

After the League Comes the Balance of Power

Rejection of Treaty Would Throw Europe Back on System Centuries Old

By Frank H. Simonds

THE defeat of the peace treaty will have certain consequences, as far as Europe is concerned, which will not be modified by any later ratification. Chief among these consequences will be the total discrediting of the league of nations. The United States Senate may or may not have killed the Treaty of Versailles, so far as American participation is concerned, but it has destroyed the league of nations. And with this destruction the way is cleared for a European return to that system of the balance of power which for centuries has been the central circumstance in European history.

In saying that the league of nations has been discredited and is doomed there is no implication that it will be at once and formally repudiated by the European nations which have already subscribed to the Treaty of Versailles. On the contrary, the various commissions appointed will meet as prescribed; they will function for the time being, since it is of utmost importance that there be no further delay, but beneath the surface great and rapid changes will inevitably take place.

The reason is obvious. When the President went to Europe, carrying his league of nations project, Europe was divided on the course to follow. The experienced statesmen of the Continent had little faith in the league and very grave apprehensions as to the dangers which it would bring in its train. Some urged that it was wise policy to give Mr. Wilson what he wanted, and thus insure American cooperation; others argued that the price was too high to pay. Lloyd George settled the debate against the advice of Clemenceau by promising Britain's aid to Mr. Wilson.

British delegation at Paris accepted the President's decision. They accepted it as a further detail in the policy to please America by satisfying the President. They continued their course when Mr. Wilson ruled against Belgium and took the league of nations to Geneva; they joined with him in opposing French occupation of the left bank of the Rhine or annexation of the Sarre Basin, they stood with him against Italian possession of Fiume. They really broke with him only over reparations, and this was a matter of life and death for Lloyd George personally.

The extent to which the British supported Mr. Wilson at Paris led ultimately to a certain resentment on the part of the French and to an open denunciation on the part of the Italians. Orlando is reported to have suggested to Clemenceau at one moment that France and Italy, with the ultimate adherence of Rumania, form a Latin bloc to counterbalance the Anglo-Saxon duo, and the Paris papers murmured against an Anglo-Saxon peace.

But these protests were ephemeral. Lloyd George really placated the French, although he had at least one bad quarter of an hour in which he openly threatened to take the conference away from Paris, by his support of their demand for an Anglo-American guarantee and his championship of their right to occupy the Sarre Basin. Insensibly, but surely, Clemenceau, influenced by Jusserand and Tardieu, was led to accept the British view that pleasing the President meant enlisting America's aid.

Resentment

In the middle stage of the conference there was much French resentment against the President and his league purposes, but toward the end this more or less died down, although the President never regained the popularity he had enjoyed in the first moments of his arrival. From start to finish the French never had any faith in the league of nations, but they were reconciled by the treaty of insurance, and they were convinced in the end that the British policy was wiser.

That the American Senate might reject the treaty never for a moment obtained even a respectful hearing in Paris. In France and in Britain foreign affairs are outside the sphere of operations of party politics, and the American situation was ignored. Moreover, Paris was filled with the friends of the Administration and the champions of Mr. Wilson's league, who consistently reported, and many of them at least honestly believed, that the league of nations project would receive American sanction when the Senate at last received the treaty.

I am going over this fairly familiar ground once more, because only by recalling it can one explain the situation in Europe. The situation was just this: Europe wholeheartedly desired American aid; Great Britain unreservedly sought a new and better understanding with America and hoped for American participation in world administration; France, equally anxious for American friendship, necessarily thought also of material things, such as new German attacks and possible European combinations growing out of Italian and Rumanian disappointments.

Now the action of the Senate destroys the whole British conception of the American situation. It discloses an opposition to the President which must pass all British conceptions. It reveals the fact, not even suspected in Paris, that British support of the President, however much appreciated by that portion of the American public believing in the league of nations and approving of the President's course, necessarily arouses the antagonism of the President's opponents.

