

The Mistakes of the Kaiser

By RENE VIVIANI

Premier of France When the War Broke Out

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GERMAN RESPONSIBILITY FOR MOBILIZATION

But let us have done with the influence, however great, which the publication of news in a paper may have had, and let us see whether there was not also something else.

Another document, more formidable yet in so far as its effect is concerned (for it did not come from any paper, even an official one, but from the hands of the German emperor), undoubtedly exerted an influence of the most vital importance.

What document? A dispatch sent by William II. It is known that, on July 30th, the German emperor addressed a telegram to the czar. Here it is:

"My ambassador has been instructed to call the attention of thy government to the dangers and the grave consequences of mobilization; this is what I told thee in my last telegram. Austria-Hungary has mobilized only against Serbia and only a part of her army. If Russia, as appears from thy telegram and the communication from thy government, mobilizes against Austria-Hungary, the mediatory mission which thou didst entrust to me as a friend, and which I accepted at thy earnest prayer, will be jeopardized if not rendered impossible. The whole burden of the decision to be made now rests upon thy shoulders, which must bear the responsibility of peace or war." (Yellow Book, 210.)

This telegram, though it was in answer to a previous one from the czar, made no allusion to an exceedingly important proposal of Nicholas II to convene the Hague Arbitration Court. This telegram was threatening—the responsibility for war would fall upon the czar, because he had safeguarded the country by means of a partial mobilization.

What could the emperor of Russia hope at that supreme juncture, after such a telegram? But—and this is important—more than important—at what hour did he receive it, at what hour was it dispatched?

Let us show clearly why the determination of this is of interest in stating and solving the problem.

When Did It Arrive?

In the White Book, the dispatch bears the date of July 30, one o'clock in the morning, which would mean that it had arrived during the same night, which would have no important bearing on the events which occurred that same day in the early part of the evening at St. Petersburg. But the hour marked is false. The second White Book shows that this telegram was dispatched July 30, at 3:20 p. m.—or 4:20 Russian time—and that, being an imperial message, it arrived at about 5:20 or 5:30, Russian time.

Now, at that moment, the czar and M. Sazonoff were together in consultation with each other. M. Sazonoff read and re-read this dispatch in the presence of the czar, and held it for a long time in his hands. And what time was it? It was between—

It was at about this time—i. e., toward the end of the afternoon—that the imminence of the danger became apparent to the Russian government, with such a dispatch coming on top of the rumors in circulation concerning German mobilization at Berlin, which in the absence of an official telegram, the private telegram from the journalist Markow to his agency had already spread in St. Petersburg.

M. Sazonoff noticed the disastrous impression made upon the czar by the kaiser's dispatch. And it was at that fateful hour (5:30 o'clock) that the czar cancelled the decision made by him the day before not to mobilize, since he as well as his counselors heard all about them semi-official rumors and official warnings relating to German mobilization, and, at the same time, were struck by the threat of war implied in the dispatch from Emperor William. Thus, Russian general mobilization was caused by the underhand maneuvers of the German general staff and by the angry and threatening dispatch from Emperor William—in short, by the combination of all sorts of intrigues.

And now let us settle still another question that is vital toward fixing the general responsibility of Germany and of the German emperor and his chancellor.

It is known that Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg sent two telegrams to his ambassador at Vienna, asking him to press the Austrian government to agree to enter into discussion with Russia. In these telegrams Herr von Bethmann called attention to the meritorious moderation displayed by Serbia (which, to be sure, he noticed very late in the day), and stated that Austria honor had been satisfied. Then a few hours later he annulled these messages, which in consequence, kept the Austrian government from learning of the instructions contained in them. Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg alleged, as an explanation of his change of front, the insistent demands of the German general staff, "due to Russian and French preparations."

This allegation, of course, was false. Let us, however, assume that it was founded upon fact.

