

# THE LIVING AGE

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## A WEEK OF THE WORLD

### EUROPE'S ARGUMENT AGAINST THE RUHR OCCUPATION

It is difficult to summarize European press opinion upon the Ruhr occupation. Of course, German papers, including the German language press in the Austrian Succession States, are unanimously hostile, although Communist organs betray flashes of jubilation at the 'breakdown of capitalism' and the 'incapacity of the capitalist Governments' that the occupation is supposed to demonstrate. Sentiment in Italy, while resenting Bonar Law's abruptness at Paris, seems to be drifting toward resigned opposition to France's action. Spanish newspapers, which sometimes veer close to the same point of the compass as the British press, likewise condemn the 'new invasion,' although some Conservative papers are studiously objective in their comments. In France, of course, the Government has unanimous support, except from the Socialist press, and a few Radical-Pacifist publications. The same may be said of Belgium, with the qualification that a much larger proportion of the people there are Socialists, whose opposition to military measures is pronounced. We are not able to quote, except at second-hand, from the Polish press.

The spontaneous sympathies of the people are with France. But the Polish mark has fallen in sympathy with the German mark, and Poland feels that her business interests are paying heavily for France's action. Moreover, she will be the first to suffer if a crisis arises in Germany that invites Russian intervention.

The Conservative Scandinavian papers deplore the effect of the occupation upon business, and the prospect of renewed social unrest, while the Socialist and Liberal-Labor press share the opposition to military action general among European workers.

British opinion seems less pessimistic than at first as to the effect upon business. The *Economist* points out that, while the French policy undoubtedly delays, perhaps indefinitely, Europe's return to normal trading conditions, business, like the eels in the frying pan, is gradually adjusting itself to currency anarchy and political chaos. British commerce and finance are learning to dispense with Continental custom to an extent hitherto believed impossible.

The *Daily Express* likens the British attitude toward France to that of the first Lord Holland, when his infant son, Charles Fox, announced his intention of smashing a valuable watch

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in order to set it going: 'Well, if you must, you must.' The Catholic *New Witness* observes that 'as is not uncommonly the case, the volatile Frenchman has stood firm, and the stolid Englishman has chopped and changed.' It recalls the khaki election, the indignation when Edith Cavell was shot and the *Lusitania* was sunk, and the subsequent swinging around to the ideas of Mr. Keynes, who is now that rather exceptional personage, a prophet with honor in his own country. The *Outlook*, which has been from the beginning viciously antagonistic to French policy, asks the French Government: —

What has become of the twelve hundred million francs profit accruing since the Armistice from the sale of reparation coal? The question is not impertinent, in view of French denunciation of Germany for not restoring the devastated areas. . . . There exists in France a coal syndicate, similar to that German *Kohlensyndicat* which recently executed a strategic retreat to Hamburg. It is called the *Comité des Houillères*, and the magnates who control it have succeeded in selling, since the Armistice, 28,750,000 tons of reparation coal at an average price of 92.20 francs per ton. This coal has been credited by the Reparations Commission to Germany at 51.70 francs per ton. The difference represents that twelve hundred million francs concerning whose fate I am so curious.

Elsewhere its editor discusses the argument that France is merely exacting from Germany what Germany exacted from her in 1870, and draws this distinction between the two situations: —

Had the French armies won the battles of the frontiers and crushed German resistance in that first autumn, this programme would have been carried out, amid the applause of the world. But France lost the opening campaign, was saved from defeat only by her Allies, and so the war dragged on through more than four years, during

which the accumulated treasures of a century of productive work were dissipated by all the combatants. It became evident long before the Armistice that, in terms of economics, there could be no victory, but only degrees of defeat. France, not only during the war but since the Armistice, has found herself unable to realize this disagreeable truth; or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the leaders of French politics have not dared to disillusion their people, nor does there exist in France a free and independent press to perform this important service for them.

Apparently the ex-soldiers of Great Britain, while sympathizing with France, do not endorse a policy of force. Their official organ, the *British Legion*, says in its New Year's number that the ex-service men of Europe

are moving toward closer coöperation for the purpose of preserving peace and making the world safer for themselves and their wives and children to live in. . . .

It is n't good enough to leave to-morrow to look after itself in our preoccupation with the anxieties of to-day. There are all sorts of people and peoples in the world who think that 'another little war would n't do them any harm.' Nor would it. There are little nations which look on war as their national industry; there are individuals for whom wars — in which they happily take no active part — are a profitable undertaking. The people who are thoroughly determined on a policy of 'never again' are those who have been through the hell of it. The establishment of real peace in the world is one of the first interests of the ex-service men in all countries.

