

British Unpopular For Agreeing To Pay Debt

Average Man on the Street Abroad Believes that United States Insisted on a Pound of Flesh at a Time When England Was Staggering and Stumbling

By DAVID LAWRENCE
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Washington, August 14.—Assuming that there had been no political controversy in the United States over the League of Nations or the World Court and America were approaching the European problem without any previous connection with it, there would still be room for the widest possible difference of opinion as to what American foreign policy should be in the present grave crisis in Europe.

Anyone who has tried to form a judgment of what America should do will not have his mind cleared by a visit to Europe. The chances are he will find it even more confused. It's a good deal like trying to analyze a poker game without being able to look at the cards of any of the players. Most of the moves on the surface hardly reflect what is actually going on.

America is as distinct a part of the game as if she were a European country. There seems to be no way of dissociating the United States from the fact for the very substantial reason that ten billions of dollars of American money is involved. Granting that the United States will never consider cancellation of the war debt, the problem becomes even more acute for Europe feels the burden of that debt almost as much as any factor in the entire economic situation.

In this connection it may be surprising to many people on this side of the Atlantic but the writer can say without qualification that about the most unpopular thing a British government ever did was to agree to pay the American war debt and about the most unfavorable opinion that could possibly be held of the American Government is held by the average man in the street because he believes the United States insisted on its pound of flesh at a time when the British are staggering and stumbling.

Just imagine nearly one half of your weekly salary being taken away from you by the United States and then have the Government say it's necessary because another country wants repayment of a war loan. Imagine also how anxious the average Britisher is to pay anything when out of the war has come French militarism and such a terrible blow at British commerce that 1,200,000 men are out of work and must accept the charity of a government which in fear of revolution is compelled to support its poverty stricken people.

When history comes to be written ten years hence, there will be serious doubts as to the value of the British debt settlement so far as improving the relations between the American and British peoples. Americans are paying the lowest per capita tax of any of the nations engaged in the war and at the same time America is the wealthiest of them all. Under such circumstances the resentment among the common people is indescribable though to be sure in the government circle the importance of a nation paying its debts is fully realized. Indeed the British government is endeavoring just now to use the fact of American insistence on payment as a lever to compel France to scale down the amount of German reparations to a figure that will yield revenue at once instead of continental chaos.

The danger in all Europe today is revolution and counter-revolution—a war between classes. If the American Government could be sure of what is going to happen it would act as a mediator in the European disputes. Former President Roosevelt believed the United States should have protested against the violation of Belgium's neutrality at once in 1914 and that America might have brought the war to an earlier end by intervention when the Lusitania was sunk. All this is hindsight. When the catastrophe comes in Europe there will be another series of controversies as to the part the United States should have played in averting disaster. Should a business depression follow in the United States, criticism would become even more intense.

Under these circumstances then what should President Coolidge do? The need of the hour is a clear out statement of American opinion. There are many people in Europe who argue that the United States

should morally support the British position and thus weaken France before the bar of public opinion. Such a course would only impair the usefulness of American mediation. There is a neutral position as between France and Great Britain. It consists of a bold attack on the fundamentals of the whole European problem—the elimination one by one of the factors causing the dispute.

First, there is the question of French security. America might well propose that all the powers of Europe enter into a solemn treaty promising not to attack one another for a period of 50 years. Such a respect for the sovereignty of each other's domain would when formally ratified by parliaments constitute an impressive argument against the militarist's lack of faith in all human kind.

The next step is the taking by the United States of her vacant chair on the reparations commission as advocated by President Harding. Congress by resolution must give the necessary authority for this. When America has joined the commission, her representative will be in a position to give the world the facts and to influence the opinion of all Europe. Out of the reparations problem must come an international economic conference called by one of the European powers for the purpose of discussing every factor entering into the economic crisis from war debts to reparations. America need not agree in advance to cancel or reduce war debts, but cannot refuse to discuss with other governments measures that would relieve them of the strain. If America could bring about the demobilization of the French army and the general disarmament of Europe by promising to reduce the allied war debt by a certain percentage, the net return to American business and the peace of the world would be a thousand fold.

