

My dear friend, your tour was quixotic to-day; but it will not be quixotic to-morrow. There is indeed a historical destiny. If our mature and peace-loving men of to-day appeal to that to justify renouncing high ideals, if they consider your crusade but boyish folly, this does not mean that destiny will always be what they now conceive it.

I believe that our peoples will wake up. The phenomenal development of the United States, overwhelming and intimidating as it is, leaves me perfectly tranquil. Business men are the same in New York, Paris, Buenos Aires, and London. But nations likewise are the same. Believe

me, those who are guilty of injustice and follies toward the weak are not nations, but only powerful syndicates of business men, who play with their millions as generals play with their soldiers, who regard their devastations philosophically, reckoning them necessary in the higher interest of 'the job' — which for them is the creation of a powerful financial machine.

Our duty is to anticipate and prevent future evil by cultivating in 'Our America' a compelling sentiment, a high ideal, a pride worthy of a truly great, powerful, and respected Homeland. Let us promote confidently and loyally this ideal of our common Latin-American Fatherland.

DIPLOMACY AND POLITICIANS

BY L. DUMONT-WILDEN

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WHEN we review the international politics of the past four years, the world seems to have come to a standstill. In whatever direction we look, every important question, no matter how grave and how urgent, remains just where it was. In spite of all our conferences and laborious negotiations, the Reparations problem has not advanced a particle since the Treaty of Versailles. Western Europe is as bereft of a policy toward Bolshevik Russia as it was in the beginning. We have not settled the Austrian question or the Hungarian question. Our relations with the United States have been growing worse ever since the Treaty of

Peace was signed, and continue to be the sport of popular sentiment in that country. The Eastern question, instead of clarifying, is growing more confused with every day that passes.

Is this due to the incapacity of the men in charge of public affairs? Perhaps so. The truth is that since 1914 every country has been using up its statesmen at a tremendous rate. Those who were heralded as geniuses yesterday are contemptuously cast aside to-day. We welcomed the Wilsonian era and the publication of the Fourteen Points as the dawn of a new world. Clemenceau was lauded as a man worthy of the pen of Plutarch. Even

Lloyd George passed for a time for a great political genius. It was the same with Venizelos. But one after another these plaster statues have been pulverized with the sledge-hammer of public opinion, and there is not a nation in our bewildered world that is not to-day hunting for a real man. But can we imagine a single man able to master the complexity of our problems, and to reduce them to order by the mere power of his genius? And were we to find him, would we trust him with authority and power to impose his will upon all the nations whose passions have been so imprudently lashed to fury?

In the politics of earlier days each people — or better said each State — possessed a tradition, a policy dictated by history, geography, and well-defined and enduring interests, which every citizen called to high office instinctively understood. That condition no longer exists. What complicates and paralyzes international politics to-day, far more than the incompetence of our statesmen, is the fact that none of the Governments responsible for the reconstruction of the world knows precisely what its national interest and a rational policy demand. This uncertainty produces a situation that, with unimportant differences of detail, is identical in every free country of Europe.

A foreign policy must have continuity. It is conditioned by permanent interests that must be interpreted and accommodated to events. The adjustment of even a minor international incident requires time and patience. Now universal suffrage has subordinated every parliamentary government to the caprices of an excited and passionate public opinion, usually the worse informed in direct proportion as its supposed sources of information are more abundant.

Some countries have tried to avoid the instability of Cabinets depending upon popular suffrage by introducing proportional representation. They hoped this would prevent abrupt and unpredictable changes in the electorate. But this institution, so long considered as a sort of panacea for such evils, has only made the parliamentary system more inefficient than ever. Proportional representation encourages the subdivision of parties, and makes it impossible to form a reliable majority, which is indispensable if we are to have strong Cabinets, competent and efficient enough to deal with great crises. The champions of proportional representation are quite aware of this. They know their system renders impossible a strong Government. In times of peace it is quite arguable that a strong Government is not essential for the public welfare. But in times like this, when we are trying to reconstruct the world and to restore order out of the worst disorder recorded in history, we realize more and more the necessity of a strong central authority.