Even in France several organizations have made the Ruhr occupation an occasion to protest against militarism. This theme was the topic of a meeting of the French section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, which was addressed by several distinguished speakers, including Jane Addams.

Naturally, organized labor in France

objects to the occupation. The Communists held a meeting at which their leader, Marcel Cachin, who has just been deprived of his immunity as a member of Parliament and indicted for antipatriotic agitation, was the principal speaker. A German woman speaker, from Berlin, denounced France's action, in her own language, as a 'capitalist coup.' She was received with a remarkably enthusiastic demonstration, but one of the ironies of the situation was that the only ones present who really understood her remarks were the *anciens combattants*, many of whom had learned German while prisoners of war.

The *Confédération Générale du Travail* and the *Ligue des Droits de l'Homme* held a joint meeting to protest against the occupation, which was attended by a well-dressed audience from the trade-union upper classes. The speakers denounced the occupation of the Ruhr as a 'crazy Government adventure,' declared that the true security of France lay in the growth of democracy in Germany, and argued that the present policy merely meant additional burdens for French taxpayers. While the Communists scoffed at the League of Nations, the Confederation of Labor believed that the best hope of peace lay in that body.

In Belgium, the Socialists of all complexions — who when united are the most powerful single party — oppose the occupation. Louis de Brouckere, writing in *Le Peuple*, the Labor organ of Brussels, ridicules its effectiveness:—

The securities owned by Stinnes and men of his ilk are not in the Ruhr. They are deposited in neutral and Allied banks, especially in the magnificent palaces occupied by our own great financial institutions, which have been especially complacent to the little operations by which German

multimillionaires have tucked away their shining dollars and pounds sterling, out of reach of the Reparations Commission. We do not need eighty-five thousand French troops and twenty-five hundred Belgian troops to collect that money — a police sergeant and a few patrolmen could do the job. . . . We Socialists are charged with having no constructive proposal to recommend in place of occupation. Admitting that, would not it be better to do nothing, than to make such obvious fools of ourselves? But we have a plan . . . difficult unquestionably, but at least businesslike. It will eventually secure definite Reparations, and is the only plan that will attain that object. At the same time, it promotes peace; and that is no mere coincidence. For peace means production, and without production — no Reparations.

The plan proposed by the Socialists is essentially that recommended by the American Government: to ascertain through an impartial inquiry how much Germany can pay, and then to help Germany raise this sum.

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#### THE PARIS PRESS

EXTERNALLY there has been comparatively little change in the Paris press since the period before the war. In general, its relations with the Government are much closer and more confidential than in the United States or in other European countries. The *Maison de la Presse*, or official French press and propaganda bureau, is competently managed.

Broadly, Paris journals may be grouped into those whose primary function is to provide news — *Petit Parisien*, *Matin*, *Journal*, *Petit Journal* — and political organs. *Petit Parisien*, the favorite paper of the middle classes, with readers in every part of France, has the largest circulation, something over one and a half millions. The most sensational of the Paris dailies is probably *Matin*, with a circulation ap-

proaching one million. It is technically perhaps the best of the great dailies, and shares its news service with leading London papers. *Journal* is said to have close relations with President Mille- rand, and with French iron and steel magnates. *Petit Journal*, with a circulation of about one million, is owned by the former Minister of Reconstruction, Loucheur, who, like Hugo Stinnes in Germany, is now a great newspaper-proprietor as well as a great industrialist.

Among the party organs, the most important is *L'Écho de Paris*, the favorite newspaper of bureaucrats and army officers, with a circulation of over 200,000. The leading journals of the Right in this group are *Gaulois*, *Figaro*, *L'Action Française*, *Écho National*, *L'Éclair*, and the two very important evening papers, *Le Temps* and *Journal des Débats*. *Le Figaro*, under the direction of Alfred Capus, who died a few weeks ago, has been a very influential political organ in France, and gossip has it that its editorial chair is reserved for Poincaré whenever he desires to retire from politics. *L'Action Française*, an ultraconservative Orleanist paper, is edited by Léon Daudet, the obstreperous, versatile Royalist deputy, who also guides the fortunes of the semi-monthly *Revue Universelle*, though he is not its titular editor.

*Le Temps*, which is now sixty-two years old, occupies a position somewhat similar to that of the London *Times*, as a semi-official mouthpiece of the Government, although it never has enjoyed quite the same prestige in France that its older contemporary has enjoyed in England. The *Journal des Débats*, a much more venerable daily founded one hundred and thirty-four years ago, has about half the circulation of *Le Temps*, or some fifty thousand. It is much read by the clergy, and maintains a high political and literary stand-

ard. Its editor, August Gauvain, is reputed to know the Orient better than any other French journalist.

