

force and by a onesided, arbitrary repudiation of obligations.

I would ask the lords and masters of Europe whether this is a wise or clever or even prudent policy? Or whether on the contrary it is not a direct challenge to rebel — a direct way

of proving that whereas nothing can be obtained by peaceful means, there is much to be gained by arbitrary force? Is it not a direct moral endorsement of the principle of self-help and of "taking the law into one's own hands" against which we are now hearing such vociferous outcries?

BRITISH PROFESSORS AND TERRITORIAL REVISION

by

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International life is devoting more and more attention to the question of "revision". Mankind realises that *the Paris peace-treaties are bad*.

All classes of society alike also realise that the seventeen years which have passed since the treaties were drafted *have already invalidated numerous provisions of those treaties*. And society everywhere feels that the most important part of the work is yet to be done — viz. the work of *territorial revision*.

Public opinion wishes *to see clearly* in the problem of territorial revision. Those co-operating to that end deserve gratitude. Those who aim at obscuring the problem and at retarding its just solution, are undertaking a serious responsibility in the eyes of history.

Below will be found two studies on the question to which we have added comments of our own.

I.

An exceptionally valuable article was published by Professor Arnold J. Toynbee in the February—March number of "*International Affairs*", with the title "*Peaceful Change or War? The Next Stage in the International Crisis*". The article is essentially a recapitulation of an address given by the professor before the *Royal Institute for Foreign Affairs* (Chatham House) at the end of last year.

The essay is quite comprehensive and exhaustive and both politically and scientifically stands on a very high level. It might serve as a classical example of how to study objectively — with due regard alike for the political and legal factors and for all those historical and moral moments which must be taken into account — a problem which moves on absolutely new ground.

The subject of the article is the possibility of a *peaceful amendment* of the peace treaties of 1919. The writer — apart from coming to the conclusion that the unsatisfied "have nots" or Powers not obtaining what they want will sooner or later attain their objects — *advises Great Britain herself to set a good example* and accept the proposal made by the Labour Party Member Mr. Lansbury, to the effect that Great Britain should surrender certain of her colonies, seeing that otherwise any

practical pacifism is inconceivable. The article is based upon the *dual conception* recently in evidence in the foreign policy of Britain which postulates that no collective security is conceivable in the evolution of life without periodical amendments of the peace treaties.

Professor Toynbee explains how ticklish a matter it is to renounce territories at all. He then enumerates in succession the overseas colonies which are either claimed or menaced and the "irredenta" territories in Europe, proceeding to deal with cases in the past of the surrender of territories involving the payment of material compensation. Yet these cases cannot be regarded as precedents. Despite the difficulties and the lack of familiar ways and means, a solution must be found, for otherwise — continues Toynbee, inspired by the practical principles of a higher pacifism — there cannot be any spiritual peace.

The writer then enumerates the dissatisfied countries — Germany, Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria and Lithuania in Europe. He then adds:

"In order to limit the scope of our survey, we may venture, at the risk of being thought cynical, to ignore, for the moment, the grievances of the smaller countries, and this on two grounds: in the first place because they lack the strength to bring about violent changes by their own unaided efforts and in the second place because their claims are likely to stand or fall with those of their greater companions in discontent. If the claims of Germany and Italy are satisfied either peacefully or by force, the claims of Hungary and Bulgaria have a fair prospect of being satisfied simultaneously by whichever of the two methods it may be".

This is a very serious warning not to be ignored by those who keep imposing intolerably heavy burdens of taxation on their nationals for the purpose of being able by force of arms to defend against revision the territories unlawfully acquired by them.

Speaking of the "irredenta" territories, Professor Toynbee takes the several countries in succession. *Italy* has no more "irredenta" claims on her neighbours promising any important or positive results. In respect of *Germany* however the

writer says that "... the list of German *terre irredente* is a large one. Leaving out of account the distant and isolated German minorities in the Soviet Union and Rumania and Yugoslavia, and confining our attention to *terre irredente* claimed by Germany which are directly contiguous with the present territory of the Reich, the list includes Austria (with the adjoining South Tirol), Deutsch Böhmen (or Sudetenland), Danzig, Memel, Eupen and Malmédy, and the Polish Corridor, this last-mentioned territory being claimed on geographical and historical grounds, in spite of the fact that its inhabitants are not Germans but Poles. The list is formidable enough..."

