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REVIEW OF THE YEAR 1921

PROGRESS SLOW DURING THE YEAR

Heavy Taxes, Chaotic Financial Conditions and Minor Wars Hamper Recovery in 1921.

HOPE COMES NEAR ITS END

Washington Conference on Armament Limitation the Most Important Event—What President Harding's Administration and the Congress Have Accomplished.

By EDWARD W. PICKARD

Back to Normalcy was the slogan of 1921, not only in America but in all the civilized nations of the world. But minor wars, internal economic disturbances, chaotic financial conditions in Europe, widespread unemployment, famine in Russia and other hindrances made progress in the right direction slow, excepting, perhaps, in the United States.

When the year opened the peoples were groaning under the burden of taxation and depression resulting from the world war. As it drew to a close they were still groaning but had hopefully turned their eyes toward Washington, where the representatives of great powers were negotiating international agreements that would eliminate some of the causes of war, especially in the Far East, and limit the means of making war. In the success of this conference and of others that might grow out of it lay for the time being the hope of humanity.

Efforts to enforce the terms of the treaty of Versailles resulted in conflicts among some of the new nations created by that pact, and several of the older nations were involved in wars. Germany, working fast to recover her old position in the world of commerce, was hampered by the disastrous decline in the value of the mark, and her leaders protested continually that she could not possibly pay the war indemnity. Peace negotiations between the British government and Sinn Fein were brought to a successful conclusion by which the Irish Free State was constituted.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

The League of Nations, though functioning without the co-operation of the United States, accomplished much during the year, chiefly through its council, which met in Paris on February 21 and immediately referred proposed amendments to the covenant to a committee. President Wilson, who during January had withdrawn the American representatives from the council of ambassadors and the reparations commission, on February 23 sent to the league council a strong protest against the inclusion of the island of Yap in territories subjected to the mandate of Japan, and also formally demanded for America a voice in the disposal of the former German colonies. The council in reply said it was not concerned with the allocation of Yap to Japan and invited the United States to take part in discussions concerning the Turkish and African mandates. A month after the Republican administration took office Secretary of State Hughes reiterated Mr. Wilson's stand concerning Yap and mandates in general, and later France and Italy endorsed America's position in the controversy over the island, though Japan formally refused to give up her mandate. Thereafter that dispute was the subject of long drawn-out negotiations between the United States and Japan which led to a treaty by which the United States was assured equal rights in Yap and other islands mandated to Japan.

The council

any gave Germany more time to disburse, appointed a commission to pass on Austria's economic state, decided that Latvia and Estonia should be recognized as sovereign states, and then fixed the German reparations at 200,000,000,000 gold marks, payable in annual installments, and 12 per cent tax on exports during the period of payment. This reparations decision created consternation in Germany and Berlin at once began efforts to persuade the United States to interpose in her behalf. The Wilson administration made no response, but on April 3 Secretary Hughes informed Germany the United States would not countenance her escaping full responsibility for the war or getting out of paying to the limit of her ability. A few days earlier, Berlin having failed to make the first payments, French troops occupied Dueseldorf, Duisburg and Ruhrort. The British objected strenuously to this independent action and France withdrew. It would be tedious to detail the negotiations over the reparations bill. Suffice it to say that Germany, with Doctor Wirth as chancellor, was compelled to accept the figure of 135,000,000,000 gold marks finally decided on by the supreme council, made the payments due during the year, but, on December 14, announced that the in major part of the sum due in the early part of 1922 could not be raised. And since many economists agreed that to drive her into absolute bankruptcy would be disastrous to the rest of the world, toward the close of the year there was increasing talk of arranging a moratorium of two to three years for her. France was the chief obstacle to such delay, as she relied on the money due her from Germany, but she showed signs of yielding to the general view. Division of Upper Silesia between Germany and Poland caused a lot of trouble. A plebiscite was held there in March, but both sides asserted it was unfair, and early in May the region was invaded by Polish irregulars. Thinly veiled support was given them by the Warsaw government and also by the French and there succeeded a long series of fights between them and German volunteer allies. The entire continent trembled with near to rupture, but in June British troops entered the territory and began clearing out the Poles. The dispute was referred to the league council which in October announced the boundary lines. Neither Germany nor Poland was satisfied but both accepted the decision.

All through the year the Greeks fought the Turkish nationalists in Anatolia, with varying fortune, while the allied powers held aloof, though offering mediation which Greece refused. In November France made a treaty with the Kamalist government which aroused protests from Great Britain and led to diplomatic negotiations.

The United States formally made peace with the central powers, the treaty with Austria being signed August 24, that with Germany August 25, and the pact with Hungary August 29. In these treaties America reserved all that was given her by the treaty of Versailles which the senate had refused to ratify.

