted a diplomatic defeat of this nature. One thing must be borne in mind: by all laws of self-preservation Great Britain had to come into the war, as soon as the possibility of Germany's overrunning France and gaining the Atlantic seaboard appeared. Vienna, Austria.

IV—Austria's Life and Death Struggle Against Irredentism

By DR. FRIEDRICH VON WIESNER

LEGAL COUNSELOR, AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY IN 1914; OFFICIAL INVESTIGATOR FOR AUSTRIA OF THE SARAJEVO ASSASSINATION

THE position in which Austria-Hungary found herself with respect to Serbia and Rumania before the assassination of Sarajevo is described by Professor Barnes with absolute correctness. If, however, we wish to survey the then-prevailing situation of the Danube Monarchy as a whole, as seems necessary for any judgment of the decisions taken by the Austro-Hungarian Government at that time, we must amplify somewhat Professor Barnes's exposition. For beside the Greater Serbia and Greater Rumania movements, there had existed for years outside of Austria two other irredentist movements which also aimed at the separation and annexation of territories of the Dual Monarchy: The universally active Italia Irredenta, which under the rallying cry, "*Trento e Trieste*," aspired to South Tyrol and the Adriatic territory, and Russian irredentism, which wished to annex Galicia and Upper Hungary to Russia.

Thus the Habsburg Empire was menaced by four irredentist movements abroad, all of which adopted the pretext that they must free their compatriots living on Austro-Hungarian territory. No analogous separatist tendencies of broad national scope within the empire corresponded to these nationalistic movements abroad. The agitation movements abroad had gradually succeeded in winning over single individuals or groups in Austro-Hungary, but the broad masses of nationalities aspired only to extension of their national rights within the framework of the monarchy. On the other hand, it was not to be denied that the work

of sedition carried on by the foreign emissaries had in the last years been intensified and had gained ground. The Government authorities of Austria-Hungary were not exactly informed of the success of the irredentist propaganda, as all these movements followed the methods of secret conspiracies. Only now and then could one get a glance into the workings of this activity. The trial, which I conducted in 1910 as State Attorney, of the Trient Irredentist Giuseppe Colpi, and that of the Russian Irredentists in Upper Hungary and East Galicia, which laid bare the underground activity of the Russian Pan Slavist, Count Bobrinsky, gave deep insight into the menace of these movements.

From the time of the Annexation crisis, but especially from the Balkan wars on, it was clearly to be seen that of these four irredentist movements the Greater Serbia propaganda was the most active, the most advanced and the most resolute. It had been shown that it could not be overcome by diplomatic means, for despite the solemn promise which Serbia had given, after the termination of the Annexation crisis, to cultivate friendly relations with the Dual Monarchy, the anti-Austrian propaganda in Serbia increased in intensity, and after the close of the Balkan wars grew steadily greater in extent. It was impossible to prove this by documentary evidence, but it could be perceived from innumerable indications, from the hate-filled words of the Serbian press and from the activity of Serbian propaganda in the Western States.

In two great trials conducted in Vienna and Agram the Government strove to break through the invisible net in which Serbia tried to enmesh the Habsburg Empire and render it defenseless. The Friedjung trial failed, because the documents by which the anti-Austrian activities of the "Slovenski Jug" Club were to be demonstrated were proved not to be genuine. But today we know that the activity of the "Slovenski Jug," as later that of the "Narodna Odbrana," subsequently founded, aimed at bringing about a state of revolution in the Southern Slav regions of Austria-Hungary, and that the Serbian witnesses who hastened to the trial bore false witness when they defended the aforesaid club against this charge. Exposed to the invidious comments of a considerable part of the world press, this trial led to the opposite of what had been desired in Vienna. In the eyes of general public opinion Serbia seemed to have been cleared of the suspicion that a revolutionary movement in the Southern Slav regions of Austria-Hungary had been carried on there. The second trial, the trial for high treason at Agram, led, however, in some single instances, to positive results, but because of the insincerity of the accused and of many witnesses, and the tactics of the counsel for the defense, did not bring forth the general clarification that was expected. The Serbo-phil propaganda abroad was clever enough to use this trial, also, to the disadvantage of the Danube Monarchy through malicious interpretation of the facts.

Thus the defense of the Danube Monarchy against the Serb revolutionary Irredentist agitation by the agencies of diplomacy and publicity had failed. It was quite in keeping with the aggressive character of this movement that after the close of the Balkan War it became even more intensified. The attempt by Jukich to kill Royal Commissioner von Cuvaj (1912), and of Shefer to kill Baron Skerlec at Agram (1914) pointed clearly to Serbian inspiration. Reliable information indicated that the Serbian Irredenta, in agreement with influential Russian circles, wished to strike decisive blows against the monarchy.

