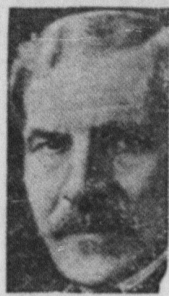


News Review of Current Events the World Over

War Debts Injected in World Conference—Britain Pays Installment of Ten Millions—Final Doings of Congress Before Adjournment.

By EDWARD W. PICKARD

RAMSAY MACDONALD threw a fair-sized monkey wrench into the London economic conference machinery in his opening speech, but the wheels hadn't really begun to revolve, so the mechanism was not wrecked immediately. Whether it is ultimately to operate successfully depends on diplomatic skill or on the complaisance of Uncle Sam.



Ramsay MacDonald

In the middle of an otherwise well-ordered address, the British prime minister suddenly interjected the war debts issue, despite the fact that it was not on the agenda of the conference. That question, he declared, "must be dealt with before every obstacle to general recovery has been removed, and it must be taken up without delay by the nations concerned. Lausanne has to be completed and this vexed question settled once for all in the light of present world conditions."

Delegates from all parts of the British empire and possibly those from France were not surprised by MacDonald's action, but Secretary Hull and his brother delegates from the United States did not attempt to conceal their displeasure with what they considered at least a display of poor taste. Mr. Hull was soon in telephonic communication with Washington, and as a result his address to the conference which was to open the second day of the parley was postponed. Among the other speakers of that day, however, were Guido Jung of Italy and Gen. Jan Christian Smuts of South Africa, both of whom backed up MacDonald's stand.

"We firmly believe," Jung said, "that there is a preliminary problem—intergovernmental debts arising from the war. An armistice was signed for them at Lausanne. A final settlement now is imperative."

Smuts was even more offensive to Americans, frankly blaming the United States for the deplorable plight of the world.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Neville Chamberlain seconded the remarks of MacDonald about war debts, and also said the crisis in world economic conditions makes restoration of the gold standard absolutely impossible at present.

He favored multilateral treaties for lower tariffs, provided the reductions were actual and tangible, that they covered a wide area, that they did not impose undue sacrifices on lower tariff countries and that they did not lead to economic warfare. He emphasized the necessity for cheap money.

WHEN Secretary Hull arose, the third to deliver his address, it was expected he would make some sort of reply to the war debts demand. But he was silent on that subject, devoting much of his speech to argument for a renewal of the tariff truce promulgated by President Roosevelt. This must be followed, he said, by removal of trade barriers, elimination of excessive tariffs, stabilization of exchanges and abandonment of nationalistic economic policies.

"The world cannot longer go on as it is going at present," Hull said. "A successful meeting of this conference in my judgment is the key to widespread business recovery."

POSSIBLY more threatening to the success of the conference than the injection of the war debts issue was the demand of the French, represented by Premier Daladier, that the dollar be stabilized before the matter of tariff reductions and removal of other trade barriers be taken up.

Both the dollar and the pound, he intimated, must be stabilized on a gold basis at the earliest possible moment.

"We feel we must end the currency war," Premier Daladier declared. "The maintenance of the gold standard is indispensable. How can circulation of goods be re-established if their value depends on luck and hazard? What would you say to an architect or builder who used an elastic foot-rule?"

America's hope for success of the conference was built upon a world tariff truce, and the French believe they have blocked this for the present at least. They assert this would mean nothing so long as currencies are fluctuating. Only 15 of the nations represented in the conference adhered to the temporary tariff truce which was to last during the life of the parley, and one of these, France, now refuses to renew its pledge under existing circumstances.

WHILE this sort of talk was going on in the conference hall, Great Britain and Italy were planning to evade payment of the greater part of the installments due the United States on June 15, and France was calmly ignoring the fact that she also was due to make a payment on that date, her government being determined to do nothing about it. The British offered to pay \$10,000,000 of the \$79,950,000 due.

President Roosevelt's reply to the British offer, eagerly awaited, was that the United States would accept the partial payment only with the explicit understanding that the money was just an installment on the sum due and that such action should in no way invalidate America's claim to the unpaid remainder.

Mr. Roosevelt advised the British that as soon as possible they should make whatever representations for a revision of the debt they desire to offer, and in Washington. He said he had no power to reduce or cancel the debt but would submit the results of the negotiation to congress.