President Harding on July 10 issued informal invitations to Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan to send representatives to Washington for a conference on limitation of armament and Far East questions. Acceptance from all was already assured by a process of "feeling out" and on August 11 the formal invitations went out, China, Belgium, Holland and Portugal being asked to participate in discussions involving the Far East. The foremost statesmen of these nine powers were named as delegates and on November 12 the momentous conference opened with imposing ceremony. Almost immediately Secretary Hughes put forward America's plan for reduction and limitation of naval armament, including a naval holiday for ten years, the scrapping of all shipbuilding programs, destruction of vessels to a certain point, and the maintenance of the navies of America, Great Britain and Japan on a 5-5-8 basis. The plan was formally accepted by the delegates of those nations on December 15, and to the agreement were added clauses for the preservation of the status quo of naval bases and fortification in the western Pacific.

Of almost equal importance was the four-power pact accepted by the conference on December 12. This was cast in the form of a treaty by which the United States, Great Britain, France and Japan agreed to maintain peace in the Pacific, the Anglo-Japanese treaty being abrogated.

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New Year, 1921

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door for trade and industry of all nations. Direct negotiations between the Chinese and Japanese delegates resulted in Japan's agreeing to restore Shantung province to China upon receiving payment for the railway. It was evident from the first that the conference could not do much in the matter of limitation of land armaments so long as the situation in central Europe remained so unsettled. Premier Briand was present to give voice to France's needs of protection and fears of aggression by Germany and possibly by Russia. His eloquent speech so far convinced the conference that the other powers gave assurance that France would never be left in the "moral isolation" which she feared.

President Harding has clung to his idea that an association of nations can be formed which would do what the League of Nations cannot do, and on November 25 he put forward the suggestion of a continuing series of conferences like that in Washington, which presumably might result in the formation of the association. The idea was received with favor everywhere, except that the French demurred at the proposed inclusion of Germany.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

During the first six months of the year the guerrilla warfare between the British forces in Ireland and the Irish "republicans" continued unabated. Murders by the Sinn Feiners and reprisals by the British were of almost daily occurrence. The Irish were especially exasperated by the execution of a number of prisoners convicted of complicity in the killing of soldiers. The appointment of Lord Talbot, leading British Roman Catholic, as lord lieutenant of Ireland, failed of its effect. On May 25 the Sinn Feiners burned the Dublin custom house, and on June 30 they re-elected Eamon de Valera president of the "Irish republic." Meanwhile the new government of northern Ireland was organized, with Sir James Craig as premier, and on June 22 King George went across to open the Ulster parliament. De Valera on July 9 accepted the invitation of Premier Lloyd George to a conference in London, and truce was announced. This began the series of negotiations that lasted through the remainder of the year. Offers and counter-offers were made, and finally Britain professed Ireland full status as a dominion within the empire, to be known as the Irish Free State. A treaty to this effect was ratified by the British government and submitted to that country

of the Irish Free state or retaining her status. Angriely she chose the latter.

Charles, ex-emperor of Austria-Hungary, made two futile efforts to regain the Hungarian throne. On March 27 he appeared in Hungary, without forces and claimed the crown, but Regent Horthy refused to step aside. Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavians and Rumanians mobilized to frustrate the coup and the allied council of ambassadors warned Hungary that the restoration of the Hapsburg regime would not be tolerated. So Charles returned to his place of refuge in Switzerland. But he was not through, for on October 21 he and his wife, Zita, went by airplane to Hungary and rallied a considerable number of supporters who proclaimed Charles king. Again the "little emperor" prepared for action, but Regent Horthy led his army out of Budapest and defeated the Carlists in a real battle. The former emperor and empress were taken prisoner, as were a number of prominent Hungarian nobles. The allies decreed that Charles must be expelled and in November he and Zita were taken to Funchal, Madeira.

Russia's year was one of fighting, famine and efforts to resume relations with other nations. The soviet government held its own against repeated revolts, which included slings of the workmen of Moscow; of peasants under Antonov, and an invasion of the Ukraine by Petliura, which for a time threatened to be successful. Failure of the crops brought a terrible famine in the Volga region. Many thousands starved to death and even the American relief administration, which took charge of the situation, could only partially check the disaster. In seeking to break through the ring of isolation surrounding it, the Moscow government gradually receded from its communistic principles. It sought the aid of foreign capital, and on August 9 it abandoned state ownership of all but a few of the largest industries. Treaties were made with the Baltic states and with Turkey, and tempting offers of concessions were held out to other nations. In a notable pronouncement on October 21 Premier Lenin admitted the economic defeat of communism.

Old King Peter of Serbia died in Belgrade on August 17, and four days later his son, Alexander was proclaimed king of Yugoslavia. He was reluctant to leave Paris, however, and he was not until November 6 that he went to Belgrade and assumed his crown. Portugal was upset by several revolutionary movements toward the close of the year. On August 19 the monarchy was overthrown by a military coup and several cabinet members were assassinated. A few days later a plot

of the royalists was uncovered, and in November Carralho Mesquita led a revolt. Because of these disorders and of the spread of bolshevism the powers began consideration of a plan for intervention. Spain had rebels, also, the tribesmen of Morocco. Against them she maintained a wearying and expensive warfare for months. And while on the subject of rebellion, mention must be made of the revolt of the Moplahs on the Malabar coast of India, which caused the British government much annoyance and not a few lives.