Such in its large features was Austria-Hungary's situation early in 1914. The Habsburg Government must have realized that these Irredentist activities which, after Raconigi and the Peace of Bucharest, also logically fitted into the international groupings, would some day lead to an attack or would give rise to international complications. But though Vienna clearly

perceived this danger, it was almost in the dark as regarded concrete details. But the point on which there was absolutely no information whatsoever was the question, how far the Governments of Serbia, Russia, Rumania and Italy stood behind the Irredentist movements in their respective countries, when the visible exponents of those movements were represented only by clubs and individuals. It could not be doubted, however, that these movements, conducted in the light of full publicity, had the approval and support of the respective Governments. But there existed no proofs which could withstand all criticism and would be absolutely convincing.

Only a few days after the assassination at Sarajevo it became clear from the judicial investigation that the plot had originated in Belgrade and that the plotters had there been equipped with weapons. Subsequent evidence led to the establishment of the fact that Serbian officers and officials were involved in the plot, and that this plot had its origin in a great organized movement which embraced all classes of society in Serbia. The political character of the murder, its Serbian origin and "Greater Serbia" motive were beyond doubt and could be demonstrated categorically. On the other hand, there were no proofs as to whether, and to what extent, the Belgrade Government had knowledge of the plot, whether it had any responsibility otherwise, and in what relation it stood toward the Greater Serbia movement as such. I repeat that at that time no one among the influential authorities of Austria-Hungary doubted that the Greater Serbia Irredentist movement was made possible only because the Serbian Government knew of it and directed it. But the Foreign Office did not wish to limit itself to mere conviction; it wished to know how much thereof was beyond doubt and absolutely demonstrable.

EVIDENCE GAINED AT SARAJEVO

The object of my mission to Sarajevo was to clear up this doubtful question. At the time of my departure, it had been decided that a very energetic démarche would be made in Belgrade. For what we knew of the murder plot against the Austrian heir to the throne, and what was known otherwise of the Serbo-Russian plans, showed beyond all doubt that the Greater Serbia Irredenta had launched upon a decisive offensive against Austria-Hungary, an offensive demanding a definitive defense. The Danube Monarchy was forced to deal a deathblow to Greater Serbia propaganda,

and thereby show the other three Irredentist propaganda movements its determination and readiness to maintain its integrity and its existence. Count Berchtold wished, in taking this fateful step, to shape the content and form of the Austrian demand in such a way that the charges which he brought against Serbia should be irrefutable. It was my task to ascertain the facts which would give those charges a sound foundation.

The evidences which I secured in Sarajevo had the following result:

1. The Greater Serbia Irredentist movement, which aimed to effect by revolutionary methods the forcible separation of the Southern Slav region from Austria-Hungary, was conducted from Serbia through large and influential clubs and other organizations, notably the "Narodna Odbrana," in which influential politicians, former ministers, high officials and officers participated. The Belgrade Government knew of this movement and its organization, and left it an absolutely free hand. These facts were demonstrated beyond all question and supported by a large amount of documentary evidence which I brought back with me from Sarajevo.

2. The assassination was resolved upon in Belgrade, and prepared with the collaboration of Major Tankosich and the Serbian official Ciganovich, who also delivered over weapons for carrying out the plot and arranged to have the assassins instructed in the use of these weapons. The carrying out of the plot was made possible only through the fact that the frontier authorities of Shabac and Loznica, according to information given by the Serbian official Ciganovich, with the cooperation of the Finanzwachorgane (local customs authorities) there, had smuggled the assassins and their weapons into Bosnia by secret ways. These facts were demonstrable and virtually unassailable.

3. On the other hand, there were no proofs that the Serbian Government had had previous knowledge of the attentat or had cooperated in preparing it. If we wished to assert this, we would have been confronted by the possibility that counter-arguments would be presented which at that time could not be refuted. I therefore did not assert that the Serbian Government had any knowledge of the attentat, but only that such an assumption was not demonstrable, and was exposed to the possibility of counter-arguments.

This result of my conclusions at that time I summarized in my dispatch from Sarajevo

of July 13, 1914 (*Red Book*, No. 17). In accord with the object of my task, this telegram was concentrated on the question as to what charges against Serbia could be brought in such a way as to be irrefutable. In order to bring out precisely the separate points of this question, I based the telegram on the ideas and expressions usual in the nomenclature of the Austrian criminal law. This dispatch was intended for private official use, for the Minister and his most intimate staff of collaborators, who knew my mission exactly, who knew what I had to say, and who could not misunderstand and who did not misunderstand the meaning of my communication.

