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The Week

LIBERALS who had faith in "the other France" had to stand a good deal of derision in the months preceding the election. There was no other France; Poincaré was the Gallic spirit personified, we were assured again and again by men who had lived long in Paris and were in a position to know. As the election results showed, they were wrong. There is another France, and what is more, it has come into power. It is a France which is as liberal as the present position of the nation permits. As we pointed out in our last issue, it inherits from the régime of Poincaré expectations and hatreds that limit its action narrowly, yet its tendency is toward larger and more generous conceptions of the national interest. The new régime in France will continue to befriend the states of the Little Entente and Poland, but it will not force loans upon them to equip armies for the maintenance of French hegemony. It will not rush to the arms of Soviet Russia, but neither will it refuse to deal with Russia on a reasonable basis. It will try to collect as much money from Germany as it can, but it will not pre-

sent wholly impossible demands with the definite purpose of placing Germany in default and proceeding on that pretext to plunge her into deeper ruin. It will try to improve the financial position of France, but not by turning her over, bound hand and foot, to the financiers.

WHILE the liberalism of "the other France," is genuine and the policies it would naturally pursue are salutary, we ought not to be over-optimistic about the extent to which it will be able to realize its ideals. The parties of the left on which the next government must depend for support are seriously divided. They are united in opposition to Poincaré and the Bloc National, but on hardly anything else. The extreme left, indeed, prides itself on its political unaccountability. It is therefore to be expected that a government headed by Herriot or Briand or Painlevé will seek to enlist enough of the group to the right of the centre to maintain independence of the extreme left. This would involve compromise. It might even involve so many compromises that the new French policy would be hardly distinguishable from the old. This is pretty certain to be the case unless the new government can point to greatly improved relations among the Allies as a result of the adoption of liberal policies. The American government, by welcoming the new régime wholeheartedly and emphasizing America's readiness to join in the financial reconstruction of a Europe delivered from oppression and dreams of revenge, could go far toward solidifying the position of French liberalism.

AMONG the reforms promised by the victors in the elections is the reduction in military service from eighteen months to nine. Such a reduction would save the government a billion francs a year. It would save the nation much more than that, if the time of the young men subject to military service is worth anything. How much would it weaken the national defence? Hardly at all, we believe. The men in active military service are nothing more than a first line of defence. The main reliance, in time of war, falls on the reservists, men who have gone through the compulsory term of military service. Nine months would be fully adequate to

train a man for his place in the reserve, if the military authorities could get over their propensity to waste time. If the reform is put through there will be a great outcry in military circles. The Socialists and Liberals will be violently denounced as traitors to France. But the effect on the general European situation will be excellent. The reduction in the number of men under the colors will be taken as evidence that France is turning away from militarism and preparing to resume her proper place in civilization.

IN any other country but France it would be a sheer impossibility for a statesman who had been tried and convicted on charges barely distinguishable from treason to come back to a position of influence. That is what Caillaux has done. Herriot, who will have a chance at the premiership if he wants it, was bitterly attacked by the Bloc National as a mere lieutenant of Caillaux, and while this was an exaggeration of the relationship, there is little doubt that Herriot owes much to Caillaux. It appears probable that the new parliament will grant amnesty to political prisoners, in which case Caillaux's exile will be ended and he will appear again in Paris at the head of a powerful faction. Whether he ever gets back into the government will then depend chiefly on himself. If he retains his old capacity for forming combinations and dramatizing political issues he is not at all unlikely to force himself into the ministry once more. This may not be desirable from some points of view. But Europe needs now, more than anything else, statesmen who are good Europeans, interested in the whole of European civilization. And Caillaux is a better European than most.

THE capacity of the newspaper-reading public to be shocked quickly becomes exhausted. Were this not the case, such revelations as were made before the Wheeler committee last week would have resulted in black headlines, instead of being passed over by most of the press as a matter of routine. George Remus, a Cincinnati bootlegger, declared that in the course of his operations he had paid Jesse Smith, Attorney-General Daugherty's intimate friend and companion, between \$250,000 and \$300,000 to purchase immunity from arrest, on the assumption and with the assurance from Smith that this protection came from the Attorney-General himself. On the following day, the committee heard the details in the case of Dave Gershon, a former Department of Justice representative. Gershon has made the charge that E. L. Doheny financed the abortive Mexican revolution in 1921 and that Secretary Fall helped arrange the details. The record shows, incidentally, that ammunition intended for Mexico was seized in California in that year and that it was subsequently ordered released by W. J. Burns. It was Burns who on being informed by L. C. Wheeler, Department of Justice

representative at Los Angeles, that Gershon planned to make his knowledge public, replied with a letter on May 3, 1924, demanding that he be prosecuted at once, and vigorously. Burns, at least, is one member of the Daugherty crowd who went down with his colors flying. He kept up until the last moment the policies which made his ousting a matter of public necessity.

