

JANUARY 16, 1920: The Peace Conference at Paris summoned Holland to yield the ex-Kaiser of Germany for trial.

During the last year of the Great War there had been in Allied countries discussion as to what should be done about the Kaiser and other German war leaders after Germany had been defeated. During a political campaign in England, Lloyd George made an appeal for votes with the promise to hang the Kaiser in the Tower of London. With the collapse of Germany in November, 1918, the Kaiser had fled to Holland and now if any punitive action were to be taken against him the Allies must first secure his person from the Dutch. This the Peace Conference on January 16 sought to do.

In its reply, issued January 23, Holland refused. The Allies then, February 16, asked Holland to intern the Kaiser, which request, on March 5, was acceded to. (At the time this chapter is written, 1935, the one-time Monarch of Imperial Germany was still a resident of Doorn, Holland, where he lived in comfortable retirement in an estate companioned by his second wife, the former German Princess Herminie of Reuss.)

The Allied plans for the punishment of other Germans turned out equally infructuous. February 3, a demand was made in a note to the German Ambassador at Paris (who refused to transmit it to his Government) for the surrender of 890 persons to the Allies for trial, among them: Von Bethmann-Hollweg, Enver Pasha, Admiral von Tirpitz, Von Hindenburg, Ludendorff, von Mackensen, Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, the Duke of Württemberg, and other Princes and titled officers. With the Germans stubbornly set in opposition, an impasse was reached, which, however, caused few regrets among the Allied statesmen, long since weary of violence. They realized the possibilities that a programme of reprisal and punishment might restimulate international hatreds, and it was with relief that they gave up thought of going through with it. They were in the mood to smile when on February 13 the ex-Crown Prince of Germany, in a gesture of martyrdom, cabled President Wilson offering to surrender himself for trial in place of the 890. The offer was ignored.

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BY MARK SULLIVAN 1936 (P. 526)

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