REPORT TO BERCHTOLD

My oral report to Count Berchtold on the morning of July 15, 1914, was of course more comprehensive than the content of my dispatch; it covered numerous details of the evidence and reconstructed the relation of the attentat to our other information about the Greater Serbia movement, exactly as that movement has been so thoroughly described in the memorandum of the Foreign Ministry (*Red Book*, No. 48). Count Berchtold had communicated my dispatch to Count Tisza and Count Stürgh the day before, and therefore in no way did he keep it secret. To Count Tisza, at Count Berchtold's wish, on the afternoon of July 15, 1914, I explained for almost an hour the whole result of the investigation at Sarajevo and of my findings there. I can scarcely know what influence my report had on Count Tisza, inasmuch as before my personal conversation with him and specifically the day before he had knowledge of my telegram, and on the afternoon of the day of July 15 he had also learned of the conclusions which I had orally imparted to Count Berchtold. When I spoke with him (Count Tisza), he was already fundamentally convinced that the intended demands of the ultimatum were completely covered, and that in addition we must advance other and even more sweeping grounds of suspicion against Serbia. My conversation with him was, therefore, of a supplementary and recapitulatory nature, on the basis of which Count Tisza, after discussion, checked up his attitude toward the ultimatum and finally approved it.

If my dispatch of July 13, 1914, is compared with the text of the ultimatum, it will be demonstrated that the ultimatum did not make a single charge that went beyond what could be strictly proved at the time and the proof of which the memorandum presented with all details. It is

completely false, as is occasionally asserted, that Count Berchtold had no sufficient proofs of the charges brought against Serbia in the ultimatum. This opinion could have arisen only through the fact that the note of reservation of the American delegation to the "Commission for the Determination of the Authors of the World War and Their Responsibility" reproduced and made public from my 336-word dispatch only thirty-one words, entirely torn from their context, with the result that both the content and sense of my telegram were completely distorted and even made to mean the exact opposite. According to the citation of Messrs. Robert Lansing and James Brown Scott, the impression was given that I had declared Serbia to be completely guiltless, while, on the contrary I made a very clear statement regarding the serious charges which could be proved against Serbia. Through this false quotation of my telegram the American delegation introduced great confusion into the question of war guilt and laid on the Government of the Monarchist régime an accusation which was wholly without justification. My appeal to Messrs. Lansing and Brown Scott to clarify the origin of this quotation has to the present, unfortunately, remained unanswered. Neither of these two gentlemen, however, when they drafted this note in April, 1919, had read the memorandum of the Vienna Cabinet (at that

time this memorandum lay unread also in the archives of the Foreign Offices of France and Great Britain), for otherwise they would have been bound to notice that my Sarajevo dispatch did not read like the version quoted by them.

As is seen from these supplementary observations, the treatment of Professor Barnes is correct on all these points and in accordance with the facts. The charges which the Austro-Hungarian Government made against Serbia in the ultimatum were absolutely unshakable. The demands which the Vienna Cabinet based on those charges it was forced to present if it wished to maintain the State's existence. Whatever new facts regarding the Greater Serbia movement and the Sarajevo assassination have subsequently been made known only confirm the view that the Government of the Danube Monarchy correctly estimated the meaning of Serbian Irredentism, and that the responsibility of the Belgrade Government therefor and for the Sarajevo assassination extends far beyond the charges brought by Vienna at that time. From this may be seen the moderation and the feeling of responsibility of the Austrian statesmen who, though firmly convinced of this deep guilt of the Serbian Government in 1914, did not express this conviction, because they could not present the strict proof thereof to the world.

Vienna, Austria.

V—Germany's Reasons for Supporting Her Ally's Anti-Serb Policy

By GOTTLIEB VON JAGOW

FORMER GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTER

THE motives by which Germany's policy was guided in July, 1914, and the circumstances under which she acted, seem to me to be correctly set forth in the article of Professor H. E. Barnes, which I have read with great interest.

To understand those circumstances, we must mentally reconstruct the political situation that prevailed before the war. The Habsburg Monarchy stood out as one of the oldest of the Great Powers of Europe. It was a stately structure, built up out of the old "Ostmark," based on a long historical development, and held together in cohesive

unity chiefly by the common dynasty. "*Tu, felix Austria nube!*" It was a factor of wide cultural significance. Intellectual life and the civilization of Western Europe were spread among the aspiring peoples of the east of our Continent mainly through Vienna, which was also an important factor of European peace. I recall that Sazonov once said to me, after giving vent to his anti-Austrian feelings, and quoting a phrase of Napoleon III: "But after all, if Austria did not exist, we would have to create it!" The correctness of this observation is demonstrated *ex post* by the status

