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HOPEFUL OUTLOOK FOR WORLD PEACE

Is the year 1935 going to bring us the real peace for which the world has now been clamouring for fully 15 years? This question, or rather sincere hope, is in the minds of millions of people who have the fate of our civilisation at heart.

The last month of 1934 certainly augured well, because the Council of the League of Nations apparently settled two grave problems, which threatened to plunge Europe in a new war. Monsieur Laval's visit to Signor Mussolini in the first days of January was a further most important step in the good direction, since it paved the way for a cooperation between those two great Powers and former allies upon whom the final settlement of European entanglement greatly depends. The understanding between Italy and France seemed to us to be an absolute necessity to save our civilization, to restore just and adequately peaceful conditions in Europe: the only other alternative being a reversion to the system of alliances which proved so dangerous in pre-war Europe.

A more hopeful outlook for 1935 is thus entirely justified, because it is this cooperation between Rome and Paris which can, if fearlessly carried to an end, guarantee the total liquidation of all difficulties, which the peace treaties by no means solved, but rather left in further embitterment since the end of the war.

It is now up to the statesmen of Europe to concentrate all their efforts upon the practical and final solution of all problems, not to be satisfied with piecemeal work, not to attempt to gain laurels with the extremists of their own country, but to do some real good for the whole civilization. We must insist upon the solution of *all problems*, because it is only too well known that a solution by instalments, reluctantly granted and belated concessions, always leave a venomous thorn on both sides.

It is not our desire to deal in these lines with the Versailles Treaty, but we cannot help pointing

out that for instance the financial clauses of that Treaty had to be altered time after time, that the military evacuation of the Rhine before the date fixed by the Treaty, the Locarno Treaty, the Kellogg Pact, were in fact partial alterations of the Versailles Treaty, as well as on the other hand the wanton occupation of the Ruhr. And yet all these part issues, however important they may have been, have always left, on both sides, the impression of not voluntary, but enforced actions or concessions, and could thus not bring forth that peaceful atmosphere of mutual confidence which is the only guarantee of a genuine and honest peace.

Are the nations of Europe now ready to follow a path which leads to an honest and just solution of the European problems, is the great question; and are the leading statesmen of Europe already able and willing to fight down, in their own lands, that very small minority which would prefer to continue on that dangerous road which up to now has proved to be so fateful to all of us?

The Saar vote, which gave Germany the satisfaction of more than ninety per cent of the population of the Saar, entitled to vote, desiring the return to Germany, should be a strong memento to those who believe that Versailles was an honest peace treaty or that the policy carried on since then in Europe, has been a policy inducive to the establishment of real peace? Where are the 150,000 Frenchmen of the Saar, one of the arguments of Clemenceau, and where are the blessings of 15 years of French influence on this territory? And yet what do we see again? Signs that France desires to put conditions, military and other, to the evacuation of the Saar and to a loyal acceptance of Hitler's offer of friendly cooperation.

Why does France insist upon forcing Germany into Eastern pacts including Russia and even the Balkan States, together with Turkey? Why? if Poland was able to come to very satisfactory terms with Hitler's Germany. And surely neither are the

Russian bolsheviks nor Turkey likely to safeguard Austrian independence if Austria, supported by England, France and Italy could not herself achieve this aim. France cannot be surprised if her policy is regarded with misgivings in those quarters which considered France's attitude since Versailles, — but not Hitlers coming to power — as the greatest hindrance to the establishment of a peaceful atmosphere in Central Europe. Can anyone believe that if Briand had been allowed to carry on his policy of reaching an equitable understanding with Germany, Hitler could ever have received the support of more than four fifths of the German people?

Let us hope that the good will of Laval will overcome all difficulties which are put into his way by shortsighted extremists in his own country, that he will follow the lead of the majority of the French people and of the French ex-soldiers of the great war, rather than to listen to Little Entente insinuations or to the flattery of Moscow, and thus facilitate the return of Germany to the League of Nations and pave the way to an equitable solution of the Danubian problem.

This latter problem is probably even more serious than the Franco German difference. Taking everything into consideration and admitting that France could completely isolate Germany, the fact remains that the Germans, a compact mass of 65 million people, capable to endure, for sheer patriotic reasons, the greatest privations, would survive and would abide their time, and they would certainly not think of war as a means of breaking their political isolation. The problem is entirely different in the Danubian valley, as recent events have shown.

In fact it was the Danubian problem which brought Europe, late in 1934, to the verge of a new war and one ramification of which was, only in the last moment, peacefully settled in Geneva: the Hungarian-Jugoslav dispute over the Marseilles murder. This dispute has been extensively dealt with in previous numbers of this review, so that it seems hardly necessary to reiterate in full the arguments against the unjustified charges made against Hungary in concerted and always reiterated attacks of the Little Entente. The fact, however, that the Little Entente, supported by France, refused to agree to a final and formal closing of this dispute

at the January session of the Council, justifies the belief that these powers want to avail themselves, for political reasons, of the weapon of an unsettled controversy. This, of course, would detract from the value of their profession that they desire a sincere cooperation of all European countries on an equitable and fair basis and with the ultimate aim of solving all difficulties, which still separate the nations of Europe in two dangerously inimical camps.

If the Rome agreement between Mussolini and Laval is to bring not only good results, but also far-reaching ones, it would be essential that Monsieur Laval should make the Little Entente statesmen clearly understand that France's and Italy's aim is the real pacification of Europe, the restoration of political and economic stability in the Danubian Valley, against which the selfish interests of a few statesmen and the little group of their close political friends and their satellites would have to stand back. They would have to disappear if they only preach, but not practice, European cooperation on the basis of equal rights to all.

Should Mussolini and Laval succeed in their high aims, they will surely find Hungary willing to cooperate for the good of the world, our civilization and the welfare of the people of the Danubian Valley. The only conditions of Hungary are, that she be accorded equal rights in all fields of sovereignty and in dealing with her neighbours, that the Hungarian minorities in the Little Entente States should at last be given those rights which international treaties guaranteed them, and last, but not least, that she should not always be treated as a peace breaker if she desires, by peaceful means and with the help of the League of Nations, to have those wrongs rectified under which she believes that she has a very just grievance.

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The raison d'être of forms of government depends upon that human substance which is ultimately the criterion of human creations. Such a creation — or institution — is Monarchy too, the most eminent type of which is undoubtedly the Kingdom of Great Britain.