

## October the First is too late

*On the German side there was little will to continue the fight. Kuhlmann had in any case been on the point of proposing peace terms himself, similar to those which the British Government now suggested. And the German High Command was shaken to its roots by the situation in the east and south. Nothing at that stage was known in Germany of the existence of the huge Plain of Glass, but all the communication with the East had mysteriously ceased. The railways tracks to the east continued normally to Warsaw and somewhat beyond that. Every town, every village, down to the smallest hamlet, seemed to be entirely normal up to a certain point. Then it all simply vanished. The railway tracks ceased. The vegetation ceased. Not a single person could be found. It was just a complete desert. Those who knew these facts, and there were not many at this stage, had the bottom knocked out of their self-confidence. Hindenburg and Ludendorff knew of course, as did most of the High Command. It could only mean that what was being said in the west, in Britain, was true. Added to the already bad state of the war, to the privations in Germany, it was decisive. It was agreed that Hindenburg should travel to London for the proposed conference.*

*A cease fire was already in effect by the time the conference was held. The biggest card in the hand of the British government was of course the military weapons of 1966. The immediate problem was to bring the strength of those weapons over to the Germany mind. An actual physical demonstration was to be avoided if at all possible.*

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Fred Hoyle.

## QUESTIONS

1. Did the Germans want to go on with the war?
2. What strange event happened to the east?
3. Who was going to London for a conference?
4. Which was the biggest card in the hand of British government?
5. Which was the immediate problem now?
6. The passive voice. Classification of tenses.
7. Vocabulary:
  - Vanish
  - Track
  - Weapon
  - Avoid
  - Will