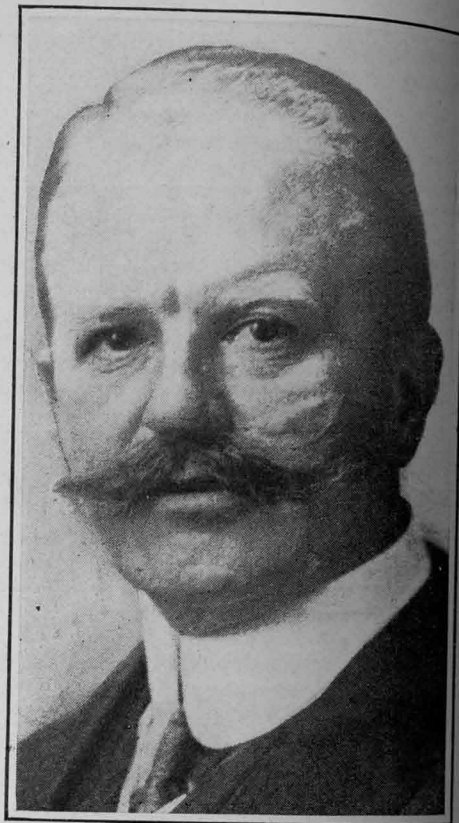
of affairs which arose after the collapse of the old Empire, and which has not inaccurately been described as the "Balkanization" of the former Habsburg territories. The existence of the Austrian Monarchy was menaced by the "Greater Serbia" aspirations and intrigues. To combat this danger was the right of a nation fighting for self-preservation and the duty of the responsible Austro-Hungarian statesmen.

The German Government, for the sake of maintaining peace, had hitherto counseled Vienna to pursue a conciliatory policy and to seek an understanding with Serbia. The Austrian memorandum delivered on July 5, 1914, after the assassination of the Austrian heir to the throne, showed the danger of the situation with convincing clearness. That the policy of Belgrade aspired to the creation of a Greater Serbian empire *at the cost of Austria*, has been proved by the revelations of the secret Serbian and Russian documents. In Berlin we never doubted that the threads of Sarajevo led to Belgrade; that the conspiracy which culminated in the bloody deed was tolerated, if not furthered, by the Serbian Government. The confession of Ljuba Jovanovich has subsequently confirmed this belief.

COGENT REASONS FOR SUPPORTING AUSTRIA

We did *not* spur Austria on to the action which she took against Serbia; Austria reached her decision, which she viewed as dictated by the law of self-preservation, of her own accord and without any outside influence. But we were bound to recognize Austria's cause as just. Could we hold back our ally and leave her in the lurch?

First of all, it was a question of a conflict which, in view of the rôle of protector which Russia had assumed over the Balkan Slavs, might have further European consequences. We strove, therefore, to "localize" the conflict, to prevent its spreading to other Powers. If Russia, nevertheless, seized the opportunity to take hostile action against Austria, the *casus foederis* became applicable to us. Our alliance with the Danube Monarchy had existed for three decades; it had been made public and was generally known. It imposed on us stipulated obligations, just as the Franco-Russian treaty imposed similar obligations on the two respective parties. But not only because of these covenanted obligations, but also because of our own position and prestige, we could not, in any war between Austria and the Great Power of the East [Russia], leave Austria in the lurch. Had we refused our help at a moment when our



ALFRED ZIMMERMAN
Former Foreign Minister of Germany

ally was fighting for its existence, what value would the alliance with Germany have had for Austria? The alliance would have been terminated; and where would we have found among the European group of Powers another point of support? We would have stood *completely isolated* before the hostile concert of the Entente Powers—France, Russia, Great Britain. Or does any one believe that for our abandonment of Austria, France would have sacrificed and consigned to oblivion her desires for "*Revanche*," Great Britain her distrust of our navy and her commercial rivalry, Russia her Pan-Slavic movement of expansion?

Great tension prevailed all over Europe. But trusting in the love of peace so often asserted by the Powers, and in the hope that they would not close their eyes to the justice of Austria's cause, we looked forward to the success of our efforts to localize the Austro-Hungarian conflict and to prevent a general conflagration.

Acting on the basis of these considerations, when Vienna communicated to us her decision to take action against Serbia, we advised her to act *quickly* while the shocking impression made on the world by the Sarajevo assassination was still fresh in the minds of all.

The result was contrary to our hopes. After we had initiated between Petersburg and Vienna the negotiations which we hoped would lead to an agreement, Russia proceeded to the action which, as she knew, was bound to destroy all hopes of peace—viz., general mobilization, through which she also threatened us and forced us to draw the sword in self-defense.

GERMANY NOT SURE OF BRITISH NEUTRALITY

I venture to make some observations regarding one point of Professor Barnes's arguments. Professor Barnes assumes that we had counted on Great Britain's neutrality. This was not the case. Britain's attitude was uncertain. It is true that the British Government, through the exchange of notes between Grey and Cambon on Nov. 22-23, 1912, of which we had knowledge through secret sources, had assumed heavy moral obligations toward France. But they were not *binding in all cases*. Grey in his letter had even made this reservation. In Great Britain the Parliament, as the chosen representative of the people, had to decide between war and peace. Popular opinion in Great Britain had recently somewhat improved in Germany's favor; the people generally wanted peace. Lord Grey himself

says in his Memoirs that an anti-war party existed in Parliament and even in the Cabinet. In Part I, page 312, he writes:

I knew it to be very doubtful whether the Cabinet, Parliament and the country would take this view on the outbreak of the war (sc., that the interest of Britain required that we should not stand aside, while France fought alone in the West, but must support her).