But we still show the same heedless faith in our institutions that we showed in 1914, in our days of peace and prosperity, when the far-visioned men who saw the tempest gathering on the horizon were rated dangerous and disturbing spirits. None the less, every parliament in Europe and even in the world to-day faces practically the same crisis. Legislative authority, after arrogating to itself executive functions, has been shattered to fragments. No party is strong enough to impose its will on the others, and ministries, organized merely because there must be some sort of cabinet, owe their precarious and ephemeral existence to hybrid and unstable coalitions.

In the days before the war, nations managed to pursue a fairly consistent foreign policy, because parliament and

the voters took little interest in affairs abroad. These remained the preserve of a few specialists, who ultimately quite disassociated themselves from any political party. Our government bureaus were then the depositories of our political traditions, expert in matters of precedent, doctrine, custom, able to appeal at need to the prestige of some great man of the past whose authority was the more imposing the less we knew about him. Except for a few parliamentary crises, we might say that the foreign policies of France, from 1871 to 1914, were almost as consistent and logical as those of England.

But the war has changed all this completely. That great struggle was conducted by professional politicians who, having won it, imagined they could win peace by the same methods, and therefore hastened to turn our diplomats out of their former posts of authority. Whether our politicians assumed the functions of ambassadors or of foreign ministers, they filled their new positions like executives; and no matter how great the power of some of them may have been for a brief period, they remained essentially tools in the hands of parliamentary majorities that knew nothing of foreign affairs.

Simultaneously, the common people woke up to a realization of what a deluge of misery a heedless and blundering foreign policy might bring upon them. The man in the street became passionately interested in problems for which he formerly cared nothing. He imagined he could force his ready-made and naive opinions upon the Government. So our cabinet officers had to keep the voter, as well as the course of affairs abroad, constantly in mind. This has compelled them to adopt insincere, claptrap, deceptive policies that have invariably brought their ultimate discomfiture.

When we consider that European

Cabinets to-day lack solid parliamentary backing, that they owe their brief power to unstable and inharmonious majorities, that they are subject to the jealous but incompetent surveillance of a public exasperated by one disappointment after another, is it at all remarkable that our Ministers lack the freedom of action and initiative necessary for a consistent foreign policy?

This is the explanation of all the political vacillation that gives every Government in Europe an appearance of incoherence and uncertainty and exposes it to ever more bitter criticism from the masses. Bonar Law has made several excellent speeches since he took office, which show a generous comprehension of the French position in regard to Reparations. To listen to him, we might imagine the Entente Cordiale back in the honeymoon period again. We know the British Premier well enough to feel certain that he is sincere; but this is no guaranty of British coöperation, because Bonar Law, although he sees clearly the international situation as it is, cannot remain in power unless he makes concessions to his country's imperialism in Asia and to the pro-German sympathies of the Labor party.

The Belgian Cabinet, although it still harks back to its old traditions of neutrality and well knows that its interests are identical with those of France in dealing with Germany, is obsessed by the spectre of Socialism and the phantom of the Flemish movement. Its Ministers are at the mercy of a Socialist-Flemish coalition, should the slightest misstep bring those two parties together. The Belgian Socialists, abandoning their resolute and commendable course during the war, are now fighting vigorously every suggestion that sanctions be enforced against defaulting Germany.

In Italy Mussolini has crushed international Socialism, but we have reason to fear that he will find himself sadly shackled by the promises that he has made to his Nationalist partisans. And have we not in France a powerful party, violently opposed to strong measures against Germany? It would not be so bad, perhaps, if the Socialist parties had a real international policy, a clear conception of what the future relations between Governments ought to be according to their own theories. But they are as badly divided on all these important questions as are the so-called bourgeois parties. How many different Socialist creeds and sects we might enumerate between the patriots who have not forgotten the lesson of 1914 and the agents of Moscow who hearken obediently to the oracles of Lenin and Trotskii! What divergencies, what irreconcilable hatreds we discover there!

