

Oct 14, 1918

My dearest Ruth, We had the great news last night. It convinces me. I quite expect we shall have an armistice in a few weeks' time & once fighting has stopped it cannot start again. The workings of the German mind is clear enough. They face the facts & decide to cut their losses. They have no further prospects in the war beyond making us pay dear for in defence of their fatherland - fighting without allies, with their backs to the wall & more economically isolated than ever; they consequently wish to bring it to an end with as little further bloodshed & horrors & misery to themselves <sup>as may be</sup> & to start their period of recovery as soon as possible. To make an end now & keep their country free from invasion they are prepared to forego the whole of their political hopes. This means defeat for them & victory for us. The offer of evacuation is a sufficient proof of that - evacuation not only of Belgium & France but of all occupied territory, Rumania, Galicia, Poland & the rest. Of course I feel with everyone who cares for justice that the barbarians haven't yet been sufficiently punished - but they never could be. I don't precisely recollect the 14 points & the agenda; I think they must include indemnities for Belgium & Serbia - I believe in that anyway,



though no indemnities can payback the ruined homes  
& the untold sum of personal sufferings - I believe in  
the indemnities chiefly as establishing the sanction of  
the laws which Germany violated. But mere punish-  
ment might not at this stage <sup>be</sup> an object of continuing  
the war. We can let them stew in their own juice -  
they will punish themselves. On the other hand  
there is a military problem. Unless an enemy  
surrenders unconditionally you cannot let him  
have an armistice when he will if you are going  
to find him a stronger enemy afterwards supposing  
the parleys break down & fighting begins again.  
For that reason I should like to see a more complete  
defeat before an armistice. But that might only  
be a question of a few weeks; and in any case he  
would be a weaker enemy after evacuation because  
of the great difficulties he would have to make his  
people fight again & the value of proximity (to  
us) for air raids. In my opinion the enemy still  
has it in his power to retreat to the Rhine without  
complete disaster. The armistice therefore should  
be granted when a point is reached after which



such further defeats as we could immediately inflict would not be worth while - because the cost to us is not worth the loss to him - does not sufficiently weaken him in view of a renewed struggle. Of course it is very difficult to know exactly how weak he is now. I feel that a few more weeks of at the present rate will probably be enough to make absolutely sure that he wouldn't again take up arms after an armistice unless provoked to it by demands on our part which would be ~~not~~ inconsistent with our declared war aims. However if Wilson & Lloyd George will be content without <sup>indefinitely</sup> further defeats you may believe it won't be myself as will be mightily sorry!

There! I felt I must tell you exactly what I have thought of this - we have always shared our thoughts about the War. How much more I think of the great healing which is approaching us, I leave you to imagine. It ought to feel like Spring in Heaven. I believe it will feel like that when we recover from our weariness of spirit. Perhaps you my darling already begin to feel something of that sort - you are so divinely altruistic. At present I'm short of the



right companions to share the near prospect of peace. And then I find personal considerations come in. I should have liked to return home, if not a hero, at least a man of arms more tried than I have been; my share has been too small; my mistrick now is to want more fighting for myself. However I can get beyond all that. The moment fighting ceases I shall be ready to apply myself to the problem of getting released as soon as possible. And I do feel a wonderful relief & happiness in this splendid turn of the tide.

No mail now for three days so I've no letters to answer. We had a disappointing day yesterday - took the Piece Maker (I forgot to tell you before of the change of name to this good named double entendre) up to the spur & stood by ready for action for six hours waiting for aeroplane observation; it was a lovely day and it seemed incredible that the g bird couldn't see our target. It is a very discouraging experience for the future - we can't expect many clearer days than yesterday at this time of year. I must end now as the letters are off earlier than usual this (15<sup>th</sup>) morning.

Much love to you

Yours loving George.