Further, on pp. 335-36, he writes:

The notion of being involved in war about a Balkan quarrel was repugnant. . . . If France were involved, it would not be in any quarrel in which we owed her goodwill, as in the Moroccan disputes. It would indeed not be in any quarrel of her own at all; it would be because she, as Russia's ally, had the misfortune to be involved in a Russian quarrel, in which France had no direct interest and which did not arouse feeling in the French people. . . . What, it was asked, was the good of keeping so carefully clear of alliances and obligations if we were to be drawn into European war in such a quarrel as this? . . . Such I felt to be how the situation was viewed by numbers of people, and I knew the desire to keep out of war to be very *widespread and strong*.

If even Sir E. Grey had such doubts, it was quite comprehensible that we in Berlin should be torn between pessimistic fears and optimistic hopes regarding Great Britain's attitude. Many important considerations indicated that Great Britain would not enter the war, at least not at its inception. But we never *counted firmly* on Great Britain's neutrality. Decisive for our attitude were the reasons why we could not leave our Austrian ally in the lurch.

Berlin, Germany.

VI—Austria's Fateful Decisions Reached Independently

By ALFRED ZIMMERMAN

FORMER GERMAN UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

THE article written by Professor Harry Elmer Barnes on the relations and interchanges between Germany and Austria in 1914 has highly interested me. I beg to make the following remarks with regard to its statements:

It is quite correct that Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg and the Kaiser felt certain that an Austrian war on Serbia would not be likely to produce a European war, but that I was rather more pessimistic in this regard. Precisely in order to avoid the

danger of a European war, I was for a prompt action against Serbia, as I believed that in view of the terrible crime of Sarajevo, and the then universal sympathy with Austria, Russia and France would abstain from interfering. But I cannot confirm the supposition that I believed Germany and Austria quite capable of defeating any potential enemies in the event of a European war. Knowing already at that time the secret engagements of the British Foreign Office to France and Russia, I had

very serious reasons for not counting on the neutrality of Great Britain in case of war with France and Russia.

The Austrian statesmen rightly admit that their appeal to Germany and their ultimatum to Serbia were formulated by the Austrians quite independently of any German participation, that the ultimatum was submitted without giving Germany adequate advance knowledge or asking her for advice on the subject, and that in deciding to reject the Serbian answer and to make war on Serbia, Austria acted on her own responsibility. The Franco-Russian allegation that Austrian policy as to Serbia

was originated by and forced upon Austria by Germany is absolutely false.

I fully agree, on the other hand, with the declarations made to Professor Barnes by the Kaiser, the Crown Prince and Herr von Jagow.

The three "major counts" against Germany I am sorry not to be able to comment upon, as I have not at hand the material to peruse them.

Permit me to add that I highly admire and appreciate the most valuable efforts of Professor Barnes to clear up the question of responsibility for the World War.

Berlin, Germany.

VII—Statement by the Former Emperor of Germany

In reply to the Editor's request of the former German Emperor to comment on Professor Barnes's article, the following communication, transmitted through the "Acting Chief of the Household of H. I. M.," was received:

BY COMMAND of H. I. M. the Emperor I have the honour to inform you concerning your request of Feb. 28 that H. I. M., after studying Professor Barnes's excellent essay, finds that this eminent his-

torian has treated the question of the Austro-German relations in such an able, clear and exhaustive way, that nothing is left to be added or said.

H. I. M., therefore, in thanking you for your kind offer, will refrain from making any remarks or additions to Professor Barnes's essay.

(Signed) ACTING CHIEF OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF H. I. M.

Haus Doorn, April 5, 1928.

VIII—Germany's Responsibility Not Diminished by New Evidence

By MICHAEL T. FLORINSKY

DIVISION OF HISTORY AND ECONOMICS, THE CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE

THE opening paragraph of Professor H. E. Barnes's article on Germany and Austria in 1914 contains the statement that during Professor Barnes's visit to Europe in the Summers of 1926 and 1927 he succeeded in obtaining a "considerable body of revolutionary evidence" which "will clear up for all time" some of the problems of the responsibility for the World War. The present writer fears that the hopes raised by this promise still remain unfulfilled. The new evidence is in the nature of present-day statements by former leaders of Austrian and German politics interpreting the situation as they look back upon it now.