Can it be looked upon as founded on fact that thirty-first day of July? Let it be so assumed. But—could it be so considered on July 27 and 28? On these dates what were the alleged Russian and French preparations? On these dates has Serbia replied to Austria in uncompromising and insolent terms? Serbia had accepted everything and asked discussion only on one clause of the Austrian ultimatum, and the entente, for its part, also was asking for a peaceful debate in London. The moderation of Serbia's answer was so disconcerting to the courtiers who counted upon war as a consequence of the inacceptability of her answer that Emperor William declared "that there was no longer any cause for war and that Austria had obtained satisfaction." Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg said the same thing.

Why the Delay?

But now, over the tomb of the latter—for, luckily for him, his conscience now sleeps therein—a terrible question arises: If, on July 26, 27, or 28, the attitude of Serbia was such that Emperor William paid involuntary homage to it, what was there, then, to prevent Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg to give to Austria-Hungary in the course of those very days, the advice which he did not give until July 31? Why this loss of time? Why did Herr von Jagow, shortly afterward, about July 31, refuse to transmit to Austria the Sazonoff proposal sent to him by Count Pourtales? If indeed it be true that the German general staff, which led to the civil dispatch of the German government in order to drag it along into war, had a reason for complaint on July 31, it would not have had even the shadow of a pretext for the complaint before that date.

The voluntary loss of time, the lapse of hours because of conscious inertia, the curt refusals, all these things produced the tense nervousness and the state of excitement—in short, the supreme results—which were sought.

Thus, the principal culprit—even though what was maintained by the German general staff was correct—is still Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg. And to think that, in his speech of Dec. 24, 1914, in answer to the speech made by me before the chamber of deputies on the twenty-second, he threatened me with reprisals from the world! Well, he is dead—but there are cases where death can not serve as an excuse.

And now let us take up the preparations by Austria and also those of Germany—concerning which, naturally, the German general staff made no complaint.

It will be recalled that Austria, the day after the conciliatory answer of Serbia, mobilized against Serbia and invaded the latter's territory on the twenty-eighth; that, on July 29, (though there had been no menace on the part of Russia), Austria partially mobilized half her army. It was Austria, then, who took the first two steps: partial mobilization and war against Serbia. And she it was also who first ordered general mobilization, a mobilization which, let it be clearly understood, was forced upon Austria by Germany, who took upon herself that day an additional responsibility.

A Telegram in Evidence. Here is a telegram, concerning which, of course, German writers never speak, sent by the Austrian ambassador at Berlin, and reading as follows:

"Count Szogonyi to Count Berchtold—Telegram 351—Berlin, July 30, 1914—Dispatched at 7:40 a. m.—Arrived at 10:20 p. m. In strictly secret cipher.

"The Austro-Hungarian military attaché, after a very important talk with the head of the German General Staff, has just sent to Baron Conrad a telegram in view of which Count von Moltke urgently advises me that

there be immediate general mobilization. . . ."

"Urgently! Immediately!" And this on July 30, before 7:40, since this dispatch, bearing that hour stamped upon it refers to an earlier dispatch sent to Baron von Conrad by the Austrian military attaché.

And now I ask—what had Russia done?

Those bringing the worst accusations against her, reproach her with having taken steps, between 5 and 7 p. m., toward self-defense—in other words, at a considerably later hour than that at which Austria bid defiance to the world.

On July 31, Count Berchtold answered the above telegram as follows: Cipher—3:02—"The order for mobilization is issued today, July 31. Please let me know the first day of your mobilization."

Under what conditions was that mobilization accomplished, which, as early as July 31, Germany was urgently pressing upon Austria? To learn this, it is necessary to re-read the dispatch addressed to me on July 30, by M. Dumaine, French ambassador at Vienna (Yellow Book, 164). The ambassador tells of a long interview, said also to have been cordial, between the Russian ambassador, Count Berchtold, on which he pinned great hopes. Nevertheless, he thus concluded his dispatch:

"The interview had been conducted in an amicable tone and gave rise to the belief that all hope of localizing the conflict was not over, when the news of the German mobilization reached Vienna."

Concise enough, is it not? The sinister hours will be recalled: July 30, at one in the afternoon, beneath the complacent gaze of Herr von Jagow, and under the auspices of the German general staff, there appeared in the Lokal Anzeiger, a semi-official paper devoted to the government, the news of the German mobilization which was called false. We have noted the profound effect caused in Russia—an effect that had been desired. We have just seen what effect it produced in Vienna, where, be it observed, no denial was made. Nothing, in fact, indicates that there was an official denial.

