MATERIALS FOR THE STUDY OF THE WORK AND THOUGHT

OF ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE

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Vernon Bartlett, Gilbert Murray, Noel-Buxton, Arnold J. Toynbee, *The Question of Colonies. A Case for Inquiry. Extend the Mandatory System*, in «The Times», October 7, 1937, p. 15. Letter to the Editor.

THE QUESTION OF COLONIES

by Vernon Bartlett, Gilbert Murray, Noel-Buxton, Arnold J. Toynbee

Sir,

Within the last few days the colonial question has been raised once more by two authoritative voices – Herr Hitler's at Nuremberg and Mr. Te Water's at Montreal. Speaking as a citizen of a country which, like the United Kingdom, is at present administering part of the former German colonial empire under an international Mandate, the High Commissioner for South Africa in London has just pleaded, in Canada, for a speedy examination, at a conference table, of Germany's point of view.

In the hope that Mr. Te Water's initiative may be followed up, we venture to make the following suggestions regarding the conditions necessary for a satisfactory settlement, and the possibility of reconciling these conditions with each other. The first condition is that the natives of the non-self-governing territories (both those which are and those which are not at present under Mandate) should not be sacrificed in any way for the sake of improving the relations between European Powers. The second condition is that, both in the administration of non-self-governing territories and in the matter of access to such legitimate sources of supply and markets as these territories may offer, the European Powers should be placed upon a footing of approximate equality with one another.

The second of these conditions obviously calls for a revision of the colonial chapter of the Versailles Treaty; while the first of them forbids any relapse into an unrestricted exercise of sovereignty on the part of any European Power in any non-self-governing territory that is at present being held in trust and administered under an international Mandate. Both conditions can, we suggest, be satisfied simultaneously if the European Powers can bring themselves to agree upon three measures. The first of these measures is that some, at least, of the former German colonies shall be handed back to Germany, to be administered by her, not under the pre-War regime, but under the existing Mandates. At the same time, those European Powers which possess Crown Colonies should consent to place at least an

equivalent portion of those Crown Colonies under the same Mandatory regime. Thus, Germany will not find herself the only Power that is being asked to administer under a Mandate colonial territories over which she has once exercised unrestricted sovereign powers. In the third place, all non-self-governing territories ought to be thrown open to the trade of all nations on equal terms-as the Mandated Territories are to-day, and as our British Crown Colonies and Protectorates were until yesterday.

On such lines as these we see the possibility of a colonial settlement which might prove equally favourable to the well-being of the native peoples and to the peace and prosperity of Europe.