Among the radical non-Socialist dailies, the most important is *Œuvre*, which probably has a much larger circulation than any of its conservative contemporaries. Caillaux's organ, *Ère Nouvelle*, also holds a respectable position in this group. A rising journal of the same class is *Le Quotidien*, which still has its fortunes to make.

Among the Socialist dailies, the best known is *Humanité*, founded by Jaurès. It is now the official organ of the Communists. As a result of the dissensions in the Socialist Party that have followed the attempts of Moscow to impose its will upon that organization, it is struggling with serious financial difficulties. The editorial control of this journal has recently been in dispute. In the future, it will be under the joint editorial direction of Marcel Cachin, an extremist now under indictment for agitation against the Government, and of two less prominent members of the Left Socialist wing. Half a dozen members of the staff have recently been summarily dismissed on the ground that they have been too friendly to the Socialist Centre.

*Populaire*, formerly more radical than *Humanité*, is the organ of Jean Longuet, and now represents the moderate Socialists.

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#### THE SCHOOL AND THE STATE

*La Escuela Nueva*, a new educational journal published in Mexico City, makes its bow to the public with a leader arguing that Mexican education should be primarily cultural. But it should promote democratic culture, and not the culture hitherto fostered by Mexico's schools, which have produced 'a very small intellectual social group that calls itself "select."' "

Culture that seeks to create a small privileged class, that expresses itself in the refinement of a few individuals, that mainly serves to beguile the time of the rich and idle, that stamps a caste mark upon a social class or a family, is a culture that breeds discord in the heart of the nation, weakens patriotism, engenders a spirit of rebellion, and sows the seed of the interminable disorders of which we are the unhappy victims.

At the seventh annual meeting of the British Historical Association, held in Exeter last month, the relation of the school to propaganda was a hotly debated question. The same theme has been eagerly discussed in Germany ever since the war. According to the *Manchester Guardian's* report of this meeting, —

Not a single person urged a full-blooded and hearty following of history propaganda such as that of the Pan-Germanists, and it was pointed out that, however Prussian boys might carry into their lives opinions taught them in the classroom, British boys were of very different temper. The worst and the best of schoolboy nature combined to defeat propaganda in the classroom. The natural antagonism of pupil to teacher and the love of fairness, deep-seated in British youth, made any reckless partisanship unprofitable as well as immoral. There is no more certain way of making your views unpopular than by ramming them authoritatively down your pupils' throats. If you encourage the teaching of one-sided patriotism you must give a similar liberty to those who would maintain that their country was always wrong.

There was an impressive warning of the dangers of a 'proletarian propaganda' that refused to hear the other side and desired the exclusive cultivation of a history that dwelt exclusively on the lurid horrors of the past. If any propaganda be allowed, there must be propaganda all round. By laying stress on certain sides of history a colorable case may be made out for almost anything.

A ripple of disillusioned humor riposted to an incidental suggestion that the teachers were hired by the capitalist classes to preach the divine right of property and tradition.

The general feeling was that history teaching in school and university alike should be free from propaganda and as impartial as the teacher can make it.

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#### MEMEL

LITHUANIA'S invasion of Memel, the tiny strip of territory and town at the mouth of the river of that name, is ascribed by *Le Figaro*, and by the French press in general, to German machinations. Memel is said to have served, for the past two years or more, as a smuggling centre for munitions sent into Russia via Lithuania. Poland aspires to the possession of the port, and last April concluded an agreement with the High Commissioner of the League of Nations, temporarily in possession, opening it to Polish trade. This action was resented by Esthonia and Lettland, as well as by Lithuania. Russia immediately seized this opportunity to associate herself with the Baltic States and Finland, to defeat any project Poland might entertain to secure permanent possession of this district.

*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, which represents neutral opinion, with possibly a slight German shading, condemns Lithuania's action as a continuation of the arbitrary tactics that have kept Europe unsettled ever since the Armistice. The German press, far from welcoming Lithuania's move, resents it as an attempt to seize unjustly territory that properly belongs to East Prussia, just at a time when Germany is preoccupied with the French occupation of the Ruhr.

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#### THE CITY OF THE FUTURE

*La Grande Revue* of Paris has continued through several issues a series of articles upon the city of the future, consisting principally of replies re-

ceived from eminent architects, municipal engineers, and city improvers in France, to inquiries addressed them by the art editor. The discussion centres around the physical aspects of the coming city, rather than its social organization. It is predicted that it will group around three centres: the church, the town hall, and the people's palace — *la Maison de Tous*. The latter is conceived as the home 'of all activities designed to coördinate, stimulate, and adorn community life.' Concretely, the purpose of the forces centring here will be to foster the physical and moral welfare of the individual, to promote his intellectual and moral education, and to provide him with recreation. Such a centre would contain dispensaries, free clinics, milk stations, agencies to combat alcoholism and tuberculosis, public baths and gymnasiums, theatres, concerts, libraries, lectures, parks, and refreshment rooms.