THE State of Montana is today on trial before the nation on a charge of having loaned its legal machinery to a brazen conspiracy against Senator Burton K. Wheeler for the purpose of blackmailing him into halting the investigation of the Department of Justice. The Senate committee which has been investigating the indictment has declared, only one member dissenting, that Senator Wheeler has not been guilty of any violation of the law which prohibits a member of Congress from appearing before a federal department on behalf of a client. The indictment against him, however, still stands; and the state of Montana owes it to Senator Wheeler, itself and the nation to proceed as promptly as possible to a trial, and to see that its absolute fairness is beyond anybody's doubt. Whatever the outcome of this trial, however—and there can be very few who seriously doubt that Senator Wheeler will be vindicated—some facts have already been established beyond any dispute. We know that George B. Lockwood, of the Republican National Committee sent a paid spy to Montana in the effort to find something in Senator Wheeler's record which could be used to force him into silence. We know that W. J. Burns, of the Department of Justice, assigned some of his own detectives to aid in this sorry quest. These are stains on the honor of the Republican party and that of the Department of Justice which cannot and will not be forgotten in a hurry.

THE Standing Committee on the State of the Church at a recent meeting of Methodists in Springfield, Massachusetts, reached one revolutionary decision. It recommended to the Methodist Episcopal General Conference the adoption of a resolution which would place the Methodist church as a body in opposition to all future war. The resolution declared for "the right and responsibility of the church to utter moral judgment concerning the nature of war; for the freedom of the individual member of the church to follow the dictates of his own conscience whether as an individual he can support or engage in war; for an educational campaign which shall seek to reveal to all our people the nature, causes and consequences of war; for the removal of the causes of war, such as selfish nationalism, economic imperialism, and militarism; and for the establishment of world law and order by outlawing war, by establishing and codifying international law, by immediately entering the Permanent Court of International Justice and by securing

the participation of the United States in an effective association of nations." If this resolution is accepted by the Methodist church, and if Methodists act upon it when the American government next declares war, a conflict is certain to ensue between the Methodist church and the state which may profoundly affect the future relationship between politics and religion in America.

IF the Methodist church had adopted this resolution previous to the declaration of war against Germany, what would have been the result? It would not have meant that individual Methodists would have been obliged, if they remained in the communion of their church, to refuse to enlist or work on behalf of the war, as in the case of the Quakers, for the basis of the resolution is freedom of individual conscience. But the Methodist church as a corporate body could not have actively supported the war, and if any member of the church had refused to serve, if drafted, he would have been sustained in his refusal by the counsel and the authority of his Christian communion. To that extent the Methodist church would have challenged the authority of the state and would have incurred the kind of suspicion, abuse and persecution which during the recent war was bestowed upon all people who sympathized with and abetted conscientious objectors. They would have been accused of giving aid and comfort to the enemy, and of being faithless to their country during a period in which its safety hung in the balance. There are not very many individual Methodists who could have withstood pressure of this kind. Membership in the church is usually considered to be a badge of respectability rather than an invitation to become or to support political and social outcasts. But it is this fact which makes the adoption of the resolution all the more important. The clergymen who voted for it must have known that if and when they acted upon it they would be involved in a collision with the most headstrong and ruthless passions which move the citizens of a modern state.

MANY of the weightiest newspaper writers on public affairs agree in pronouncing President Coolidge's veto message on the bonus a masterly public document. Why masterly? Because its conclusions agree with those of the writers above mentioned. From any other point of view the message is rather a spotty performance. It argues, justly, that military service is a patriotic duty, and its performance does not establish a claim to indefinite payments out of the Treasury. It denies—again justly—that the able-bodied veterans are a specially handicapped class, needing gratuities from the government. But it does not answer the argument that in a war whose outcome depended on industrial effort as much as on the operations in the field, the "soldiers on the home front"—the industrial workers, the business concerns supplying the requirements of war, the lenders

of money—were permitted to enjoy war wages, profits and interest while the enlisted men in the field or in camp were stayed with pittance. The President minimizes the good the bonus would do the individual veteran and exaggerates the injury it would do the tax payers, by the somewhat tricky method of measuring the veteran's gain by the annual payment and the tax payer's burden by the aggregate of the payments under the bill. His message assumes without further ado that the income tax payer's desire to be relieved of his tax burden is holy and the veteran's desire for a bonus is profane. It gravely argues that the veteran will lose more, directly and indirectly, through the taxes falling on another class than he will gain from the bonus falling directly into his own pocket. The bill deserved a veto, but was it so bad that it deserved a laboriously uncandid message besides?

THE veto of the Bonus bill was overridden by a vote of 313 to 78 in the House, and 59 to 26 in the Senate. A rare non-partisanship in this rebuke to the President was exhibited by both Houses. In the House 145 Republicans joined with 166 Democrats and two independents to override the veto; 21 Democrats joined the 57 Republicans who voted to sustain it. In the Senate 32 Republicans and 27 Democrats combined to override the veto. If any proof were needed that President Coolidge does not possess great gifts of leadership, this vote would supply it. Optimistic Republicans are saying that the matter was shrewdly managed nevertheless. The income tax payers have an additional reason for voting for Coolidge, and the veterans are not left with a grudge against the Republicans. But this argument is too deep for us.