In the very nature of the case, that kind of historical evidence is never accepted by the scientific historian as sufficient in itself. It may be legitimate as an interpretation of facts and documents otherwise known to us. But the historian's task is not to accept these statements as *ex cathedra* and necessarily true, because the authors were actors in the scene, but at least to submit them to an impartial analysis for this very reason. It is in this spirit that we shall consider the new evidence produced by Professor Barnes.

The leading actors on the Austrian side in the drama of July, 1914—Count Berch-



Drawing by Kenneth Grove

THE EX-KAISER WILHELM

told, Count Hoyos and Dr. von Wiesner—endorse the already familiar theory that "Austria must rest her case before the bar of historical judgment solely upon the accuracy of her major contention that the Serbian menace threatened the very integrity of the Dual Monarchy and could not be successfully withstood except through a punitive war against the Serbs or complete Serbian acquiescence in the ultimatum of July 23, 1914. They admitted frankly that they foresaw the possibility of a European war arising out of such action, though they did not believe such conditions probable. But they felt it better to accept the chance of a European war than to face what seemed to them certain ruin if they failed to accept the Serbian challenge." This contention, in the opinion of Professor Barnes, is "reasonable and just when viewed from the Austrian angle."

The explanation of so lenient a treatment of Austria-Hungary, which, in fact, is nothing short of a complete exoneration, is to be found in the assertion that in July, 1914, the Austrian Government had in its hands conclusive evidence of the participation of Serbia in the Sarajevo murder and of the existence of an anti-Austrian Russo-Serbian plot. This evidence consisted of:

(1) the telegraphic report of Dr. von Wiesner, supplemented by his detailed oral report; (2) a number of secret telegrams exchanged between Belgrade and St. Petersburg and intercepted by the Austrian Foreign Office; they established that "Hartwig, the Russian Minister in Serbia, was pursuing an authorized policy in directing the Russo-Balkan plots at the expense of Austria." Let us consider each of these points.

1—Von Wiesner's telegraphic report, which contained little that would justify the drastic action taken against Serbia (Berchtold himself seems to imply this by emphasizing the importance of von Wiesner's oral report), was sent from Sarajevo on July 13 at 1:10 P. M. It closed with the announcement of von Wiesner's departure for Vienna in the evening of the same day. It seems extremely unlikely that in the few hours which von Wiesner spent in Serbia after the dispatch of his report he obtained evidence which would induce him to change any of his fundamental conclusions, nor does Berchtold or von Wiesner disclose that any such evidence actually came to his knowledge. It may be assumed, therefore, that von Wiesner's oral report was a mere elaboration, however valuable and interesting, of the conclusions he telegraphed from Sarajevo, and it is difficult to see how it could produce the effect attributed to it by Berchtold. These conclusions, it will be remembered, were that, while the assassins had been helped by Serbian accomplices, "there is nothing to show the complicity of the Serbian Government, * * * nor is there anything to lead one even to conjecture such a thing. On the contrary, there is evidence to show that such complicity is out of the question." The "revisionists" have tried to explain away this fundamental document by adducing other data not known at the time of the investigation, but the fact is that they were not known then, and that the official report was so unsatisfactory to Berchtold that he did not publish it. The statement that Berchtold did not "suppress" the report but merely "filed it awaiting the return of his commissioner with the full oral report" seems to deal rather with words than with facts. As long as the report was withheld what does it matter whether we call it suppression or filing? But why was it filed? If the oral report incriminated Serbia, why did not Berchtold make more use of it to win over Tisza? The historian is not so much interested in what Berchtold makes

today of his impressions of the oral report as in what use he made of them then.

2—Let us now take up the Russian telegrams intercepted by the Austrian Foreign Office and regarded by it in 1914 "as more vital and more incriminating with respect to Serbia than the report of Dr. von Wiesner." We are told that in the Summer of 1914 the source of this information could not be disclosed for "apparent" reasons. It is to be regretted that Berchtold did not explain why, fourteen years after the outbreak of the war, they still remain unpublished, and why Austrian statesmen have never placed before the bar of history what they consider a vital piece of evidence for their defense. Surely, the "apparent" reasons (the writer confesses that he is at a loss as to what they are) which explain Austria's commendable discretion in 1914 are no longer valid. It may be remembered that not the slightest reference to the Russo-Serbian plot is made in Franz Joseph's autograph and strictly confidential letter to William and the attached memorandum which were taken by Hoyos to Berlin on July 4, and which set forth the case for Austria (*Austrian Red Book*, Vol. I, No. I). Nor does it appear from Count Czernin's memoirs that he was aware of any such plot.

RUSSIA'S DIPLOMACY IN BELGRADE.

