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The Black Legend

By
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THE BLACK LEGEND

By Ivy Lee

I

Eleven years ago, the United States of America came out of its remote isolation—in European eyes—to loom upon the horizon as the hope of the world.

In 1917, Europe saw us suddenly, dramatically, in a time of extraordinary emotional tension, as the heaven-sent deliverer, heroic in stature, ardent, young, dauntless, irresistible, and, above all, splendidly just. We brought hope to peoples who had almost ceased to hope. The generosity of the American people touched the imagination of the whole world and aroused an unparalleled feeling of good will toward us everywhere.

That emotion—heightened by the arrival of our troops in France—came to its climax when Woodrow Wilson appeared in person in Europe to meet everywhere demonstrations of passionate and popular fervor such as have not been equaled in our time. The peoples of Europe counted upon us, as the clear-eyed and confident architects of a New World, to help them replace the European system with something nearer their hearts' desire. To-day these hopes and expectations are replaced by a complex of suspicion, misunderstanding, and

fear. Europe clearly does not see America as America sees herself.

It was inevitable that reaction should set in when peace came. Europe, facing the realities of the aftermath, began to count the cost of war. And, in her eyes, we failed her.

1. The enemy countries had counted upon us to effect a magnanimous peace in the spirit of President Wilson's fourteen points. They consider that we failed them in that.

2. The Allied Powers, so they say, sacrificed their better judgment and some of their plain interests to sign a Peace Treaty largely designed by President Wilson, because they wished to respect what they believed to be the wishes of the United States. Having accepted what they considered in substance an 'American Treaty,' the people of the Allied countries were amazed and disheartened to learn, later, that the United States declined to honor it.

The Senatorial prerogative of vetoing or ratifying a treaty,—of which the European people have heard so much *since* the war,—however real to us, is in European eyes only a pretext. This suggestion occurs again and again, sometimes explicitly, but more frequently by implication in the use of such words as 'betrayal' and 'dodging' as descriptive of our failure to ratify.

3. As with the Treaty, so with the League of Nations. The idea of the League of Na-

tions was conceived in the United States. Most of the practical politicians of Europe were in 1919 frankly skeptical of it. At the best, they argued, it could not be workable until at least ten years after the Treaty was signed. But President Wilson wove the League into the fabric of the Treaty. The Europeans gave way, in deference to American wishes and against their own desires. European statesmen accepted the League, not as a plan by which Europe was to work out her salvation by herself, but as a coöperative world scheme in which the United States would have an integral part. It was not intended to be merely a League of European Nations, nor yet a League of Nations exclusive of the United States. The United States was an essential, an indispensable, element in the structure. Yet to-day, ten years after the signing of the Peace Treaty, the United States is still outside the League.

The situation was put pointedly enough by so cultivated and well-disposed an observer as the Bishop of Aberdeen. 'The Americans are a strange people,' the Bishop told his countrymen, through the columns of a great London newspaper, on his return from a visit to our shores. 'They invented the Treaty of Versailles and refused to sign it. They invented the League of Nations and refused to join it. They invented the cocktail and refused to drink it.'

4. And so with regard to our failure to ratify the specific treaty, signed by President Wilson, Mr. Lansing, M. Clemenceau, and M. Pichon, whereby the United States, recognizing that 'adequate security and protection to France' might not be provided by the Peace Treaty, agreed 'to come immediately' to the assistance of France 'in the event of any unprovoked movement of aggression' by Germany. That agreement was arrived at on the same day that a similar undertaking was made by Great Britain—subject to the treaty with us being ratified. By our failure to ratify, it is contended, we threw the whole of Europe back into its ancient and vicious system of alliances. As Clemenceau said publicly on his visit to the United States, 'But for that undertaking by you, I would have demanded the Rhine!'