Under the new inflation bill the President is authorized to accept silver in payment of debt installments at the value of 50 cents an ounce. So the British paid in silver obtained from India.

WAR debts, as much as discord over the matter of war veterans' benefits, caused delay in the adjournment of congress, though the latter question was the ostensible reason. The senate appeared determined to stay in session until it had learned all there was to know about the offers of partial payment and the President's response. The senators had known for a long time that Mr. Roosevelt wanted them to get away before June 15, and Robinson of Indiana read to them cabled dispatches from London saying that Chancellor Chamberlain was waiting for congress to adjourn before announcing his offer of 10 per cent payment. So they decided to stay on the job a little longer.

On the surface the delay was due to disagreement over the modification of the President's program for reduction of veterans' benefits, a part of the independent offices bill. The house had accepted the compromise, but 20 Democratic senators and Shipstead, Farmer-Laborite, joined with 27 Republicans to recommit the measure. Then the senate adopted the Cutting-Stelwer amendment, which would increase veterans' compensations by about \$135,000,000, though the President had said he would go no further than \$100,000,000. It was expected the house would accept the senate plan and that Mr. Roosevelt would veto the entire bill. But the house showed signs of going along with the President, so the Democratic senators changed their mind and, after a hot debate, accepted the program it had previously rejected. The bill was passed by a vote of 45 to 36, and what had seemed to be the first defeat for the President was turned into a victory. Congress then adjourned.

IN OTHER respects the senate acted swiftly in completing the legislation the President had asked. The important bills enacted included the most terrifying industry control-public works measure; the Glass-Steagall banking bill which makes provision for limited deposit guarantee January 1, 1934, unless in an emergency ordered earlier by the President; and the fourth deficiency bill carrying the largest appropriations ever made in peace time. The home owners' loan act setting up a \$2,200,000,000 corporation for home loan mortgage relief already had been passed and was signed by the President, who at the same time issued an appeal to mortgage holders to desist from foreclosures until the new agency can begin functioning.

The industry control bill did not get through without fierce opposition from 15 of the more radical Democrats and 23 Republicans, all led by Senator Borah, who especially denounced the giving of vast power to Gen. Hugh Johnson, the man selected as the administrator.

The senate rather ignored the executive order which President Roosevelt had transmitted, providing for regroupings, consolidations, transfers and abolitions of certain executive agencies and functions. He explained in his message the necessity for these changes and said they would effect a saving of more than \$25,000,000. Many other changes, he said, were in contemplation, and he had selected only those he believed should be put into effect as quickly as possible.

NOW Massachusetts is in line for repeal of prohibition, the tenth state to decide the matter. The electors voted about 4 to 1 wet in selecting 45 delegates to a constitutional convention that will ratify the repeal amendment. In Boston the vote was approximately 10 to 1, and one of that city's delegates will be James Roosevelt, son of President Roosevelt. In most of the communities the question of local license was submitted and only a few of them stood firm against license.

JOSEPH B. EASTMAN, a member of the interstate commerce commission, was selected by President Roosevelt to be federal co-ordinator of transportation under the terms of the emergency railway act. Eastman doesn't like the labor clauses in the measure which prevent the reduction of operating forces, but believes that much can be accomplished in spite of them.



J. B. Eastman

The railroad executives themselves have decided there must be savings effected in labor and decided to request organized labor to accept a 22 1/2 per cent reduction in the basic wage scale. Their committee of nine is empowered to negotiate with the unions to a conclusion. If the negotiations fail, there would still be a long period before a strike call. Under the terms of the railway labor act, if direct negotiations fail, the federal mediation board would offer the services of a conciliator who might spend several months in bringing the parties together. Then, if both parties persisted in disagreement, the way would be open to arbitration.

Arbitration would likely extend over a long period. Should this fail, the law provides for the declaration of a state of emergency, under which the President of the United States appoints a fact finding commission, which must study the issues involved and report within thirty days.

MRS. ROOSEVELT returned home from her air trip to California in the course of which she announced the coming divorce of her son Elliott. To the Washington correspondents she explained the incident at the Dallas airport when Gov. "Ma" Ferguson and her husband failed to get into a photograph with the First Lady. The simple fact was that Mrs. Roosevelt, being hungry, was eating breakfast and asked the photographers to wait, and when she finished eating, the Ferns had gone away in a huff.

