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GERMANY IN THE LEAGUE

Commenting on reports that Great Britain now favors admitting Germany to the league of nations, immediately, the New Republic presents a strong argument in favor of such a step.

The general impression has been that Germany was to be admitted to the new federation only after a long period of probation, if she were admitted at all—that she must first fulfill all her obligations to the allies and show signs of sincere repentance and reformation. Most Americans have accepted this view. But it is at least worth while, in view of the present menacing situation in Europe, to give serious consideration to this magazine's argument.

"Insofar as the western European democracies still need any protection against Germany, they will obtain it

in largest measure not by excluding Germany from the League, but by admitting her into the League at the earliest possible moment. As long as she is not bound by obligations of the League, she is free to intrigue for the purpose of undermining its strength and taking advantage of dissensions among its members; and she will have the more reason to intrigue because her exclusion from the society of nations deprives her of any participation in the common fund of security and good feeling. Her compulsory disarmament, desirable as it is, will not render her politically impotent. For political power depends not only on available military force, but on latent resources, upon the disunity of the opposition and upon ability to impress or persuade popular opinion. The best way to sterilize this German political power is to bring her into the League as soon as the German government signs the treaty of peace.

"A prolonged period of probation during which the German nation will neither enjoy the security nor share the responsibility of the members of the League would tend to mould the Germans into less rather than more trustworthy political associates. If the allies assign to Germany the social position of an outlaw, the psychology and collective morale of her people will become, or, if you please, will remain that of outlaws. The psychologically sound method of preventing such a calamity and of avoiding the permanent schism which it would introduce into European civilization is to give her a position in the society of nations commensurate with the necessary political importance of the German nation in a stable European system. Then if she misbehaved, her associates would have impregnable moral and political reasons for putting her in irons."

Some critics will call this line of reasoning "pro-German." Undoubtedly immediate admission to the League is

what the Germans want, and nobody is particularly eager to do the Hun a favor just now. But this is not answering the argument.

We can keep right on saying "He drinks like a fish." Pretty soon everybody will drink like a fish.

THE AMERICAN LEGION

It was accepted as a matter of course that as soon as the war was over there would be formed a military organization similar to the Grand Army of the Republic, the Confederate Veterans and the Spanish War Veterans. Such an organization is now definitely under way. It calls itself the American Legion. That name may be changed, but it would be hard to find a better one. There is to be a preliminary meeting in St. Louis next month to arrange for a national convention in November, at which time the plans will be perfected. The most active leader of the movement at present seems to be Lieut. Col. Theodore Roosevelt Jr.

The announced purpose of the Legion is to offer membership to all officers and enlisted men in the United States military or naval service during the war. No doubt there will be some special insignia, and perhaps some special degree of honor, for those who actually saw service in France. It is only right and fair, however, that membership is to be open, on a practically equal basis, to all the soldiers and sailors, even though they never got any further than the training camp. There were just as good fighters in those camps as ever fought in France, and it was not their fault that the war ended when it did.

Lieut. Col. Roosevelt explains the objects of the Legion as being "to perpetuate comradeships formed during the war, to preserve the history of the conflict and to maintain the principles for which American soldiers and sail-

ors trained, fought and died." These are worthy aims, valuable to the nation as well as the men concerned.

It is promised that the Legion will be nonpartisan, and will not interest itself in politics. Therein lies the only conceivable danger of such an institution. Four million men would be a tremendous power in politics if they worked and voted en masse for any political end.

There is little fear that the men who so nobly upheld American ideals in this war will ever knowingly take concerted action to their country's harm. It is always possible, however, that any organization may come under the influence of unscrupulous or mistaken leaders, and the Legion will therefore do well not to lay itself liable to this danger. The nation admires and trusts its army, but it would rather not have any "soldier vote."

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