

The Terms of Peace

Germany is fighting to retain her exploitative position in seized territories—and hopes, by victory or acquiescence, to prepare for an extension of this power.

Russian aims are similarly imperialistic. Stalin is as much in the war as if his armies were marching. He is in the position of a gangster collecting the loot from a victim shot down by his strong-arm man; i. e., Hitler. The gang leader shoots only when necessary, and his victim is usually his own bodyguard.

But what are England and France fighting for? In the absence of any statement of definite aims it must be concluded that these governments are fighting to retain their exploitative position in parts of the world under their control, a position which would be threatened by the success of the Russo-German venture. It's the old story of the conflict of the "haves" and the "have nots," of the south side mob trying to "muscle in" on the more lucrative north side.

The seductive suggestion of King George VI that England would consider any terms proposed by Germany is half of the diplomatic game of putting Hitler "on the spot"—the other half being M. Lebrun's demand that Germany get out of Poland, Austria and Czecho-Slovakia as a prerequisite for any discussion of peace. Both suggestions involve the unprecedented resignation of an undefeated dictator, and were thrown out merely for the historical purpose of placing the war blame on Germany. It seems also that the French president's drastic proposal and the gentle suggestion of the King were intended to demonstrate to Germans that France is more inclined to war than England, and that the German claims to the contrary are mere propaganda. Anyhow, both statements definitely preclude any possibility of peace without victory.

There is, however, a statement of purpose by England's Chamberlain which because of its vagueness permits of many conjectures. "We are not aiming only at victory," he said in the House of Commons, "but rather looking beyond it to the laying of a foundation of a better interna-

tional system which will mean that war is not the inevitable lot of every succeeding generation."

Boiled down, this means a condition of permanent peace. In view of the fact that "every succeeding generation" has seen war for hundreds of years we can exclude the elimination of Hitlerism, another



condition of peace laid down by Chamberlain, as an absolutely necessary factor. Hitler did not cause the World War, nor the Boer War, nor the Spanish-American War, nor the wars against the Riffs, nor the Napoleonic wars, nor Caesar's wars. So that, if we seek the "foundation of a better international system" which will rid "every succeeding generation" of war, we must seek it outside the peculiar political make-up of any given government. War is indigenous to all political ideologies—from the most democratic to the most totalitarian.

The cause of war is not in the politics of any nation, but in its economy. If people are poor, or are threatened with poverty, they will fight. If they are prosperous, and if their prosperity is based on freedom of production, rather than on exploitation of other peoples, the condition of peace prevails. So, let us take Chamberlain at his word and detail the terms of peace which will fit his broad purpose. We believe that these terms, and none other, will lay the "foundation of a better international system which will mean that war is not the inevitable lot of each succeeding generation":

1. Complete free trade between all the nations, including all their territories, mandated or seized. Thus the natural resources of each will be open to the other on the basis of exchange, and there would be no need of fighting for colonies. The peoples of all the nations would be

"haves" in accordance with their production, and the only "have nots" would be those who refused to produce.

2. Taxes of all kinds must be abolished. One cannot imagine Germans being so stupid as to fight Frenchmen and Englishmen who want to abolish their taxes. Hitlerism would crash to the ground—for the Germans would do it themselves.

3. The only source of revenue for any country would be the rent of its land. With a promise of this kind, meaning that their own expropriated lands at home would be given back to them, the armies of France and England would be invincible—if there were any army to oppose them.

These are the only terms of permanent peace.