We are also informed that the archives of Moscow have been examined by Dr. M. Bogitschevich and that they contain most damaging evidence as to the sinister part played by Russia in the Balkans. The archives of Moscow are, unfortunately, inaccessible to the present writer, but he examined the documents published by the Soviet Government as recently as 1925 and 1926 (*Krasny Arkhiv*, Vols. VIII, IX, XV and XVI) and dealing with *The Preparation for the Balkan War* and *The First Balkan War*. They cover a number of years and include numerous dispatches from Hartwig. The editors of the collection state in the preface that the documents have been specially selected in order to expose the treacherous and militaristic policy of the Imperial Russian Government. In spite of this, they contain nothing "revolutionary" and certainly do not corroborate the statement of Berchtold. The writer, therefore, cannot help but feel that the statement of Dr. Bogitschevich should be accepted with some caution, and at least has no documentary proof to sustain it.

As to the "authorized policy" of Hartwig, we fortunately have the authoritative evi-

dence of M. Sazonov himself. Commenting in his memoirs (*Fateful Years*, London, 1912-1913) in his endeavor to restrain the national aspirations of Serbia, which were warmly supported by an influential body of Russian public opinion "which all but accused Russian diplomacy of high treason" (p. 74), M. Sazonov writes as follows: "My problem was still further complicated by the fact that even in Serbia * * * I did not always find that self-control and sober estimate of the dangers of the moment which alone could avert a catastrophe. * * * To my mind, the Serbian attitude was partly accounted for by the fact that M. Hartwig, our Minister to Belgrade, preferred the agreeable rôle of countenancing the exaggerated attitude adopted by Government and social circles in Belgrade, to the less grateful one which he should have adopted in the true interest of Serbia. * * * Hartwig interpreted Russian policy in Belgrade according to his own taste, and thereby greatly added to my difficulties" (p. 80). And again: "* * * The conduct of the Russian Minister in Belgrade in fostering Serbian aspirations * * * placed the Russian Government in an awkward position" (p. 82). The actual relationship between Hartwig and Sazonov is made clear by these remarks. In private conversations with the present writer M. Sazonov was still more outspoken. Sazonov's account of Russia's policy in Serbia will be found in his book. He frankly criticizes the rôle of Hartwig, who, unfortunately, could not be removed as a result of his exceptional position in Belgrade and his popularity with an influential body of public opinion at home. So much for the Russo-Balkan plot.

The interesting problem of the influence exerted by Germany on the policy of Austria is a good example of the extreme caution one should exercise in interpreting *post hoc* evidence of responsible leaders. Berchtold and his associates maintain that after the support of Germany had been assured on July 5 communications from Berlin had practically no influence on their attitude. This is one of those half-truths the fallacy of which may easily be detected and which are bound to find themselves at variance with undeniable facts.

GERMANY'S "FREE HAND" TO AUSTRIA

There is little doubt that the decisive factor in the relation between Germany and Austria was the commitment entered into on July 5 and 6 by the Government of Berlin to lend its unreserved support to



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the Government of Vienna "whatever Austria's decision may turn out to be." In another place (*The Genesis of the World War*, 1926, p. 185) Professor Barnes describes this decision—and not too strongly—as "foolish and ill-advised." Having this assurance of Germany's support, to which it was rigorously adhering, Berchtold may well maintain with a fair degree of sincerity that the subsequent policy of Berlin had relatively little effect upon him. This, however, does not prove that the views of Wilhelmstrasse did not influence the policy of Ballplatz. If Germany, instead of fostering the aggressive policy of Vienna, had tendered counsels of moderation, would it have been entirely disregarded? One may be allowed to doubt this. From evidence such as the outspoken memoirs of Conrad von Hötzendorf it appears that the War Party in Vienna considered the support of Germany among its chief trumps, and was by no means indifferent to repeated assurances of such support which were forthcoming from Berlin. It exercised a strong influence upon public opinion. Are all these factors to be ignored?

There is, furthermore, at least one piece of direct evidence to show that on this occasion Berchtold's memory is failing him.

One should remember that in the first part of July the policy of Austria in Serbia was not yet definitely settled. There was still one obstacle to overcome—the opposition of Count Tisza, the only statesman in Vienna who realized all the danger of the situation. In order to triumph over his resistance Berchtold naturally used his major card, the friendly advices and information which were showered on him from Berlin. "Tschirschky has just left me," wrote Berchtold to Tisza on July 8, "and told me that he had received a telegram from Berlin by which his imperial master instructed him to declare that in Berlin an action of the monarchy against Serbia is fully expected, and that Germany could not understand why we should neglect this opportunity of dealing a blow. * * * Tschirschky's remarks impressed me so much that I thought they might in some degree influence your ultimate decision, and for this reason I am informing you without delay." (*Austrian Red Book*, Vol. I, No. 10.) Is this compatible with Berchtold's recent pronouncement that "the bellicosity which Tschirschky had shown up to this time [the end of July] had exerted no practical effect upon Austrian policy?" Count Montgelas has attempted to prove that Berchtold had misunderstood Tschirschky. This opinion may or may not be accepted, but the fact remains that Berchtold used what he believed to be, or represented to be, the wishes of Berlin, in order to win over Tisza. Was Berlin of no importance to Berchtold on July 8?