Indeed, the Socialists are sadly embarrassed over this question of Reparations. They are hampered by their old professions, and at the same time fearful of offending our wounded and crippled soldiers, who are still a mighty voting power. So they do not dare confess that they are ready to forgive Germany. They admit that we should have Reparations, but they vigorously attack every concrete measure to collect them.

And have the Socialists a Russian policy? If so, it is purely negative and retrospective. It confines itself to blaming the old Cabinets of the Entente for the support they gave Denikin

and Wrangel. But we cannot possibly imagine Vandervelde, ostracized as an enemy by the Soviets, eager to resume relations with them. And in regard to the Eastern question the Socialists have no policy beyond a few weak expressions of sympathy for the Armenians and the Jews. Consequently, if some turn in the wheel of fortune should put in power a radical Socialist Cabinet, we have every reason to suppose that it will display quite as much vacillation and hesitation as the Cabinets we have at present.

Charles Maurras has tried to prove, in a series of well-known books and striking articles, that no democratic republic can ever have a foreign policy. Without going as far as that, we may conclude from the present situation that a parliamentary democracy, whether under a monarchical or a republican form of government, will not be able to deal efficiently with the vast array of foreign problems that are crowding upon us, until after we have passed through a slow process of intellectual and moral education.

Maurras says, 'Politics first'; our business men politicians say, 'Economy first.' Would it not be nearer the truth to say, 'Ideas first, and a party to make them effective'? If Governments are to get along amicably with each other, they must first of all recover confidence in themselves, confidence in their rights. And the Cabinets that represent them must hold power, not by virtue of lobby intrigues, but by virtue of an enlightened public opinion that knows what it wants.

ON THE EVE OF THE OCCUPATION

BY A RUHR CORRESPONDENT

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THE delicate nature of the industrial organization in the Ruhr can best be appreciated by a visit to the district itself. The industries of the Ruhr are concentrated in a small and highly organized area whose pig-iron and steel production is roughly equivalent to that of England. Here are situated the ovens producing the metallurgical coke whose peculiar qualities lend the Ruhr area its special importance.

Around the mines have grown up the great steel-works where the ores of Lorraine, Sweden, and Canada are worked up, being brought via the Rhine to the great river port of Ruhrort — one of the largest coal depôts in the world — and from the North Sea ports via the Dortmund-Ems Canal. A complicated maze of railways assists in bringing in the raw materials, distributing the finished products, and carrying the foodstuffs required to support the huge industrial population.

Mine-shafts, boilers, tall factory-chimneys, belching smoke, and glowing furnaces show Essen at its best. Perfect organization of mighty forces typifies the life of the Ruhr. In the smallest house there is electric light, and, though Essen can be called smoky, it is not to be compared with the Black Country towns. Government regulations and science have diminished the smoke nuisance to an amazing extent by self-consuming devices.

Like most of the great industrial concerns, Krupps has a good name for consideration of its employees. In

their garden city — a reproduction in real life of the Nuremberg toy-villages once familiar in our nurseries — every employee has his little house on the firm's estate and the expectation of a pension. Away from the grimy city lies the handsome villa of the Krupp family, with its private railway-station opposite the park gates and avenue, at which the royal train often drew up, bringing the Kaiser as a guest.

In these days much has changed in Essen. The lot of the workers is not what it was, though only last year a profit-sharing scheme was introduced. The flight from the mark and the reckless spending characteristic of the whole country have prevented it from being very successful. Krupps, formerly a conservative and self-centred concern, has lately been drawn into the current of trusts and interest-agreements, and has come to an arrangement with the Rhine metal locomotives and engineering concerns. Krupps has actually beaten its swords into ploughshares and other agricultural machines, cinemas, and motor-lorries, since the destruction of the great armament plant.

The return of Lorraine to France caused the break-up of the great German steel-syndicate, which has been succeeded by a number of big companies. The money paid by the German Government as compensation for property lost in Lorraine and the Saar had to be expended in developing the same industries in Germany. Herr Stumm is head of the group owning