Thus, everything was hurried forward: early in the afternoon of July 30, spreading of the news in Vienna of German mobilization; the same day, in order to give definite confirmation of the truth of the news, a dispatch from Berlin urgently advising Vienna to order immediate general mobilization.

Who, then, got the start on the rest? Who mobilized first? What did von Moltke know, on July 30, at 7:40, an even before, of the alleged

Russian mobilization, since it was necessary to draw up and put in cipher the dispatch sent to Vienna? Never was a crime more patent.

And, as for Germany, did she wait? Let us speak a bit of her murderous and overwhelming preparations.

A legal lie covered the movements of troops in Germany.

In order to start them, all she had to do was to proclaim the "state of war-danger" (Kriegsgefahrzustand). As a matter of fact, this was mobilization, which is tantamount to saying that, in Germany, mobilization resembles a mere formality. It is, so to speak, the stamp placed upon an envelope already addressed and containing a letter written in full.

Policy of France.

But even before proclaiming the "war-danger"—that is, to put it correctly, mobilization—Germany had already made formidable preparations. I established this in a telegram written hastily on July 30, 1914, since all the data had not been gathered at that feverish moment, and I made public this telegram, which was addressed to all the representatives of France in foreign countries, in the Yellow Book (No. 106).

Here is my telegram:

"M. Rene Viviani, president of the council, minister for foreign affairs, to M. Paul Cambon, French ambassador at London.

"Paris, July 30, 1914.

"Please inform Sir E. Grey of the following facts concerning French and German military preparations. England will see from this that if France is resolved, it is not she who is taking aggressive steps.

"You will direct the attention of Sir E. Grey to the decision taken by the council of ministers this morning; although Germany has made her covering dispositions a few hundred metres from the frontier along the whole front from Luxembourg to the Vosges, and has transported her covering troops to their war positions, we have kept our troops ten kilometers from the frontier and forbidden them to approach nearer.

"Our plan, conceived in the spirit of the offensive, provided, however, that the fighting position of our covering troops should be as near to the frontier as possible. By leaving a strip of territory undefended against sudden aggression of the enemy, the government of the republic hopes to prove that France does not bear, any more than Russia, the responsibility for the attack.

"In order to be convinced of this, it is sufficient to compare the steps taken on the two sides of our frontier, in France, soldiers who were on leave were not recalled, until we

were certain that Germany had done so five days before.

"In Germany, not only have the garrison troops of Metz been pushed up to the frontier, but they have been reinforced by units transported by train from garrisons of the interior, such as Trèves or Cologne; nothing like this has been done in France.

"The arming of the frontier defenses (clearing of trees, placing of armament, construction of batteries and strengthening of wire entanglements has begun in Germany on Saturday, the twenty-fifth; in France, on Tuesday, the twenty-eighth.

"Finally, in Germany, the reservists by tens of thousands have been recalled by individual summons, those living abroad (the classes of 1903 to 1911) have been recalled, the officers of reservists have been summoned; in the interior the roads are closed, motor cars only circulate with permits. It is the last stage of mobilization. None of these measures have been taken in France.

"The German army has its outposts on our frontier; on two occasions yesterday German patrols penetrated our territory. The whole sixteenth army corps from Metz, reinforced by part of the eighth from Trèves and Cologne, occupies the frontier from Metz to Luxembourg; the fifteenth army corps from Strassburg is massed on our frontier.

"Under penalty of being shot, the inhabitants of the annexed parts of Alsace-Lorraine are forbidden to cross the frontier.

(Signed) "Rene Viviani."

(To Be Continued)

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You feel on your teeth a viscous film. It clings to teeth, enters crevices and stays. The tooth brush used in old ways does not effectively combat it. So countless teeth are dimmed and ruined by it. Film absorbs stains, making the teeth look dingy. It forms the basis of cloudy coats. Tartar is

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City Lodges

Modern Woodmen will hold their regular meeting Monday night.

Wayne Lodge, Loyal Order of Moose will meet Monday night at the Moose club.