AUSTRIAN DIPLOMATS' OPTIMISM

It may be plausibly argued that Berchtold did not realize the full consequences of the action he was taking in Serbia, although, as he himself admits, he was willing to face a European war rather than to abandon his anti-Serbian schemes. And it is from Berchtold's own point of view that the choice of his conversation with Dumaine, the French Ambassador, on July 22, as an evidence in his favor is particularly unfortunate. To begin with, the first half of the official Austrian report of the conversation (*Austrian Red Book*, Vol. I, No. 53) gives little ground for optimism. "He [the French Ambassador] discussed all the eventualities which might result from an energetic step on our [Austrian] side toward the Cabinet of Belgrade, and painted the dangers resulting from a war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia in crude [dark? M. F.] colors calling attention to the

fact that it might become a war of the Slav races against the monarchy." Is this an optimistic outlook? And then the view of Schebeko, the Russian Ambassador, and, probably, the account of his conversation with him given by Dumaine, have been misrepresented in the Austrian report. What Schebeko and Dumaine actually thought of the situation is clearly stated in a communication of Sir Maurice de Bunsen, dated July 5, 1914:

"He [Schebeko] cannot believe that the country [Austria] will allow itself to be rushed into war, for an isolated combat with Serbia would be impossible, as Russia would be compelled to take up arms in defense of Serbia. Of this there could be no question. * * * M. Dumaine is full of serious apprehensions. * * * He has repeatedly spoken to me during the past week on the danger of the situation, which, he fears, may develop rapidly into complications from which war might easily arise." (*British Documents*, No. 40.)

It appears from the same communication that Schebeko's optimism was based on the belief that anti-Serbian feelings in Austria were limited to the upper classes and that this would exercise a moderating influence on the Austrian Government. That Schebeko's views did not change between July 5 and 22 may be seen from Dumaine's own report of his conversation with Schebeko, referred to by Berchtold. "The Russian Ambassador," wrote Dumaine on July 22, "has confided to me that his Government will not raise any objection to steps directed toward the punishment of the guilty and the dissolution of societies which are notoriously revolutionary, but could not accept requirements which would humiliate Serbian national feelings." (*French Yellow Book*, No. 18.) Is it not clear that the opinions of the French, and especially of the Russian Ambassadors, have either been misunderstood or misrepresented by Count Berchtold? As to a British diplomat's statement to the *Neue Freie Presse* [after the publication of the ultimatum], how could such a statement, even if it was actually given out by this diplomat, carry any real weight when confronted with Sir Edward Grey's unreserved condemnation of the ultimatum as a "most formidable document"? (*British Documents*, No. 19.) Foreign diplomats in Vi-

enna were left completely in the dark as to the proposed course of Austria in Serbia and found it difficult to keep in touch with Berchtold. (See *British Documents*, Nos. 40, 56.) What Berchtold is pleased to describe as their optimism was due to their reluctance to admit that Austria would take a step which would lead the Europe of 1914 to its doom, and not their ignorance of the "secret" policy of their respective Governments.

TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF SERBIA

Just a word about Count Szapary's letter. We know now that the suspicions of Sazonov as to the sincerity of Austria's assurances that the territorial integrity of Serbia would be respected were not entirely devoid of foundation. The decision of the Council of Ministers held in Vienna on July 19, after proclaiming the absence of intention on the part of Austria to increase its territory at the expense of Serbia, makes the following reservation: "Of course, the strategically necessary corrections of frontiers and the reduction of Serbia's territory to the advantage of other States, or the unavoidable temporary occupation of Serbian territory, is not precluded by this resolution." (*Austrian Red Book*, Vol. 1, No. 26.) This reservation gave Austria, in case of victory, almost a free hand in dealing with Serbia. Could this be accepted by Russia? And is it possible to maintain that Austria was honestly determined to "respect the territorial integrity of Serbia"?

Lack of space prevents the writer from undertaking more detailed examination of the evidence produced by Professor Barnes. From what has been said above one may perhaps be justified in concluding that the *post hoc* explanations of Austrian and German statesmen, however interesting in themselves, add little to our knowledge of the fundamental problems of the responsibility for the war. The existence of a Russo-Balkan plot is still to be proved, and Professor Bernadotte Schmitt's verdict still holds good: "Whether the German Government fully realized the consequence of its reckless (but deliberate) action may be debated, but its responsibility for Austria's course of action is overwhelming." (*CURRENT HISTORY*, December 1927, p. 398.)