This structure, or group of structures, the town hall, and the church, should be buildings architecturally worthy to express the highest ideals of the community.

A specialist describes in detail the best arrangement, design, and construction of public markets in different European cities. Another specialist emphasizes the importance of public kitchens, whose function should be not only to furnish clean and wholesome food at moderate prices, but also to serve meals amid artistic surroundings, since the environment in which we receive our food is an important factor in our physical well-being. There is also a discussion on tenement-house reform, model schools, school lunches, library administration, and municipal theatres.

The inquiry was suggested by the movement to rebuild the cities in the

devastated regions in accordance with the most advanced plans for municipal improvement.

#### AN INTERCHANGE OF COURTESIES

In his recent volume of reminiscences, the German Crown Prince observes that the long struggle before Verdun had one remarkable result. 'Our forces were self-purged of their poorer material. Whatever was rotten and worm-eaten vanished into the enemy's prison camps. What remained with us was the solid core.'

This statement brought a quick rebuke from the Nuremberg Ex-War Prisoners' Association, from which we quote only a few of the gentler-spoken sentences: —

None of these men hung back from the post of danger like a coward, or deserted to Holland as soon as things got hot. All of them stood at their posts to the last moment; while not a single member of the staff or of the retinue of their supreme commander was captured by the enemy. The men who were taken prisoners were the men in the front trenches. We assert that all that was rotten and worm-eaten, to use your language, was behind the front, on headquarters and staff duty.

#### MINOR NOTES

*Avanti*, the official organ of the Italian Socialist Party, formerly edited by Mussolini himself, whose printing office has been twice wrecked by the Fascisti within less than a year, has again appeared after an enforced retirement from active publication for several weeks. While recognizing the temporary prostration of the Socialist cause 'under the duress of violence,' *Avanti* warns the 'pseudo-insurrectionist Government' that its methods of reparation are sure to produce a speedy reaction.

# WHY ENGLAND AND FRANCE PART

BY J. A. SPENDER

*[Mr. Spender, the editor of the Westminster Gazette, is one of the best-known Liberal writers on foreign affairs and public questions in Great Britain.]*

From the *Westminster Gazette*, January 3  
(INDEPENDENT LIBERAL DAILY)

THERE are two sharply contrasted views of the present position and conduct of Germany. Our view is roughly that the German payments must with insignificant exceptions consist of the exportable surplus of German goods which remains after the necessary imports of food and raw material have been paid for; that Germany has never since the war had a true exportable surplus and that the attempt to make her pay in advance of her producing such a surplus has compelled her to dilute her currency, destroyed the mark, and produced the present situation for which the only remedy is a moratorium and the scaling-down of the sum demanded to a moderate figure within her capacity to pay.

It is not denied in the British thesis that the Germans have muddled their finance or that some of them have attempted to place their wealth beyond reach of the Allies, but it is maintained that the best finance and the straightest dealing could not in the circumstances have greatly affected the result. For example, heavier taxation, if it could have been imposed, would have been more likely to discourage than to stimulate the foreign trade upon which — on this theory — the payment of Reparations must depend.

To the vast majority of Frenchmen this seems to be pure pro-Germanism. They insist passionately that the Germans' are fraudulent bankrupts who

have deliberately inflated their currency in order to avoid payment, and that they have been enabled and encouraged to do this by the weakness of the Allies, and will only begin to act fairly when the Allies stand together, speak firmly, and show that they mean what they say when they threaten sanctions in default of payment. It is further almost universally believed in France that the German industrials have transferred vast sums of money abroad, — French newspapers speak confidently of a thousand millions sterling, — and the demand, therefore, goes up that this should be seized for the Reparations Account, or, if that proves impossible, that any further outflow should be stopped by seizing the Customs and intercepting this fugitive wealth.

According to the British thesis, the amount of this exported capital is very much less than the French suppose, — Mr. McKenna, if I remember rightly, put it at £200,000,000, — and, since a large part of it forms the credit on which Germany trades abroad, its seizure, if it could be seized, would extinguish German foreign trade and make an end of Reparations. To the average Frenchman all these arguments seem mere sophistications. Germany, he insists, is a very rich country; the wealth is there, and, if the Germans won't deliver it, we must go in and fetch it. We must, as M. Poincaré said