

ENGLAND BESET BY TROUBLE BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD

Continued From Page Two. The annual supply of coal and the general carrying on the routine of administration it would be helpless, while it would, with limited authority, find itself compelled to assume almost unlimited responsibility. And not only would this fact be gravely compromising in domestic politics, but it would seem bound to make any definite foreign policy totally impossible.

If the majority of the electors showed their disapproval of French policy, and their similar lack of approval for the temporizing course of Baldwin and his predecessor, the late Bonar Law, in dealing with Poincare, it is terribly difficult to discover any way by which a ministry, existing only in sufferance, could successfully take a high hand or even a firm tone in dealing with a French Ministry headed by a Premier who possesses an authority in his own Parliament almost unrivaled and occupies in Germany a position—by reason of the occupation, of the Ruhr and the collapse of German resistance—which is well nigh unassailable.

Possible But Not Probable

It is just conceivable that developments in the next fortnight might have a character that the Liberals would agree to stand by the Labor group not only passively but even actively, on the understanding that a Labor Prime Minister would undertake a vigorous policy with respect to France. The reason this will hardly happen is that for the moment, secure in his position, Poincare is likely to avoid giving any occasion for such a combination. And the agreement of the Coolidge administration to unofficial American participation in the new investigation of German financial questions offers an admirable opportunity to postpone direct controversies.

Of course when the commission gets ready to report, nothing is more likely than that its report will either conform to French views and therefore provoke no open break or that a disagreement in the commission will be made public at the moment when domestic politics have brought down the transient ministry in Great Britain, and there will be lacking a strong government to deal with the matter vigorously.

It must then be perceived in this country that the recent British election constitutes a very real menace to world peace, because the policy openly proclaimed by the Labor Party and supported by the Liberal press and many prominent Liberals leads directly to a clash with France. Labor and the majority of Liberals subscribe to the belief that the proper course to take to curb France—and all agree France must be curbed—is to back Germany openly and oppose France with equal definiteness.

All of this rests upon the double assumption that opposition to France can accomplish anything without actual resort to force and that France will consent to any relief of Germany, which tends, even tends, to let Germany escape from the necessity of meeting French claims. But it does not require any extended investigation of the French situation to see that this is not the case. If the French are ready to make minor concessions to a Tory Prime Minister, as Poincare did to Baldwin the other day, they are not in the least minded to give way before parties and leaders who are openly hostile.

Dangerously Near War For many months the Liberals and Labor press and leaders have been preaching something dangerously near war upon France. They have suddenly held up to the British public the idea that French policy is wholly responsible for British unemployment and British hardships. A majority of the British voters believe this and having voted on this assumption, now expect any government which takes office to act in restraint of France.

But if you take the trouble to read the French press, you will perceive that this British offensive had been noted and chartered in France and that the French with very few exceptions has been answering in kind. The mass of the French people have been led to believe on their side that the cause of present French difficulties in Germany is due to the failure of the British to live up to their pledges and contracts contained in the Treaty of Versailles and that the British course has openly encouraged the German resistance which has in

It is only one thing that if the British public expects any new Prime Minister to exercise coercion upon France, French public opinion will not back any Premier who fails to resist coercion and maintain the policy which France has recently pursued with the almost unanimous support of the French people. Given this state of mind in the two countries, it is not hard to see that the possibilities of a clash are very great and the chances of co-operation are almost insignificant.

As long as there was a Tory government in Great Britain, some semblance of association could be preserved between France and Britain, because a majority of the Tories were frankly friendly to France and totally unwilling to allow any step to be taken which would break off relations with France. If the Tories did not feel strong enough to march with France into the Ruhr they were able to prevent Bonar Law and Baldwin from taking any hostile step. In a word, they dictated a policy which consisted in making a formal protest against French action but then taking no step to prevent the Ruhr occupation. Passive disapproval was just as far as the Tories would or could go.

Passive Disapproval Rejected

But the Tories are in a minority now, and the Tory policy of passive

disapproval is no longer a possibility, but a reality. The Tories are prepared to fight France or to give France advantages which shall be profitable to France and to Germany. Sooner or later, then, depending somewhat upon the domestic political situation in Great Britain—their is, depending as to time. There is bound to be a real clash between British and French foreign policy. Remember that the Labor Party is committed to compelling a French evacuation of the Ruhr. It demands a revision of the Treaty of Versailles it demands open British support of Germany. It has talked and continues to talk of some form of Anglo-German Entente to replace the present somewhat fragile Anglo-French

Entente. The Labor Party is prepared to fight France or to give France advantages which shall be profitable to France and to Germany. As to fighting, the Labor Party is totally opposed to the mere idea of war. It would not fight to carry its policies, but, by contrast, it insists upon carrying out policies which have no chance of prevailing save by the use of force. There is an idea in the Labor Party, and it has been cultivated in the Liberal Press, that Great Britain ought to demand that France pay her debt to Great Britain, that Great Britain should denounce the Anglo-French Entente and that, finally, the British Ministry should proceed to

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