

August 22, 1917

GATHERING IN SWEDEN

All of Europe's neutral countries have been invited to participate in the next Nordic minister meeting

A telegram from Kristiania last Thursday cites "Aftenposten" that the Swedish government has invited all neutral countries in Europe to the Scandinavian minister conference in Stockholm to discuss the challenges now facing the neutral countries because of the United States entering the war. The Swedish government says they have ad several positive replies.

This is confirmed in a press telegram from Stockholm this last Friday in which it is stated that Spain, Switzerland, and Holland, as well as Denmark and Norway have promised to send representatives to the minister meeting, at which food supplies and other similar issues also will be discussed. The intent is also to explore how the neutral countries can take part in the peace negotiations when that day comes. It is believed that this issue may be the main question discussed at the conference. One other important concern is how the countries can maintain the neutrality and security without being forced to enter the war. This question was mentioned in the Swedish invitation, issued on an initiative by King Gustaf, to the neutral countries.

In the press telegram this has been summed together in a plan to organize a peace league consisting of the neutral countries for mutual protection with the intent to end the war.

With respect to the problem with food supplies and the aggravating trade situation because of the United States entering the war there are ongoing negotiations between the American delegation in Stockholm and the Swedish Department of Foreign Ministry (State Department).

Another press telegram from Stockholm states that the neutral countries wish to be involved at the war's end and they have recently discussed this with Germany. Germany's reply is said to have been adverse but undetermined. What the Allied has replied, if they have been directly or indirectly asked, you can conclude based on the following words stated by Prime Minister Lloyd George's famous speech before America entered the war, words he directed at America:

"If you don't fight, you have nothing to say." (*If you don't fight, you shouldn't say anything.*)

A telegram from Stockholm last Monday states that President Wilson's prohibition to export food to Sweden is to force Sweden to stop its trade with Germany and this is becoming one of the hottest issues in the upcoming election. Hjalmar Branting, who is trying to get reelected, is quoted to say this about the export ban:

"We have agreed to what America and England so far have requested, and that is an annual guarantee that no products that we export across the sea should also be sent to Germany and that no products that that we need to import from the west would be sent on to Germany. We have accepted these demands, but if America and England will demand even more it would be a violation of our rights as a neutral country, even if not as offensive as when German submarines sink our steamships or shoot our sailors. We must try to avoid a situation further demands from America and England can cause. If our negotiations fail and these powers will try to stop us from selling anything to Germany a situation will arise where we will need to look out for our own interests and not pay any attention to those of Germany or the Entente powers. Therefore we may not promise either side any more."

CHINA ENTERING THE WAR

Late information to the American media stated last Saturday that China has declared war with Germany and Austria on the 14th this month. China does say that this is independently of the Entente nations. They have taken this step to expedite the end of the war, Peking says.

The Dutch minister in Peking has taken over Austria's interests. The doors to the Deutsches Asiatisches Bank (German Asian Bank) have been sealed. Chinese soldiers have taken possession of Austrian possessions in Tien Tsin. Germans and Austrians have been given five days to leave the country.

The Chinese president says in his declaration of war that they have tried to reach a milder solution with Germany without success. The real purpose of the declaration of war is, however, to hasten an end of the war.