EVENTS of the past few weeks have illustrated clearly an important development in American political life which has received inadequate comment: the growing inability of the President, even with a theoretical majority, to control the action of Congress. Campaign promises to do this or that might well in the future be accompanied by a footnote: "This promise is to be null and void unless the candidate is elected with an overwhelming majority for his party in both Houses of Congress and unless, further, this overwhelming majority shall consist exclusively of members of his own wing of the party; and this promise shall become null and void two years from date, when experience has shown that the opposing party is almost certain to get control of Congress and prevent important legislation of any character until the succeeding presidential election." For President Coolidge, of course, the question is particularly acute. He must go before the country on the record made during the past few months, which is about as dismal as any record could be. He pinned all faith to the Mellon tax bill, and the Mellon tax bill is dead. He promised the farmers a program of relief which

they probably will not get. The bonus has been passed over his veto. He announced his support of the World Court project, and the Republican leaders in the Senate as in the National Committee continue to regard it as anathema. If candidates were really candid, Mr. Coolidge might well make his platform: "If elected, I will run one end of Pennsylvania Avenue, and let Congress run the other."

WE do not follow Secretary Hoover's argument against publicity for income tax returns. The large corporation, he admits, has nothing to lose, because it already makes the facts of its income known to its stockholders. The small business concern, however, has something to lose. Its credit rating would come to depend on its income as revealed in the tax returns, instead of on character and reputation. A bad year which impaired its income would thus impair its credit, Mr. Hoover thinks. We cannot believe that business in America is conducted in such a slipshod fashion that a concern which conceals its true condition enjoys a better credit than it would if it reported frankly on its earnings or losses. Nor do we rate highly the ethical position of the concern that accepts credit which would not be extended if all the relevant facts were made public. We understand why a business man embarrassed by losses avoids disclosing his condition. But we cannot understand why the government should connive at what amounts to a fraud upon the creditor.

The Confusion of 1924

THE political condition of the American nation just before the conventions of 1924 is not satisfactory from the point of view of any party or any economic or social interest. Its most conspicuous trait is confusion. The different agencies of government are not working capably; neither are they working in harmony. Congress ignores the President's recommendations. The President is vetoing or proposing to veto the most important bills passed by Congress. The American people as a whole are probably more sincerely unanimous in demanding governmental economy and a reduction in taxation than any other reform, but neither they nor their political representatives can agree about the way to economize and reduce taxes. The organizations of the major parties are also suffering from an excess of friction and enervation. They are the victims rather than the masters of their own problems. Neither the Republican nor the Democratic party knows its own mind. They either lack focussing and invigorating leadership or reject in practice the leader whom they theoretically acclaim. Whoever may be nominated and elected between the conventions and the first week in November, it scarcely seems possible that as the result of the election the United States will, except in matters of routine, obtain an administration which is capable of constructive responsible government.

The Republican party as the agency which is nominally conducting the government of the United States suffers more cruelly than its competitors from the effects of this confusion. In the election of 1920 it won the most overwhelming but least deserved victory in the annals of presidential politics. The American people were chagrined at the discrepancy between their expenditure upon the war in treasure, in life and in futile aspirations and the satisfaction which they received in exchange. They took out their discomfiture in voting against the late President Wilson and his party. But the Republicans had not during their eight years of opposition healed the breach within the party which lost them the election of 1912. Neither had they during the period of exclusion from office developed any positive counterpolicy of their own except in respect to the League of Nations. The flabby morale of the party was clearly revealed by the way in which the "better element" allowed an unscrupulous and self-seeking minority to "put over" the nomination of Warren G. Harding and by the subsequently complete domination in the speeches of the party leaders of the atmosphere and ideas of an atavistic McKinleyism.

Such being its moral condition the party was certain to disintegrate under the strain of office. As long as President Harding lived, his pliable and reconciling disposition maintained an appearance of unity. But after the congressional elections of 1922 an unreconciled progressive minority which exercised the balance of power in Congress brought even the appearance of Republican harmony to an end. This was the situation when in the summer of 1923, Mr. Harding died. The new President abandoned as unsuccessful the soothing tactics and started out to unify the party and improve its morale by more aggressive leadership. The policy which he chiefly emphasized for this purpose was that initiated by his Secretary of the Treasury which proposed to reduce taxes and to confer the benefit of the reduction upon the income tax payers and particularly upon those who were subject to super-taxes. His plan ignored the needs of the farmers who more than any other class in the community were suffering from economic distress. The President's insistence on the Mellon plan not only aroused the antagonism of the frank progressives but also that of many regular Republicans from the West. His leadership did, indeed, awaken great enthusiasm among the well-to-do Republicans in the industrialized states, but he paid for this increased loyalty and conviction among his supporters in the East by a still more aggressive revolt on the part of the western progressives. President Coolidge's leadership so intensified Republican dissensions that his renomination will be the signal for an open insurrection. The coalition between the agricultural west and the manufacturing east from which the power of the Republican party has always been derived has apparently come to an end. The