5. In European eyes, again, we are responsible, through our unwillingness to cancel the war debts, for the financial and industrial disasters which, after the war, came upon great parts of Europe. From the position of 'defaulter,' in the sense that we failed to implement the fourteen points, ratify the treaties, and join the League, we are lampooned as 'Uncle Shylock,' rapacious and heartless taxgatherer, concerned with the rest of the world merely for the purpose of exacting all he can get out of it in payment of war debts. The fluctuations of the franc in

France, the heavy increase of the income tax in England, the burden of reparations in Germany, have all been ascribed—at least in part—to the exactions of 'Uncle Shylock.' We are said to be the one participant nation which 'made money out of the war,' and that not alone because we lent money, but also on the ground that we profiteered unconscionably in supplying munitions and other war materials, and, as a result of our profiteering, achieved our much-trumpeted prosperity. A very conservative Englishman and friend of America stated not long ago that he had only just been convinced that all American foreign policy was not controlled by a debt-collecting mania.

II

The transition to the next stage in the growth of the Black Legend—America an active menace to the rest of the world—followed almost inevitably.

First, we are Americanizing the world. Our material products, our ways of life, and our ideas are ousting others by more or less peaceful penetration. The menace is looked upon as perhaps unconscious on our part, but none the less profound. American goods, the foreigner contends, spread American habits and ideas. American films, complains a British publicist, have caused an appreciable demand for American manufactures; must we,

asks a German, surrender our methods of production, our slow-going thoroughness, to compete with American efficiency? M. Tardieu indicates that France will have to give up her preoccupation with politics and pass into the American field—of economics—before she can treat with us. Mr. G. K. Chesterton notes the decay of the English inn and longs for the day when someone will throw a stone through the plate glass of an American-type palace hotel. The activities of Mayor Thompson of Chicago suggest to Englishmen that not only the future, but history, must be forced to bow to the dominant idea of America. One cannot walk a mile in any European capital without a hundred opportunities to buy an American cigarette; the cocktail, theoretically driven out from its native land, supersedes the apéritif; plays and novels are written in every country with both eyes on eventual sales in America—and if they are not, this excuse is given for whatever is cheap or tawdry in them.

With American habits of living come American habits of mind, to threaten traditional culture in Europe just as the Kultur of Prussianism threatened European life before 1914. Expressions of this dread are voiced not only in Europe, but in other parts of the world, where men cherish the spiritual heritage which has come down to them from ancient days. In Japan to-day the popular cry

is, 'Back to the old!' A Belgian paper declares that Europe faces a more dangerous barbarity from the United States than from the East; from South Africa comes the remark that America is 'exerting an influence upon other nations which grows more marked. The whole of the English-speaking world is feeling the effect—an effect upon its culture and therefore upon its very existence. This is the real American danger.'

A correspondent of the London *Times*, in what in substance is a conciliatory article, remarks: 'When we say "Americanism," we mean a point of view about life that is new and alien to us.' Mr. Bernard Shaw instructs his secretary to write that 'an asylum for the sane would be empty in America.' Karel Capek, the author of *R.U.R.*, denouncing what he conceives to be American conceptions, tells us that the watchword 'Success,' as exported from America, 'begins to demoralize Europe.' The *Kölnische Zeitung* summarizes the general fear by asking: 'To whom does the future belong? To the new mechanized civilization of America or to the old culture—which opposes the conquest of spiritual things to that of material things?'

Against the American language, against high buildings, mass production, standardization, materialism, hustle, self-assertiveness, vulgar wealth, mob-mindedness, electric signs, big headlines, ubiquitous advertising, the deifi-

cation of self, of big business, and the machine—against everything, in short, which is or is supposed to be typical of America and Americans, a not negligible part of the foreign world protests with considerable fervor and unfeigned alarm.

Americanization was heard of before the war, but not so loudly then, because we did not bulk so large in the eyes of the world, nor had our economic power grown to its present gigantic strength or made its presence felt so widely. The present-day fear has a new incidence. It is based not so much upon the voluntary adoption of American methods, the contagion of American ideas, or the growth of American export trade, or even upon the unfair assistance which the war debts are said to give America in competition. It is based to a much greater degree upon the unparalleled increase in our power as a creditor nation—for, leaving aside the war debts, our post-war investments extend to every part of the world. It is the effect of these post-war investments—precisely because they are infinitely greater than the war debts and go so much deeper—that gives the world anxiety.

