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BENEVOLENT NEUTRALITY

The decision of Greece to declare a "benevolent neutrality" towards the entente powers is the latest development in Balkan diplomacy. It looks like a case of trying to run with the hares and hunt with the hounds. If Greece is neutral, it seems clear that the Allied troops which have been landed in Salonika should be interned. If the qualifying of the neutrality by the insertion of the word "benevolent" means that the Allied troops now in Greece are to be allowed to proceed to the defence of Serbia, the Kaiser will be apt to regard a "benevolent neutrality" toward the entente powers as an act of war against Germany and Austria.

SOUTH AFRICAN SITUATION

"The British government is to us a foreign government." In these words General Hertzog, leader of the Nationalist party in the South African Union, stated his position and that of his followers at a recent meeting in Pretoria. The Nationalists are raising in the election to be held in mid-October the question of the future relations of South Africa to the Empire. General Hertzog asserts that it is clearly the intention immediately after the war to form a federal government for the Empire, with its seat in London. He intends to fight Federal Imperialism to the utmost, and as a first step proposes to unhorse General Botha, who is appealing as premier for a renewal of his lease of power. The campaign is of an exceptionally bitter nature. Behind Hertzog stand all the elements which gave either open or secret support to the rebellion of Maritz, a rebellion that had for its avowed object the setting up of an independent nation in South Africa in which the Dutch would be dominant. To Hertzog's Cave of Adullam all the discontented are flocking, and he expresses sympathy with all their grievances. The rebellion, he declares, was due in the first place to nothing

else than neglect and contempt of the feelings and traditions of the people, and the fact that no account had been taken of those thin, invisible bonds that bound them to the past. He had no hesitation, he declared, in espousing their cause, rebels or no rebels. From these statements it is quite manifest that if Hertzog wins and the Nationalists come to power the government of the South African Union will take no interest in the great struggle now going on in Europe, and will do nothing toward equipping or despatching the South African contingent for which recruiting is now in progress.

General Botha's position is equally clear. He stands for a self-governing South Africa within the Empire, for a union in which Briton and Boer shall have equal rights, and in which parties shall not be formed on racial lines. He asserts that the rebellion was engineered by the governor of German Southwest Africa for the benefit of Germany, with the knowledge and consent of the Kaiser. The intention was to make South Africa a great German dominion. One of the most interesting discoveries made in German Southwest Africa was a map showing the redistribution of the world after "the peace of Rome, 1914." This map indicates the whole of Africa south of the Equator as a great German Empire, with a very small portion marked "Boer Reservation." The German Emperor, in answer to a letter from the governor of German Southwest Africa, had written: "I will not only acknowledge the independence of South Africa, but I will even guarantee it, provided the rebellion is started immediately." This was doubtless another "scrap of paper" intended to be torn up and repudiated at a more convenient season, and Botha mentioned it merely to prove that the Boers who followed Maritz because they wanted an independent South Africa were really being used to promote Germany's settled policy of conquering South Africa for herself. General Botha declared that because of the German plot to possess the Union it was impossible to return

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Southwest Africa to the Germans, and he proposed that it should be colonized and held as part of the Union. Botha the Empire builder and Hertzog the Boer reactionary stand out as the two great figures in the election. The forces of Botha are undoubtedly weakened by the hostility of organized labor. Trades unionists have neither forgotten nor forgiven the deportation of their leaders during the labor troubles shortly before the outbreak of war, and they are contesting practically all the urban seats. They may divide the vote of the British electorate in not a few urban seats so that a Nationalist may slip in between the candidate of the South African party—which is the official name of the Botha ministry's supporters—and the Labor representatives. Hertzog's strength lies mainly in the Orange Free State among the back veldt Boers, but there Botha is conducting a vigorous campaign and contesting every seat. The reactionaries may unhorse him, but even were he to be driven from power he would still remain the greatest of South Africans—a tower of strength against racialism in the politics of the Union.—Toronto Globe.

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