Richmond Commandery, No. 8, K. T., will confer the Order of the Red Cross Monday at 7 o'clock.

The Ladies' Auxiliary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians will meet Tuesday.

Oriental Encampment will hold its regular meeting Tuesday night in the I. O. O. F. hall.

Richmond Lodge No. 196, F. and A. M., will hold a called meeting Tuesday night at 7 o'clock for work in the Fellow Craft degree.

Officers were installed as follows at the meeting of the Eastern Star held Saturday night in the Masonic temple: Worthy matron, Bertha Russell; worthy patron, J. Bert Russell; associate matron, Louise Rinehardt; secretary, Anna Smelser; treasurer, Flora Stevens; conductress, Elizabeth Smith; assistant conductress, Mabel Smith; chaplain, Lucy Schelle; mar-

shall, Leota Fry; organist, Ruby Dennis; Adah, Ruth Henderson; Ruth, Katherine Puckett; Esther, Esthel Riggin; Martha, Emma Schepman; Electra, Myrtle Bond; warden, Ada Sweet and sentinel, Warner Gard.

A basket luncheon was served before the business meeting. There were approximately 200 persons present at the luncheon and 300 at the installation meeting.

Richmond Council No. 18, Jr. O. U. A. M., meets Monday night at 7:30. Colonial Annex. Matters of vital importance to come up. All members are requested to be present. Elmer Wolfal, R. S., 229 North Eighteenth Street.

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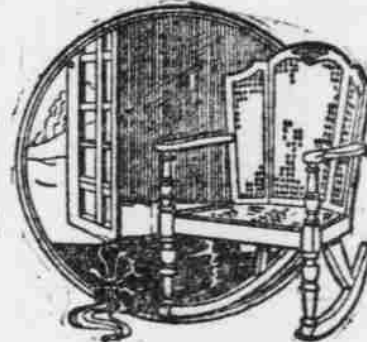
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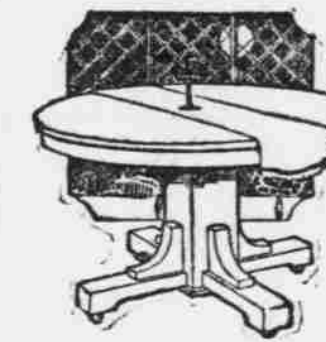
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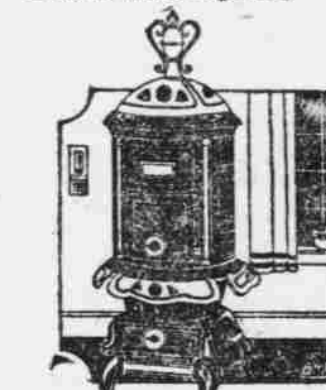
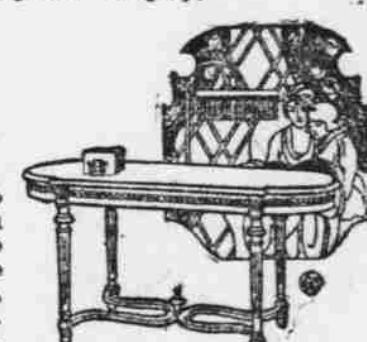
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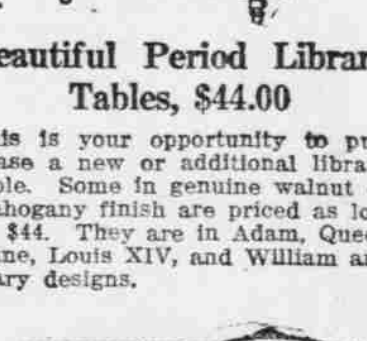
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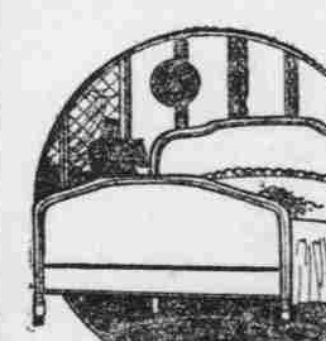
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