At the beginning of 1927, the political or war debts to the United States were divided into two classes: those already funded, amounting to seven and a half billion dollars; the unfunded, amounting to three and a half

billion—a total of eleven billions. At the end of the same year the nonpolitical investments of Americans abroad (not in Europe exclusively) amounted to fourteen and a half billion dollars. In the year 1927, two billion dollars were loaned either publicly or privately, or by purchase of foreign internal securities or properties abroad.

To understand the magnitude of these figures it is necessary only to make a single comparison. The financial centre of the world was established in London at the end of the Napoleonic Wars; Great Britain became the great creditor nation. A century later the foreign investments of Great Britain amounted to twenty billion dollars; whereas at the end of a *decade* of American lending the sum is twenty-five billions, and to this may be added the five billions which America owed in 1914 but which have now been paid—making a total change from one side of the ledger to the other of thirty billion dollars. As Dr. Max Winkler says: 'We lend money to public utility, railroad, and industrial enterprises in Canada. We finance machinery companies in Germany and Japan; steel companies in Germany and Luxemburg, Bulgaria and Rumania; plantation companies in the Dutch East Indies; oil companies in Australia and the Dutch East Indies; banks and financial institutions in Austria and Germany, Holland and Hungary, Colombia and

Australia; hydroelectric companies in Germany and Italy, Norway and Japan; railways in Belgium and Argentina, Chile and Colombia; department stores in Germany and Great Britain; street railways in Germany; rubber and oil concerns in Bolivia; rubber and mining companies in Brazil; textile companies in Germany; automobile companies in France and Italy. We acquire telephone concerns in Austria and Brazil, Chile and Uruguay. We buy public utilities in Brazil; land in Panama and Guatemala. We secure oil concessions in Colombia and Venezuela and rubber concessions in Brazil. We buy real estate in Cuba. We finance steamship companies in Great Britain and France, Germany and Italy; sugar companies in Mexico; and even lend money to banks in Iceland.'

The history of economic penetration as practised by the great European nations gives reason to believe that economic penetration is almost always followed by political domination. The logic of events, more than determined policy, has usually brought marines and warships to follow traders and missionaries. So that when our official spokesmen talk of America's 'moral obligations' in places like Nicaragua, the foreigner retorts that there isn't a pin to choose between that phrase and the older, franker term—imperialism. The less instructed Europeans concentrate on the war debts because they have there a senti-

mental argument. Wiser people abroad, in Europe and elsewhere, know that even if those debts were suddenly to vanish the world would still have to face the supervening fact of the immense financial power of the United States, its enormous industrial strength, its commercial aggressiveness. That fact underlies, much more than war debts, the movements of foreign diplomacy and the utterances of its publicists. So the menace grows. Americanization as an influence, probably unconscious and undesigned on our part, in peaceful penetration, now becomes 'American Imperialism' threatening the peace of the world, with a sinister and concerted plan, the conscious authors of which are variously represented to be our politicians, our Wall Street magnates, or our industrialists—or all three in unholy alliance. And their purpose is said to be—domination. In so many foreign eyes, these factors in America constitute a homogeneous entity, as compact and concentrated in purpose as was Kaiserism before the war.

Thus, as often as it is suggested in Congress that the United States ought not to assist Europe financially, either by remitting debts or by allowing new loans to be floated, because Europe will only spend the money on armaments, just so often Europeans reply that America is trying to use its money as a lever by which Europe will be forced into virtual subordination to American desires.