SECRETARY of Labor Perkins announced the appointment of President Robert Hutchins of the University of Chicago as chairman of the advisory committee to be set up in connection with the new federal employment service.

Senator R. F. Wagner of New York and President William Green of the American Federation of Labor and President Henry I. Harriman of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States also have been invited.

ONE of the last acts of the house of representatives was the adoption of a resolution for congressional investigation of all acts of judges and other federal court agents in receiver-ship cases, the sponsors being Sabath of Chicago and Celler of New York. Representative Hatton Summers, Texas, Democratic prosecutor and chairman of the house judiciary committee, said Chicago would be one of the first courts to be the subject of inquiry, because of the Chicago Bar association report condemning the actions of Judge Frederick E. Woodward in allowing nearly a quarter of a million in fees to his son's law firm as receivers' counsel. The bar association did not reflect on the integrity of the judge or the law firm, but condemned the practice.



Judge F. E. Woodward

CHANCELLOR ENGLEBERT DOLLFUSS is determined that Austria shall not be infected with Hitlerism, and the government is carrying on a determined war against the Nazis, who are accused of plotting to inaugurate a reign of terror there to be followed by a coup to seize control of the country. All known Nazis in the country are being arrested for questioning by the police, who assert more than 10 per cent of them are Germans. One of their alleged leaders, Theodore Habicht, was claimed by the German minister to be an employee of his legation, and the minister protested sharply when Habicht was arrested. In retaliation the Prussian secret police expelled from Germany Dr. Irwin Wasserbaeck, chief of the press department in the Austrian legation in Berlin. Naturally relations between Germany and Austria were near the breaking point.

A statement addressed to the League of Nations, the Soviet government, and the signatories of the nine power pact, the Southwest Political council condemned China's truce with Japan as a pact of surrender which the Nanking regime can implement only by precipitating a civil war. The statement said the council would be compelled to take steps to safeguard the honor and vital interests of China as a nation determined not to be conquered.

Paraguay has notified the League of Nations that it will not accept the latest proposals of the league for arbitration of its quarrel with Bolivia over the Gran Chaco territory.

THE prince of the Asturias, son of former King Alfonso of Spain, intends to marry Edelmira Sampedro of Cuba, a commoner, despite his father's objection. Dispatches from Paris say the prince, at the demand of Alfonso's emissary, signed a document renouncing all rights to the throne for himself and his descendants in favor of his brother Don Jaime.

Washington Digest

National Topics Interpreted
by William Bruckart

Washington.—President Roosevelt's departure from the White house for a rest and a fishing cruise calls attention again to the tremendous strain to which a President of the United States is subjected. Anyone holding that office has to undergo it and, despite attempts to make the job easier, none has come forward with a workable plan to lighten the burden.

Presidents have been criticized in communities away from the national capital many times in the past because they took a week or a month off. In other years, it has been common to hear political attacks on the President then occupying the White House on account of vacations or recreational methods that caused their absence from the executive mansion. Observers here, however, can in no wise agree that such criticism is justified. On the contrary, I believe the agreement would be on a premise that were the President unable to get away from his job periodically, he would be a broken man physically, if not mentally, in a short time.

The President of the United States has at his beck and call all of the advisers, all of the expert assistance, everything that is required to enable him to do the job. Yet, with all of this, he cannot dodge the responsibility of leadership, and that is the crux of the problem. He must lead in the right direction and that necessitates familiarity with every problem to be solved by his administration. He receives advice and assistance from all shades of opinion because it is human for men and women to have varying views. So the President has to sort them out and arrive at his own conclusions and those conclusions either make or break the administration.

In order to illustrate the truth of the statement that the job of President of the United States is a man-killer, let us review what has happened since Franklin D. Roosevelt took office. He entered the White House with the most acute banking crisis ever known staring him in the face; he assumed the Presidency when the country's agriculture was in the throes of destitution, if not actual starvation; he took over the job at a time when 12,000,000 were without work and whose resources were gone, and with the industries of the nation unable to operate as a whole at more than 50 per cent of normal activity.

The President, of course, knew how desperate the conditions were and he immediately called congress into extraordinary session, he closed the banks for a holiday so they could get started fresh after they had had time to determine whether they were solvent and he began grinding out a program for legislation by congress designed to restore order out of chaos. These things were done within a period of ten days and it was thought the strain would lessen after the banks were again operating. But the days and nights between March 4 and March 15, the period of the banking holiday, were only the beginning. Others presenting just as much of a burden have occurred until the current question is: how did the President stand it?