"Get your own house in order first" is the usual advice given Europeans by American observers abroad "and then we will help you." To this the Europeans answer:

"If we could get our house in order alone we would never need your help afterwards." But there are certain things Europe must do before America can be of any help. It is to end the poker game and put all the cards face up. The facts of Germany's capacity to pay are obtainable just as are the facts of what Germany has already paid. The foreign office thus far have not used the weapon of publicity as far as they can. And the American Government with its impartial sources of information can aid the whole world in influencing European governments to get together. It can be done by exposure of the facts as gathered by American diplomats. It can be done by statements from President Coolidge or Secretary of State Hughes. Mediation will not be difficult to achieve when once the public gets the true facts about Europe. And American alone is trusted sufficiently to gain the respect of the world when its conclusions based upon the facts are placed by the world.

Should the American Government tomorrow pronounce the conditions under which it would be willing to discuss possible measures of aid to the economic situation of Europe,

Refugees Soon to Be Self-Supporting

Near East Relief Doing All in Its Power to Bring Such Conditions About

By Rev. George R. Gillespie of Gastonia.

Corfu, Greece, July 17 (By mail) The Armenians and Greek refugees now herded here will become self-supporting and self-sustaining in a short while if given half a chance. The Near East relief is doing all in its power to bring this about.

Jobs are being found for as many as possible and those for whom there is no sustenance from the land are being fed until they can become self-sustaining. I have personally investigated a number of refugee camps and find that conditions are worse and more pitiful in many cases than have been reported.

I talked for an hour with Marcouh Casperian, a 17-year old Armenian girl, who was a victim of the Smyrna disaster. Caught away from home at the house of a friend she sought refuge in an Armenian church, which was bombed, and she was taken captive. Her importunities and tears prevailed with a soldier and she was released.

In a refugee camp many months later she was reunited with her mother. She is now private secretary to Miss Hastings, American director of the Athens Orphanage, has mastered the English language and is doing splendid work. This is but one of the thousands of examples of what the constructive program of the Near East Relief is accomplishing.

North Carolina must not fail in its task of supporting its quota of orphans. I understand this year but that all surplus funds, not required for the child saving program were used to feed refugees from the Smyrna holocaust. The children are not begging, but saying to Carolinians, "Out of your abundance lend us sufficient to help us become worthy wards of a great people."

FINE ARTS ENRICH THE OLYMPIC GAMES

Paris, August 15.—For the first time since the revival of the Olympic games in 1896, competition in various branches of art will be contested as well as sports.

Architecture, literature, music, painting and sculpture will be re-

presented on the Olympic Teams of various countries, just as the marathon race or the discus throw. Architects of the different nations admitted to the Olympic games will be allowed to present to the jury miniature stadiums, arenas, tennis courts, yachting, swimming pools, athletic gymnasiums, and all subjects in architecture which have direct connection with the practice of sports or athletics. Articles or fiction stories of a maximum length of 20,000 words or poetry limited to 1,000 words, having for subject or relating to some sporting event or sports or athletics, may qualify for the literature competition. They must be written in the mother language of the writer or the country which he represents, and accompanied by a French or English translation.

Music partitions for pianos—two or four hands—also will be accepted. Symphonies, choir songs, drama, will be accepted but they must be inspired by the sporting spirit as an essential condition.

Paintings, drawings, panels and water-colors, depicting athletic subjects will be passed upon by the jury along with similar subjects treated in sculpture.

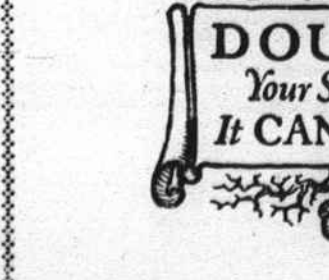
The regular Olympic medals given to winners of sporting events will be granted to the prize winners in the art competitions.

the entire European situation would change in twenty-four hours. Some American diplomats say even that would be futile as it would be too late. They fear the crash is inevitable and must come before the world will be brought to its senses. The big question is where the responsibility will be if Europe goes to smash by within the next four months and America has done nothing publicly at least to prevent a situation that may ultimately become worse for the world than the war of 1914.

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