Europeans felt that American pressure on Belgium was exerted to compel a reduction of defensive forces as one of the conditions of a loan. In 1926 and 1927 it was freely rumored that American bankers were trying to lay hands on French railroads and German shipping, beginning that economic penetration which, in small countries, leads to supervision of taxes, customs, and budgets. Czechoslovakia to-day frowns on loans from America lest they constitute financial colonization. English financial experts protest that Threadneedle Street has become a back alley of Wall Street, and a writer who takes the Anglo-American situation humorously suggests that England surrender its sovereignty to America—thereby compelling Americans to pay part of the British income tax—and then, 'since we have the better brains,' take control of the new Anglo-American Empire.

III

It is an odd fact that the three countries in which the United States is most popular to-day are those—Germany, Russia, and Japan—which have the least ground, by reason of our recent acts in relation to them, to like us. We were an enemy of Germany during the war, and the war fever cooled but slowly; we scorn to have any relations with Russia, yet even Stalin himself writes, 'The union of Russian revolutionary inspiration with the Amer-

ican practical spirit—this is the essence of practical Leninism.' By our immigration law, we cast a slur upon the Japanese people. Yet in all these countries there is much popular good will for us.

The Germans remember with gratitude the help we gave them in their great effort at reconstruction. The Russians turn to us eagerly for technical and financial coöperation in building up their industries and developing their vast resources. They have little fear of imperialism from America, although they fear it acutely from Great Britain. One prominent Russian leader expressed a general feeling when he said: 'The United States is the only great country in the world whose interests do not impinge upon those of Russia at any point. I believe, and our people have always believed, in America and have always had a traditional friendship for the American people. The ambassador from no other country would be or could be listened to at Moscow with the same friendliness, consideration, and influence as an ambassador from the United States of America.' The Japanese, who had been told constantly by their Junker Party that the United States was waiting for an opportunity to crush them, became extremely apprehensive when that opportunity seemed to present itself at the time of the disaster in Japan in 1923. When, instead of stepping in to exploit the calamity, we sent money and

other tangible proofs of our sympath genuine desire to help, the great mas the Japanese responded with gratitud good will, which still animate them ir attitude to us. The Junker Party, whi been preaching enmity toward us bas the insult of our immigration exclusion exposed and nonplused.

There is plenty of good will for Am too, in the Balkans and in Central Eu Czechoslovakia is extremely cordial. Poland. In Bulgaria, Hungary, and Au while the feeling persists that America i to carry out President Wilson's fou points, we are liked, and one meets with quent expressions of gratitude to the Un States for the help it gave in feeding starving peoples and rehabilitating t countries after the war.

Even in France, where criticism of Ame is so pointed with Gallic wit and irony, th is little aversion to us on any deep, me physical, or even imperialistic grounds. French, at heart, are not afraid that th culture, their conceptions of life, or their stitutions are imperiled by the 'Americ menace.' They are a practical people a their concern is much more with their pock book. France's attitude is influenced primar by the debt question. If any signs we orthcoming that the United States was pr ared to wipe off the debt due from Franc

French criticism of us would be transformed into an outburst of eloquent and vociferous good will.

It is in England that the distrust of America goes deepest, that dislike of Americanization is most intense, and that the challenge of American domination comes to a head. 'There is daily proof of increasing misunderstanding between England and America . . . enmity grows apace,' Mr. Andrew Soutar, the novelist, testified recently. 'Never since the Boston Tea Party have the two peoples watched so closely for an opening through which to pour ridicule. And yet quiet reflection should convince both sides that, from the point of view of the welfare of the world, there are no two nations which should be so solidly welded in friendship.' 'Granted that the American has many noble and charming qualities,' Mr. G. K. Chesterton declared in a speech 'violently objecting' to the Americanization of England, 'granted that he has retained a great fountain of simple enthusiasm,—almost always turned to absurd objects, but still genuine,—affairs have come, I think, to the point of defending our native land and damning all Americans to hell.' The financial editor of one of the greatest of the English newspapers remarked recently: 'What disturbs me about this whole situation is the feeling that somehow or other America and England do not seem to think alike any more on what some

of us feel are great problems of international morality.' Mr. Ramsay Macdonald admits that Great Britain is 'getting out at elbows' with us. Sir Auckland Geddes speaks of many Chinese 'Westernized,' 'Americanized,' 'anti-Britishized,' implying that British troubles in China may be traced to our influence. Lord Riddell tells his countrymen that America's imperialistic, naval, military, and commercial policy is 'fraught with menace to the rest of the world.'