Thus it has been a matter of frank surprise on the part of Englishmen in their own country and here that not a few of the opponents of the President and the league have spoken with unmistakable bitterness of the British part in the framing of the document and the British course in supporting the President. And it is plain that, so far from helping along the cause of American-British friendship, British policy, while unmistakably winning high opinions in one political camp, has roused compensating animosity in the other.

Confusion

The result is, then, both confusing and disappointing to the British. Wholly outside of their intention, actually in exact conflict with their

How Spain Looks Upon the World



The planets weep at Mother Earth's plight. —Esquella, Barcelona

purpose, it has made them participants in American domestic politics. For this, of course, there is only one remedy. It can be no part of British policy to endeavor to help one political party at the expense of another. Therefore an inevitable abandonment of the Paris policy is forecast.

And with abandonment will go the French, led into their present position mainly by British influence and with great reluctance on their own part at the outset. The Anglo-American partnership of Paris comes to an end; in its place there must come a new Anglo-French association, an actual alliance and, since America does not accept for itself the Wilson principles and program, Europe will perform go back to its older methods.

This is the more certain because the defeat of the treaty in the Senate was not the result of any deviation from the President's fourteen points; the battle was not fought on the Sarre Basin or on Danzig, it was won and lost on the question of American participation in European affairs and the result strikes at the heart of the whole thing, for it was to obtain American cooperation and American participation that Europe accepted the league. Most of Europe did not believe in the league, but all of Europe was convinced that all of America insisted upon it.

If the treaty had been rejected by the United States Senate because of the Sarre Valley circumstance, because of the Shantung affair, because of Danzig, then there might be some cause for the British. They might argue that it was still necessary for Europe to make additional concessions to the American idea. But neither the Sarre nor Shantung influenced the decision of the Senate. The treaty was defeated because a majority of the Senate oppose Mr. Wilson's idea of America's duty in the world, and public sentiment, up to the moment of the vote, did not disclose any decisive support for Mr. Wilson's idealism.

A New Agreement

We may expect, then, as I have said, that, seeing the situation as it is, the British and the French will proceed to a new agreement. President Poincaré's recent trip to London was accepted abroad as the first step in that direction. France and Great Britain will proceed to formulate terms of alliance, since both will be equally menaced if Germany takes up arms again. They will agree to defend the integrity of Belgian and French soil by force of arms and to maintain armies sufficient for this task.

But will the British continue to insist that the French surrender the left bank of the Rhine a few years hence, and submit their occupation of the Sarre to a plebiscite, when both courses may bring German troops nearer to the Channel and make a line on which the British will have to defend themselves next time fifty or a hundred miles nearer to the Straits of Dover, from the eastern shores of which Big Bertha could bombard London? It was all right to insist that the French do this when such a retreat was the price paid for the promise of two millions more of American troops available against German aggression. But these troops seem less available now, while the German is still there.

In any event France and Great Britain have to agree upon the terms of an alliance which will include the defence of the soil of France, Belgium and Luxemburg. Great Britain may still advocate the Wilsonian doctrine of abandonment of the Rhine barrier, but any such advocacy will have to carry with it specific pledges in the matter of British divisions, available on the first suggestion of a new German attack.

France and Britain will then have to consider the case of Italy. If Italy joins Germany in a new war, France and Britain cannot hope for victory and without American aid will probably be doomed to defeat.

Therefore it is essential that Italy be brought into a new alliance such as the last war created. But this can only be done by supporting Italian claims in many regions, particularly in the Adriatic. Anglo-French opposition to these claims was at bottom based upon the policy of following Mr. Wilson, but with Mr. Wilson out of the situation and conditions and not theories confronting British and French statesmen, who can doubt the decision in Downing Street or at the Quai d'Orsay?

A New Alliance

We shall have then, an Anglo-French-Italian alliance, which will be the successor of the old Anglo-French-Russian alliance against Germany. But such an alliance will be concerned about the independent states of Middle Europe. If Germany can again dominate Europe from Hamburg to Belgrade, from Berlin to Byzantium, all the old dangers will reappear. Therefore, for London, Paris and Rome it will be a matter of utmost concern what Rumania means to do, whether Poland will stand, what Czechoslovakia can contribute in the way of divisions and guns to block German advances southward.