There were communist outbreaks in Germany in March, and on August 28 Matthias Erzberger, the German statesman who signed the treaty of Versailles was assassinated. Doctor Wirth, who became chancellor on May 10, resigned with his cabinet on October 22, but was persuaded to remain in office and form a new ministry. In November there were riots in many German cities due to the high prices of food.

The chauvinistic element in Japan was active, especially after the Washington conference opened, and on November 3 Premier Hara was assassinated. Viscount Takahashi succeeded him. The emperor of Japan suffered a complete mental and physical breakdown some time last year, and Crown Prince Hirohito was made regent on November 25. He had lately returned from a tour of Europe.

DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

During the early part of the year the country was preparing for the change of administration on March 4. President-elect Harding resigned as senator from Ohio on January 9, and the next day he asked that preparations for an elaborate inauguration be canceled, feeling that it would be inconsistent with the urgent need for economy. On February 19 Mr. Harding announced the appointment of Charles E. Hughes as his secretary of state—a choice that met with general approval and on succeeding days he completed his cabinet, with means names: Secretary of the treasury, Andrew W. Mellon; secretary of war, John W. Weeks; attorney-general, Harry M. Dagherty; postmaster-general, Will H. Hays; secretary of the navy, Edwin Denby; secretary of the interior, Albert B. Fall; secretary of agriculture, Henry C. Wallace; secretary of commerce, Herbert C. Hoover; secretary of labor, James J. Davis. Mr. Harding was inaugurated on March 4 with simple, dignified ceremony, and President Wilson, despite his continued illness, was able to be present. The senate, in extra session, confirmed the cabinet and a number of other appointments, and adjourned on March 15.

On the first day of the year General Crowder was sent by President Wilson to Cuba to see what could be done to restore financial and economic conditions there, upset by the collapse of the sugar boom. He remained on the island for a long time and succeeded in his mission to a considerable extent. On April 11 telephone communication between the United States and Cuba was opened by an exchange of greetings between Presidents Harding and Menocal.

The United States Supreme court rendered several notable decisions. On January 31 it held that Judge Landis had no lawful right or power to presume over the trial of Victor Berger and other Socialists. On March 28 it ruled that profits from sale of corporate stocks and bonds and capital assets are taxable as income. On April 11 it refused to review the convictions of Haywood and 79 other I. W. W. members. The conviction of Senator Newberry of Michigan and others for alleged violation of the corrupt practices act was set aside on May 2, the

act being held void. On June 30 William Howard Taft was appointed chief justice and was sworn in on October 5.

The unemployment situation became so bad during the summer that President Harding called a conference of experts on the subject. It began its sessions on September 26 and, after a long study, established a central bureau and started local employment movements throughout the country. The resulting relief was but partial, for business itself was suffering a general depression.

One of the worst race riots in the history of the country broke out in Tulsa, Okla., on May 31. Before it was quelled the negro quarter of the city had been burned and 85 persons had been killed and many wounded.

Labor troubles of long standing in West Virginia culminated in an insurrectionary movement by miners which called forth a proclamation by the President ordering them to disperse. Federal troops were sent into the region and the miners soon surrendered.

A commission, headed by Gen. Leonard Wood, was sent to the Philippines. It reported in November, recommending against immediate withdrawal of the United States from the islands. Meantime General Wood was offered and accepted the post of governor general.

The American Legion, in session at Kansas City, elected Lieut. Col. Harford MacNider of Iowa its national commander on November 1. The Legion had as guests Marshal Foch of France, General Diaz of Italy, Admiral Beatty of England and other distinguished warriors. These same

visitors and many other eminent persons participated, on Armistice Day, Nov. 11, in the ceremony of the burial of America's unknown soldier in the National cemetery at Arlington.

Under the budget law which was passed in May Gen. Charles G. Dawes was appointed director general of the federal budget and he and his staff made notable progress in the way of cutting down the expenses of the government.

NATIONAL LEGISLATION

Not a great deal of legislation was passed by the Republican congress during the first two months of President Wilson's administration. The President vetoed the bill to revive the War Finance corporation on January 2, and congress promptly re-passed it. On January 12, \$7,100,000 was appropriated for enforcement of prohibition. The house decided, on January 19, that its membership should not be increased. After much debate congress set the limit of the regular army at 175,000 men. Mr. Wilson vetoed the measure, but it was passed over his veto. On February 28 the President signed the Winstow bill, making available to the railroads \$57,000,000 from the government guarantee fund.

President Harding called congress in extra session on April 11 and nearly all the rest of the year it was busy with the task of redeeming the pledges of the Republican party, with what success must be left to individual judgment. Among the first bills passed were emergency tariff and immigration acts; a new army bill cutting the army down to 150,000; and the budget bill. On April 30 the senate adopted a resolution declaring the war with Germany and Austria at an end; on June 13 the house adopted a resolution of similar import, and the measure was finally passed on July 1 and signed the next day by President Harding. Repeated efforts to pass a soldiers' bonus bill came to naught, but a soldiers' relief bureau was created on August 2 and Col. C. R. Forbes was made its director. The house passed both a tax revision bill and a tariff bill, but the senate did not get around to the latter. The tax measure was enacted into law on November 21.

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