On the splendid essay written by Professor Toynbee we Hungarians have only one observation of importance to make, — viz. that in the nature of the case there is a vast difference between the *terre irredente* of Germany and the *terre irredente* of Hungary. It would have been better — in order to make the matter more easily intelligible — not to regard the German claims and the Hungarian claims as homogeneous. For such an attempt to level those claims must inevitably lead to unfortunate misunderstandings.

The bulk of the German *terre irredente* — as may be seen from the enumeration given above — are the territories inhabited by the 11 million Germans living in Czecho-Slovakia and Austria. These Germans do not belong to the "Second" German Empire; consequently they cannot be "placed in the same box" as the *terre irredente* inhabited by the three and a half million Magyars which for over a thousand years formed integral parts of the Kingdom of Hungary, never having been separated from that country until the peace conference of 1919 — by treaties of peace based upon a brutal outrage on the Wilsonian principle of the right of self-determination of the peoples.

In this connection it should be stressed that the Hungarian "revision" movement confines its direct claims to the territories inhabited by Hungarians. Consequently, there is some exaggeration in the statement of the illustrious writer that "the Germans and Magyars are resenting the loss of their dominion over alien populations". The Hungarian attitude in the question is to the effect that its must be left to plebiscites to decide — on the basis of the right of self-determination included in the Wilsonian points — the fate of those territories which ethnically are non-Magyar. Hungary was once accorded the right of appeal to a plebiscite — viz. in the case of Sopron (under the Treaty of Venice), which town, despite the fact that a large proportion of its inhabitants are "aliens", voted for incorporation in Hungary.

As for the Hungarians (Magyars) living in the territories wrested from Hungary, their tragic fate has aroused the pity and horror of many an unbiassed inquirer. This fact is so well known today that it does not need to be proved. The only conclusion to be drawn is that the new States are incapable of governing without oppressing the millions belonging to their minorities, thereby acting as a constant menace to peace and making the League of Nations the object of criticism and in-

deed of scorn and derision owing to the fact that the decisive factor in settling the complaints dealt with in the Memorandums submitted by minorities is not justice, but intrigue and political interest and political alliance.

We are firmly convinced that Professor Toynbee's article — the attitude and conclusions of which were endorsed by the serious discussion on the same at Chatham House — will contribute to the formation of a uniform international attitude in the all-important question of "revision".

II.

An article of a very striking character appeared in the February number of the "*Fortnightly Review*". The article was entitled "*The Mischief of Revisionism*"; its writer being Professor R. B. Mowatt.

When I first read it, I could not help wondering how the historian whose work on the history of diplomacy I had been reading so eagerly for years could have written an article containing so large a share of prejudice and bias the very title of which was calculated to unfavourably influence the reader. Certainly the article is in crying contrast to the objective study of Professor Toynbee, which conscientiously reproduces the opinions of both the opposing camps. But the article is a contradiction also of the views of the numerous enlightened British scholars and politicians who have made a serious study of the question of "revisionism" as a new phenomenon of international politics due to the bad treaties made in Paris and do not simply dub as "mischief" the endeavour to obtain a revision by legitimate means, through the channel of the League of Nations.

Professor Mowatt is particularly mistaken in speaking of revisionism as propaganda. By so doing he exposes himself to the risk of being dubbed a "propagandist" in the event of his anti-revisionist arguments failing to hold water.

And they surely do fail to hold water. Let us take his arguments in succession:

1. Professor Mowatt says that "... the League Powers have been vigorously indicted in various quarters for not having made use of Article 19 of the Covenant in order to make such a ratification of frontiers as would satisfy discontented peoples and remove the sense of grievance".

Then the writer continues as follows: „Article 19 was never seriously intended to apply to frontiers”.

Where does Professor Mowatt get that from? Article 19 counterposes Article 10. The latter Article postulates territorial inviolability — though only in principle and *only in the event of aggression*. Article 19, on the other hand, refers to changes in territory. Originally these two Articles (10 and 19) were one Article. If he reads the historical data relating to the origin of Article 19, Professor Mowatt will have to admit that. And perhaps we need only quote the well-known words of Colonel House:

"The contracting Powers unite in several guarantees to each other of their territorial integrity and political independence, subject,

however, to such territorial modifications, if any, as may become necessary in the future by reason of changes in present racial conditions and aspirations, pursuant to the principle of self-determination, and as shall also be regarded by three-fourths of the Delegates as necessary and proper for the welfare of the peoples concerned; recognising also that all territorial changes involve equitable compensation and that the peace of the world is superior in importance and interest to any question of boundary".