Thus inevitably we shall see the new alliance recognizing Rumanian claims to Bessarabia, Polish claims in Lithuania, Greek claims in Thrace and using necessary force to compel the Jugo-Slavs to moderate their Adriatic attitude and in any event to give up Fiume. In place of a policy based upon abstract justice, no matter how it injures your friends, and without regard to the advantages it bestows upon your incurable enemies, we shall see develop a new application of the older principle of mutual association for mutual profit and protection.

I do not think that any one can doubt that Europe will now react to the old principles and the old ideas. In point of fact these were never laid aside; they were, at best, temporarily abandoned in the face of an imperious necessity which grew out of the commanding position attained by America during the war and the force, American and British, behind President Wilson in the Paris Conference.

The league of nations could only have had a real trial had it been accepted by the United States Senate and by the country with such unanimity and enthusiasm as to convince Europe that it was the single price of further American aid and cooperation. Its chance of a real trial ended with the vote in the Senate and cannot be reanimated by any subsequent parliamentary procedure. And since the league of nations is dead, from the European point of view only the balance of power remains.

The election in France, like the recent course of events in Britain, has given clear evidence of the tri-

Although League Idea May Not Be Doomed, Simonds Sees Changes Taking Place

umph of the conservative and non-revolutionary elements. France and Britain will be able to work together as they would not have been able to do had France gone "Red" and Britain white. In both countries the same steady sense of national necessities is apparent; we shall not have revolutions on the Seine or on the Thames this winter, it would seem. With Great Britain and France Belgium must be counted, and in any new alliance in any confederation of Europe, we may expect to see Anglo-French influence prevail.

Any breach between France and Britain would be a real world tragedy and would insure German attacks in the future. The severest criticism of Lloyd George's policy in Paris, criticism made by many conspicuous Englishmen, was that it frequently risked French friendship in seeking to obtain American approval. At certain moments in the Paris Conference the French did feel themselves abandoned and protested rather bitterly. But with President Wilson out of the situation, Anglo-French relations are bound to grow closer.

Peace With Russia

Still another consequence of the withdrawal of America from Europe seems bound to be an Allied peace with Russia. A general recognition of the need of clearing away all barriers to peace seems bound to prevail. The small countries, Poland, Rumania and Czechoslovakia, together with the Baltic states and Finland, are unable and unwilling longer to carry on a war against Russia without large contributions from the Western nations. The Western nations are not ready to supply men or money, hence the beginning of negotiations which will not improbably lead to a restoration of peace between Russia and the smaller races and states on her outer fringes. If this comes it will be only a prelude to a recognition of the fact of peace by the Western nations, under certain conditions which will insure their financial interests, mainly in the old Russian National Debt.

In sum, following upon the action of the Senate it seems to me certain that we shall see a rapid change from the league of nations ideal to the balance of power system in Europe. With this shift France and Great Britain will become the dominant forces in a new alliance which will in due course of time include Italy and Rumania, both excited by a tardy recognition of claims reflected while President Wilson's influence dominated in Paris.

Such an alliance will necessarily reopen the question of the left bank of the Rhine if the United States fails to ratify the treaty of insurance with France and Britain; it may in any event, since American assistance will seem a little less tangible than it did a year ago. We have now to face the possibility that France will stay for a long time on the Rhine, between Alsace and Holland. In the same way France may claim for Poland a better settlement at the mouth of the Vistula and Italy demand of Rumania the frontier of the Danube and the Theiss.

Peace with Russia, achieved by indirect means, is likely to follow soon; as for Turkey, that Eastern question will be disposed of at a conference of London in March, at which America will hardly play any prominent part and may not be represented, since we were not actually at war with the Ottoman. At such a conference Italy may hope to obtain compensation in Asia for any concessions made in Europe.