America is blamed in Britain for the failure of the British scheme to keep up world prices of rubber; she is blamed for buying Soviet oil and for trading with the Bolsheviki in other ways; she is said to be attempting to supplant British trade in South America; upon her is put the responsibility for a preference for certain American manufactures in the British Dominions and Colonies. America is seen as a menace to British traditions, British culture, British trade, British respect for law, British standards of sportsmanship and morality, the British countryside, and the British Commonwealth of Nations.

While nowhere in the world has America keener adverse critics than in Britain and its Dominions, probably nowhere, also, has she truer and more discriminating friends among thinking and responsible people. Nowhere, too, is the demand for understanding and constructive coöperation with America more gen-

uine or more dependable than it is in Britain. Fortunately, the leader in seeking to promote Anglo-American good will is Mr. Stanley Baldwin, the Prime Minister himself. Indeed, Sir Austen Chamberlain may be regarded as voicing the sentiments of the British Government when he recently said: 'We have no nearer and dearer friendship than our friendship with the United States. As we seek to be loyal to other friends, so we will seek to be loyal to that nation which is nearest, most akin, in racial and in moral outlook of all nations of the world.'

Both friendship and adverse criticism have a common basis in our interests and our relationships. For long, Great Britain was the dominant Power in the world: we have come at least to share that position with her. Hitherto, because of our common speech and tradition, understanding has been taken too readily for granted; divergences and different interpretations have not been sufficiently allowed for. The post-war years have accentuated the differences without giving sufficient time to comprehend them and make clear the ways in which they may make for mutual strength because they spring from qualities which may so readily complement each other.

Meantime there has arisen the question of naval parity. It is complicated; the technical points confuse the layman, and the political questions are involved in sentiment. The fun-

damental disagreement at the Ger
ference was due to the fact that th
States and Great Britain each held
gramme apparently unsuitable for t
Great Britain, with strategically
naval bases, thought she needed cr
greater range. The British progra
American eyes, meant saddling us
expense of an unserviceable cruiser fl
American programme, as England
meant assent to America's building
mathematically equal to the Britis
effectively superior. According to othe
failure at Geneva finally translates th
sounding phrase 'naval parity' into
competition.'

The ostensible misunderstandings a
Conference were abysmal. One of ou
mirals there told the British First Lo
cannot understand why you attach so
importance to food supplies.' The B
delegates were irritated by the fact tha
Americans had to refer back to Washin
and were totally unprepared for the vio
of the American press in discussing all
posals. After the breakdown, the press
ach country accused the other of bad fa
nd instead of discussing the reasons for
ailure—which go back to fundamentally
rent conceptions of sea power, commer
ghts during war time, the vexed 'freedom
e seas'—both brought on the spectre of

Anglo-Japanese alliance. British papers sist that the Anglo-Japanese Treaty w dropped out of deference to American sen ment and in consideration of the creation the 5–5–3 ratio at Washington. Their ed torial writers say that as soon as the agre ment is renewed, with an implication that must be directed against the United State the implacable attitude of this country wi change. The *Washington Post*, in answer writes:—

'The Geneva naval fiasco is followed by a secret understanding between the former proprietors of the Anglo-Japanese treaty . . . which we thought we had got rid of at the Washington Conference at a terrible price. The full extent of the way Uncle Sam has been "gypped" will convince the American people some day that they need the kind of navy they need.'

The *Round Table* wrote gravely: 'If the two halves of the English-speaking world continue as they are at present, it will be very difficult for them to avoid drifting into antagonism and competition. If they think only of themselves—the scene will have been set for a world war which will end civilization.'