It may sound simple that the President called congress into extra session; that he closed the banks and that he did all of the other things mentioned above. Unfortunately, it is not so simple as it sounds. For example, Mr. Roosevelt was inaugurated at noon, March 4; he had luncheon with a few friends and went to work with the new members of his cabinet. A steady stream of men filed in and out of the President's office, as the new Chief Executive sought to map plans. This continued into the night after the President had gone to the White House itself and long after midnight he was working on a program for handling the banking situation. Awakened at seven o'clock, the circumstances of the preceding afternoon and night were repeated although it was Sunday. Then, the banking holiday proclamation was ready.

But the banks, having been closed, must needs be reopened. Emergency legislation was required. It had to be drafted quickly and it had to be bullet-proof. Bankers and experts in finance and in legislation were summoned; others were called by long distance telephone and their views and suggestions ascertained and members of the senate and the house had to be consulted that any slip might be avoided.

That was just one problem. There were numerous others, perhaps not quite as acute at that time but nevertheless vital to the country as a whole. In order to save precious moments, the President was eating his noonday meal on his desk in the Executive office. Perhaps he had had a group of legislators or advisors with him at breakfast. He seldom was able to dine alone in the evening because there were questions to be decided at once and people whom he had called to consult were awaiting the moment they were to have with him.

It would naturally seem that the strain would subside after the first few weeks of a new administration, but such was not the case for President Roosevelt. He told the country during his campaign that he would like to have "a honeymoon" in office for awhile. He wanted to start off his administration without having congress in session and with some time to map plans. But that was not to be. The "honeymoon," if such it can be called, has been delayed until now, and even now he is not safe from the worries of his job, nor from the pestering of office seeking politicians.

The newspaper correspondents of Washington are in a peculiar position to judge the load the President carries. Those who are detailed to report White House activities are thankful when the President sends out word that there will be a brief respite. It means a moment in which those writers can safely leave their job and eat a meal without fearing that the President has sent another special message to congress or has determined to call a world conference or has suddenly decided on some less consequential thing like appointment of a collector of internal revenue or a United States attorney somewhere.

From the outlines given, it is obvious there was constant activity. But the activity itself would not have proved unbearable. It was the mental strain of reasoning out the problems and their solutions and the determination of which course should be pursued, since always there are two sides to the question. Frankly, it has always been amazing to me how Presidents have been able to survive the ordeal of their office.

Mr. Roosevelt is taking the cruise in order to recuperate and revitalize himself. He enjoys the outdoors, just as President Hoover enjoyed outdoors and as President Harding and President Wilson enjoyed golf and as President Taft enjoyed walking and President Theodore Roosevelt enjoyed horseback riding. Mr. Hoover, it will be recalled, used to spend week-ends at a mountain camp on the Rapidan river in Virginia where he could rough it and fish, and he fished in the Potomac river, too, when he had time to make a river trip. President Harding would rather play a game of golf as a member of a foursome with cronies than do anything else, thoroughly enjoying companionship. President Coolidge seemed to enjoy solitude on a yacht, although usually he had a couple of intimate friends aboard when he went on cruises.

Actually the purpose of these outings is to get away from all of the demands coming upon the office of President. He must and should have some freedom. His physical well-being is at stake at all times, for unless he is physically fit he becomes incapable of dealing with the tasks.

Presidents can receive whomsoever they desire to receive in their offices, but the list of visitors has to be culled closely in order not to overcrowd the Chief Executive's time. Some of the senators and representatives, however, have adopted another method of saving time for themselves in order to get work done. They go into hiding. Otherwise, folks from the home state would occupy so much of their time they would not be able to study the problems of legislation they have before them.

Few of the legislators have the courage, however, that has been shown by Senator Tydings of Maryland. His home state being within street car distance, the Maryland senator has plenty of visitors. He has solved his problem by posting a notice on his office door. It says his office hours are from morning until noon, when the senate convenes. After that time, no amount of knocking on the door will cause it to be opened. It seems to me that it has required a considerable determination to take such a course, but Senator Tydings did and thus far has not caused any real howl from his constituents.