In the new ordering of Europe and Asia matters American participation will hardly be considerable, even if the treaty shall finally be ratified. The reason is obvious. The policy adopted by the British at Paris has hardly stood the test of time. This conflict of assurance that America would recognize British friendship in British support of the President's wishes, the general belief that American enlistment in world affairs was to be procured by the European acceptance of the American league of nations, has led to rather bitter disillusionment, and neither Britain nor Europe is apt to run the risk of a new disappointment soon.

If the league of nations was to succeed it had to be an act of faith all around; the course of the United States Senate in denying faith for itself destroyed European faith, such as there was, and left Europe puzzled, but without temptation to risk a new American adventure. (Copyright, 1919, McClure Newspaper Syndicate)

Getting Ready for Tourists on the Battlefields

FRANCE owes a large amount of money, having been a party to and the scene of a large world war. It costs money to support five years of terrific struggling, and the financial geni of that country are devising ways and means of reducing the discouraging disparity between the cash-on-hand and the cash-to-be-paid-out sides of the national ledger.

The money spent by tourists is being counted upon as a means toward paying part of the war bills, according to Lucien D. Brunswig, a regent of the University of California and recently commissioned by the French government to promote educational relations between the sister republics.

According to Mr. Brunswig and Jules Dorang, who represents the newly formed Commission of Tourists, the government of France is virtually planning to standardize touring, in order that no guilty dollar may escape. Instead of being a nation covered with tourists roaming at will and without guides, France will have a few well-trodden paths, leading through the heart of the places where enough history was made to add another year's worth to the high school curriculum.

Poor Facilities Now

M. Dorang, with the courtesy which is France's, trusts that Americans are not offended because sightseeing is not permitted this year. France is so upset, he said,

will move methodically and systematically.

"An attempt will be made to fix the itinerary so that five hundred persons will stop at each place one night. They will be given tickets, inscribed with numbers. These will show, for example, that Mr. A will be at Verdun on Monday, Soissons on Tuesday and perhaps the Argonne on Wednesday. His card will be stamped with the number of the room he is to occupy. Mr. B will have a card which entitles him to a room at Verdun on Tuesday, Soissons on Wednesday and the Argonne on Thursday.

"Wounded and maimed soldiers, residents of the battle-scarred territory, will serve as guides. Having lived and fought over the ground, they will be able adequately to give the tourist a lasting impression of the battlefields.

"The systematic tourist system will prevent extortion on the part of a minority of the French people. Some of the members of the A. E. F. complained that they were misled by storekeepers and others, but these incidents were comparatively few. It is partially to avoid anything like this and the resulting ill feeling that the Commission on Tourists was established."

Ready Next Spring

France will be ready to receive Americans by the beginning of next spring, Mr. Brunswig said. By that time, he declared, the construction of some of the hotels will be well under way, but accommodations would assuredly be provided for all Americans traveling under government auspices.

From July 1, 1913, to July 1,

1914, 260,000 Americans visited France, Mr. Brunswig said. It is the belief of the Commission on Tourists, he said, that more than 300,000 Americans will tour France next year.

Tourists in France spend on an average of \$500 a year, according to M. Dorang. The amounts vary, he said, from tens of thousands of dollars spent by comparatively new millionaires to two or three hundred, spent by school teachers and others in search of some finishing touches to their education.

The 300,000 tourists, at the average named by M. Dorang, would spend \$150,000,000, enough to pay, if not for a full battle, at least for a sizable skirmish.

The battle-scarred territory, M. Dorang explained, would not be in demand for agricultural or industrial uses for some years, because the value of the land is but 400 francs an acre, while it is estimated that, under present conditions, the cost of restoring the property would be 4,000 francs an acre.

The Ministry of Public Works, which has the preservation of the battlefields under its jurisdiction, M. Dorang said, has arranged to preserve the "pillboxes," or concrete machine gun nests, the tangles of barbed wire and the underground trench systems, just as they were during the fighting.

The ravages of civilization will not destroy the powerful, appealing beauty of the battlefields, M. Dorang assures all prospective tourists. By an act of the French legislature the battlefields have been classified as historical reservations, he said. German prisoners are now digging drains on the battlefields.