Since that warning was sounded the Anglo-French Naval Pact proposal and President Coolidge's Armistice Day speech have again focused attention upon the subject. Doubtless the first influenced the second; if one had not

heard of the Anglo-French Naval Pact
dent Coolidge would probably not ha
memorated Armistice Day with such
references to the 'value of our treasur
protected' and the need for larger w
for the purpose. One would have been
a jingo press campaign demanding 'th
kind and number of submarine fleet, a
and swift cruisers, always kept up
mark, always excelling in power the fl
any other two nations on earth,' on the
that 'the only way to secure respect
compel respect.'

On the other hand, we should not
had the striking evidence, on both sides
Atlantic, of increasing appreciation
dangers and of a corresponding determi
to avoid them.

Commenting upon the effect caused
Anglo-French Naval Pact proposal,
Grey said: 'We are going to pay the pr
a temporary political estrangement be
the British people and the United S
True—but why?

How did it come about that such a
fortunate misconception was created, not
in the United States, but also in Germ
It came about, as Lord Grey said, be
the matter 'was so extraordinarily
handled,' in his own opinion, by the go
ments of France and Great Britain.
world was left for weeks to feed on forg

garbled versions, and rumors. By the time the official papers were issued such a storm had been aroused as made clear thinking difficult and left the way open for the impression that publication of the agreement, instead of being voluntary, had been forced by public pressure. It is equally clear that the 'Anglo-French Compromise' was killed, while yet in its swaddling clothes, by liberal opinion in Great Britain itself, utterly uninfluenced by pressure from the United States.

The underlying public feeling in England was again made clear when recently Sir Esme Howard, the British Ambassador in Washington, intimated that Great Britain would yet seek a renewal of naval limitation with the United States. The British Government next day announced that that intimation of the Ambassador should not be taken too definitely, whereupon there was an immediate outburst of protest from the British press. The British people apparently want not only peace with the United States and the rest of the world—they want an assurance, indeed a guaranty, of permanent peace. There are many judges of British politics who feel that the next general election may turn upon that very problem.

IV

Sentimentality is now at a discount. Many impeding illusions have been dispelled. The

nations of Europe are being asked, by intelligent publicists like Garvin and Wickham Steed and Spender and 'Pertinax' and Romier and Bernhard, to cast off slogans and easy formulas and to face concrete issues in the light of clear facts. This is an essential preliminary to genuine understanding between Europe and America. It makes possible, for the first time in any general sense, the sane and balanced recognition of divergences which both sides must respect. Until now very few people in Europe, especially during the war, could see plainly, much less consider, the many factors—historical, geographical, racial, social, and economic—which of necessity have differentiated American ways of life, American conceptions, and American purposes, from theirs. Befogging sentimentality and a distorted brand of patriotism have not been confined to one side. But the new spirit of critical realism is doing much to dispel the mischievous effects. As with the Geneva Conference, divergences, once clearly formulated and grasped, have brought concrete issues into the open, and future endeavors to achieve understanding will, at least, not be baffled by the polite fiction that those issues do not exist.

There may be a ray of light in a recent article in the *Round Table*, which said: '. . . The nations of the British Commonwealth should make a much more serious effort to

understand the problems and the difficulties of the United States. They have, no doubt, much ground for resentment against her since 1919. But resentment is a poor guide in the matter of policy. If the United States is to be brought into the family of nations for the sake of world peace, it will be because the limits of what she can do are clearly understood. The United States is quite unlike any ordinary "nation." . . . She has a form of government totally unlike the Parliamentary and responsible systems usual elsewhere. . . . The Government of the United States is weak and public opinion dominant, to an extent almost unintelligible to the stay-at-home European. If we are to have confident relations with the most powerful nation in the post-war world, our diplomacy must understand and accommodate itself intelligently to the constitution and the political necessities of the United States. . . . One of the first necessities is that those who take part in the public life of Great Britain should try to understand the public life of America better.'