Senator Bennett Champ Clark of Missouri is causing just a little bit of disturbance around the White House. Although the senator is still a freshman, so to speak, because this is his first full term, he has demonstrated already that he is like his father, the late Speaker Champ Clark, who came so near being the Democratic Presidential nominee over Woodrow Wilson. The late Speaker Clark was a thorn in the flesh of President Wilson. Senator Clark is proving he is a chip off the old block by being a thorn in the side of the present President. He broke with the President on the so-called economy bill and he refused to stand hitched to several other measures, including the industrial recovery-public construction measure. The Missouri senator always has been regarded as a Democrat through and through, but he appears to dislike portions of the "new deal" because of their unorthodox character.

© 1932, Western Newspaper Union.

Howe About:

Age of Reason
Great Americans
Luck
By ED HOWE

CARELESS people had a specially terrible warning during the depression; everywhere one hears the careful did much better, although every one was injured. The same story comes from the California earthquake: those who built strong houses—realized that they lived in an earthquake section—suffered much less than the occupants of houses carelessly thrown together, and neglected after they were built. There seems no doubt that carelessness is one of the very worst of our human sins.

When the age of reason arrives if it ever does we will admit that the man who goes about turning off unnecessary lights left burning by careless people, is a better man than the mean persons who left them burning because the expense is not charged to them. We will also like better the string saver. Few families keep a supply of new string on hand; when string is needed, it usually comes from a saving woman who has a ball in the drawer of the kitchen table.

A man asks me: "Who in your opinion are the fifteen greatest living Americans?" I have written him I believe they are comparatively unknown men; some of them possibly hidden away in small towns or on farms. Most of the noted men of the present have been called to Washington to advise President Hoover or President Roosevelt in the present emergency. Not one of them measured up to real greatness in the recommendations I have seen in print. My correspondent also wishes me to prepare a list of fifteen of the greatest Americans in all our history. I have only three clearly in mind: Benjamin Franklin would head the list, followed by Alexander Hamilton and John Adams. If urged to add other names, possibly I should select John D. Rockefeller, Sr., J. P. Morgan the elder, and Thomas A. Edison. I have never believed George Washington was truly great, and doubt Lincoln was. We have never had a great soldier, except possibly some unknown man who never had a chance. Measured by world standards we have never had a great literary man. Henry Wallace, grandfather of the present secretary of agriculture, was a country parson and farmer, and came very near greatness. If an infallible list of the fifteen greatest Americans, living or dead, could be prepared, few would be widely known; perhaps two-thirds of them not known at all. I do not believe one professional politician would be on the list; several business men might make it. The manner in which we marched cheering into the present American ruin, and the weakness we displayed in efforts to get out, have greatly discouraged me as to American greatness.

No little fairy attends any man to bring him good luck; no little devil attends any man to bring him bad luck. In the course of a year or a life, what baseball players call the good and bad "breaks" are about even. Good breaks have come to all of us frequently, and we have not taken proper advantage of them; frequently we all fail to handle bad "breaks" as well as we might. This is the truth, and I know it well, but what I believe is I am the unluckiest man in the world.

In the gentlest wife there is a touch of the Old Harry she does not show in mingling with the neighbors, but which does show in mingling with a husband. If wives were always as polite and gentle with husbands as telephone girls are with subscribers, there would be fewer bad husbands.

During the presentation of a play I attended recently, an actor mentioned a Contented Farmer, whereupon those in the audience burst into laughter.

I came to Miami, Fla., this winter, disgusted because Hannah, the colored woman we employ at home, never entered my room without putting the windows down, if I had them up, or putting them up if I had them down.

I have been disgusted all winter in Miami because Nancy, at the apartment house, where I live, does the same thing.

I was walking on the streets lately with a white woman from Indiana. She learned bossy ways as a school teacher when young. The tilt of my hat brim didn't suit her, so she reached over and changed it. Occasioned (not often) I rebel, and said to her: "Put that hat brim back where you found it."

She is probably telling around now that I am no gentleman, but she did it. I have never suited women; always there is something about me they want to fix.

As soon as a fool proposes another plan for more human betterment than is possible, the people should somehow have the power to say to him: "Now, now, we've tried that, and force him back to work. The certain thing seems to be we cannot afford to try all these plans as we have been doing some thousands of years to the violent disturbance of industry and peace."

© 1932, Bell Syndicate.—WNU Service.