2. Professor Mowatt attributes to Article 19 only a minor importance when he says that "Article 19 was meant to deal with subjects which can be appropriately dealt with by mediation and conciliation". However, Professor Mowatt's views are contradicted by the usages hitherto in force in the practice of the League of Nations or in international politics. In respect of the reparations payments, of the equality of Germany in respect of armaments and of the re-militarisation of the "de-militarised" Rhine territories etc., — each of which measures was really an act of revision — *Article 19 was never taken into account.*

When, during its session at Folkestone in 1934, the International Federation of League of Nations' Unions discussed Article 19, the representatives of thirty nations, during a debate on a motion submitted by Lord Cecil of Chelwood, unanimously decided that *Article 19 did refer to territorial revision*, and would doubtless have adhered to that decision even if Professor Mowatt had appeared at the session and attempted to get his one-sided opinion approved.

3. Another view of Professor Mowatt's which is quite incomprehensible is that enunciated by him when he says that "some small-scale transfers of territory, on the basis of exchange or purchase, are possible. One or two particularly glaring anomalies in the distribution of racial minorities or in the allocation of markets, might be corrected by this means, along the frontiers of, say, contiguous Central European states. Such rectifications are well worth making, but of course they would not satisfy land-hungry states". This attitude on his part shows that Professor Mowatt is quite unfamiliar with the situation in Central Europe. In particular he fails to understand that it is not a question of the states being "land-hungry" or not — nor even of the "anomalies" being "glaring" or not; the essential point is that the legal basis of the Paris peace treaties was the armistice agreement, the pivot of which was the Wilsonian right of self-determination, and that the said right of self-determination has either never been carried into effect at all or has been realised in an incredibly erroneous manner. It is for that reason that the peoples are "discontent" and are anxious to

amend the situation. *It is therefore a question of principles; not of a bargain.* The policy of barter practised at Geneva for the past fifteen years has shown that the path chosen must inevitably lead to a fresh crisis — or rather that it is high time to enter the path of justice and truth.

4. Equally untenable is the view expressed by Professor Mowatt when he says that "it is impossible on an old Continent that any state should contain no racial minorities. No amount of territorial revision would straighten out the racial tangle and leave no racial minorities within state-frontiers". This means practically that we should not protect ourselves against infection because we cannot possibly destroy infection. Or that we should not persecute sin and crime because there will always be criminals and sinners. It all smacks of propaganda, and is certainly not scientific. Professor Mowatt either does not know or has forgotten that the situation existing between Rumania and Hungary in this connection is that, whereas there are some 1,353,675 Hungarians living in Rumania, there are only 16,221 Rumanians in Hungary. If there were 16,221 Rumanians and Hungarians respectively on either side of the frontier — and not 1,353,675 Hungarians against only 16,221 Rumanians —, Professor Mowatt would be right. But he will never be right as things stand today. We should have expected Professor Mowatt to come to the conclusion that *the only way to enforce justice is to leave the matter to the free decision of the population itself*, particularly when we remember that he himself knows and declares that "everybody knows that many of the racial minorities are badly treated. The demand for territorial revision is largely due to this ill-treatment."

5. Professor Mowatt sees so clearly and acknowledges so frankly that the condition of the minorities is intolerably bad; how then can he conceive the possibility of realising in practice his suggestion that if "the political frontiers cannot be revised", they "can be made *invisible*". "Invisible" frontiers are inconceivable in view of the fact that the gaps previously existing between the opposing cultures, religions and philosophies have been made far wider by the fifteen years which have passed since the conclusion of the treaties of peace.

What revisionism desires is to restore justice to its throne. Anti-revisionism is employing every kind of stratagem to prevent that issue, resorting even to misinterpretations and mystifications. Professor Mowatt too has fallen a victim to these political wills-o'-the-wisp and treats the question one-sidedly. His article ought really to be entitled "*The Mischief of Anti-revisionism*".