Mentioning the great central plains of our country, Professor A. P. Brigham, of Colgate University, told an English audience recently: 'It is not an easy field for internationalism. Its deep, black prairie soils are better for corn, wheat, and cattle, and for resultant roads and great cities. It has little contact with Europe, or any other continent. It does

not "go down to the sea in ships." Its people, most of them, have never seen an international boundary and never will. They know only their own language. They are safe from invasion. Who cares for abroad? You meet charming folk from Chicago, St. Louis, or Minneapolis, but the mass of good common folk you never see. They are looking in on their own things. Hence Washington is sometimes slow to international action. But time tells. . . . No nation can escape the era of international cooperation which is coming.'

'We on our side often fail to appreciate the American point of view,' Sir Rennell Rodd, the distinguished British diplomatist, pointed out, following a recent visit here; '. . . imperialism is a state of mind which the majority of the American people cannot understand anyone accusing them of entertaining. After talking to men of all grades and classes there, my own experience has led me to the conclusion that the average American is generally a very fair-minded man, inclined to think things out for himself with a direct and simple mentality which on matters outside his own country is indifferently informed. But if facts are put before him straightly he sees straightly, without prejudice, and he is pretty sure to arrive at a just conclusion.'

Who is to interpret 'the mass of good common folk' to corresponding masses of 'good common folk' abroad? Who is to give truer

expression to that spirit which animates us as a people, conscious, indeed, of our wider powers, but conscious, also, of our greater need for understanding and for friendly collaboration in the larger tasks which lie ahead?

Emphatic testimony to the need for truer interpretation was provided, both by President Coolidge in his Armistice Day speech and by Mr. Stanley Baldwin in his comment upon it. President Coolidge said: 'It is always plain that Europe and the United States are lacking in mutual understanding. We are prone to think they can do as we do. We are not interested in their age-old animosities, we have not suffered from centuries of violent hostilities. We do not see how difficult it is for them to displace distrust in each other with faith in each other. On the other hand, they appear to think that we are going to do exactly what they would do if they had our chance. If they would give a little more attention to our history and judge us a little more closely by our own record, and, especially, find out in what directions we believe our real interests to lie, much which they now appear to find obscure would be quite apparent.'

Speaking in the House of Commons, two days later, Mr. Baldwin agreed that 'there is lacking between Europe and America mutual understanding'—and he gravely and profoundly regretted it. What is more, he made

two helpful suggestions. The first was to acknowledge that 'it is most important that all of us who may be called upon to speak about America in her foreign relations or about our relations with America should really get to understand, by studying its political system, that country, because it is so different from any European system. On that difference shipwreck has more than once been reached. It is important for the avoidance of future shipwreck and for the avoidance of possible ill relations after such shipwreck that we should be familiar, on this side, with the marked difference in political systems in the two countries.'

Like other friendly observers, Mr. Baldwin pleaded for more frequent personal contact. In Europe all the statesmen have got into the habit of meeting at Geneva and talking together. They learn not only each other's point of view, but each other's idiosyncrasies as individuals. There is consequently coming into European statesmanship, between European statesmen *inter se*, a desire in negotiations to see the other point of view and to compromise, if something can be effected by compromise, far more than before the war. But European statesmen do not know American statesmen. The intercourse that takes place is largely by written dispatches across 3000 miles of ocean. It is difficult to get mutual understanding in those circumstances. Some

of the most effective efforts made financially since the war have been in the process of financial reconstruction in which America has been engaged with England and other countries. This effectiveness was due largely to the fact that not only were the protagonists, the Governor of the Bank of England and the Governor of the Federal Reserve Bank, close personal friends in constant touch, but every time a difficulty was seen coming ahead one or the other would cross the Atlantic at once, either the Englishman to New York or the American to London or Paris, as the case might be, and discussions would take place instead of dispatches.

