

December 9, 1916.—I can't get it out of my head, this colossal betrayal by Lloyd George. He has not only stabbed Asquith in the back, but he has led into the shambles all those working-people who trusted him. And yet I should not be so surprised, after all. Dick McGhee, sitting in the smoking-room of the House of Commons years ago, told me that Lloyd George was not a genuine radical, that he had no principles, no convictions; a lot of ability and energy, perhaps some sentimental sympathy with the poor because he had been poor, and hatred of the rich because he envied them and was not one of them, but that was all. The worst of it is, no one seems to think it wrong, what he has done....

Meanwhile the Allies pile blunder on blunder. The dirty plot in Greece is bearing its fruit in the discomfiture of the Allies, they lost Greece; and the Roumanian catastrophes increase in size and importance with each new report.¹ Everyone is downhearted—with good cause now! Oh for a man on the side of liberty and justice in this world! But whence?...

Janssen in to see me this morning; he had seen Villalobar, whom Francqui had left the morning before (Thursday) in an ugly mood—so desirous was he, Villalobar, of having all the credit for arranging for the return of the unemployed. Francqui, who left yesterday (feeling, as Janssen said, like a true goose) had felt that Villalobar would agree to nothing that did not leave him undisputed mastery, but Janssen found this morning that he had cooled off, and was ready even to have Van Vollenhoven—Villalobar had told me he would not have Van Vollenhoven included under any circumstances. I told Janssen to arrange it any way he saw fit, with me included or left out, with the credit all of it to Villalobar or to the devil—so long as some of the unemployed could be brought back. The scheming, the chicanery, the intrigue, the petty conniving that poison the very air of the capital, are enough to sicken a dog. Janssen will organize some kind of clearing-house when the lists and requests will be dealt out.

¹ Roumania joined the Allies on Aug. 27, 1916. Austro-German armies under Mackensen and Falkenhayn at once commenced a series of drives which resulted in the capture of Bucharest on December 6 and the conquest of the whole country.