V

To dispel a legend which has taken so firm a hold upon the European mind it is hardly enough to say that Europe must 'give a little more attention to our history' and 'find out in what directions we believe our real interests to lie.' Our work of interpretation must be more constructive information. Personal contacts are infinitely worth while—whether between humble mortals, bank governors, or statesmen. Lindbergh's good-will flight, the success of Mr. Dwight Morrow in Mexico, and Mr. Hoover's South American tour have abundantly proved the values of personal contact. Above all, nothing has so impressed the British with the good will of

America as the sincere sympathy manifested by the American people over the illness of King George. There is nothing like human contact to produce understanding among men.

Among the happy agencies for sharpening intelligence and encouraging a longer view seems to be that group of associations, such as the Royal Institute of International Affairs in Great Britain, and the Foreign Policy Association and the Council of Foreign Relations in the United States, which devote themselves to a sympathetic study of world affairs. Unofficial as these organizations are, they watch the formation of policy and they help increasingly to create that atmosphere of sane judgment and good will upon which statesmen may rely later to give time for negotiation and adjustment. Such bodies perform valuable work of interpretation. Through them we can become aware of tendencies before they reach a point of tension. They act, moreover, as guides and checks. Similarly, the new International Chamber of Commerce serves to smooth out differences before they become acute. Indeed, if the Chamber succeeds in breaking down some of the barriers which unduly restrict international trade, it will have done more for international prosperity than all the chancelleries put together. How trade agreements promote peaceful understanding is seen in the friendliness between Germany and France brought about in 1927,

through the cartels arranged by industrial leaders on both sides, at a time when 'the spirit of Locarno' was imperiled and political cordiality was chilled.

Foreign offices of governments seldom frame policies long in advance or give careful consideration to tendencies. They cannot do so. Practical problems arise in foreign affairs every day, and foreign offices of every country are very apt to decide the questions of the day in the light of practical and immediate considerations and let the future take care of itself.

In our military establishment we have a War College, which carefully studies every possible contingency that might develop in case of war with any country in the world. This War College is not related to the actual administration of the army or navy of the moment, but merely plans for all possible future contingencies. It looks ahead. Would it not be extremely helpful if in our State Department there was a similar group studying fundamental tendencies and seeking to anticipate possibilities of friction in the future?

Yet, helpful as an International Affairs College might be, and valuable as the various existing methods making for contact and understanding undoubtedly are, something at once simpler, more direct, and more authoritative is needed if America is to be interpreted worthy and decisively, and if the fog

of misunderstanding and fear which hangs over Europe in particular is to be removed.

In the next three years this work of interpretation can be done only by conscious acts of statesmanship conceived in a new spirit and, in turn, engendering a new spirit. It will have for its basis the good will which exists in the hearts of the American people. It will challenge crude symbols, fantastic legends, and outworn conceptions at home and abroad. It will be conscious of our greater power, our widened interests, and our profound responsibilities. The interpretation will be not only to the world, but to ourselves. It will speak for us and to us, not only as a nation, but as a partner in the family of nations.

It is related that at a partners' meeting of the firm of J. P. Morgan and Company, some years ago, there was much discussion of the attitude of certain sections of the public toward the firm. The late Mr. J. P. Morgan is said to have directed the discussion with this observation: 'It is not of so much importance what the public thinks of us; what really matters is what is our attitude toward the public, and what do we deserve to have the public think of us.' While it is of interest for us to know of the Black Legend Europe is conceiving about America, it is of primary consequence to consider what America's attitude is toward the world.

Shall we so fear entanglement with other nations and consequent subservience of our policies to theirs that we shall in turn become slaves to events we shall have refused to help shape before they become critical? What do we propose to do when complications grow out of our economic penetration in various parts of the world? Shall we bring political pressure or attempt political intervention when our investments abroad are endangered or when foreign countries default on their debts to Americans? Shall we leave our protection in such matters to other nations, or shall we join in advance in responsible and coöperative efforts so to shape events that independent or selfishly protective action by any nation will be unnecessary?