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A POST-WAR DIARY

Friday, October 10, 1924.—Went to see Foch at 8, Boulevard des Invalides at 10.30. Some of his old hands are still with him, including one whom I remember at Cassel in 1914. The Marshal is aging. His step is less firm and his back is a bit bent. The old fire—but it comes and goes, and he seems occasionally to lose the thread of his ideas. But there is the same action with the words. I said that I had come to consult him about points of history and about the future. His last 'directive' to the Allied Armies was dated November 10, 1918. What was his directive to the Allied Armies today? 'L'union d'abord,' he replied, and then sent for the authentic text of three of his last speeches at Verdun, Boulogne, and Beauvais, telling me that I should find in them the information which I sought. I put them in my pocket. The Beauvais speech is the best.

'But what about the Official History?' I asked. 'It gets on; it is nearly ready,' he replied. I said that I had been told the same thing six years ago. He seemed dissatisfied about the his-

enracinée in the soil, with long-service men in larger numbers. He thought that Pétain would consent to this. He would if a Government so decided, but it would be a worse army and dearer. . . . I told him my ideas about the next conference and that we should be better without, but he says it is *exigée* by our Government. . . .

P. thought it a real danger that we should all disarm, for then the nation with the largest population would have the pull, especially if it had the industrial capacity for rapid arming, like Germany. He is very anxious about letting the Germans back into the Cologne zone.

Wednesday, October 15. — After doing some business, went to the British Embassy for a talk with H. E. Lord Crewe. He was very well and in good form. I told him of my mission and of what I had heard here. He was much interested in both the military and the civil side. He thinks that the Disarmament Conference cannot be avoided. I spoke to him of Jaspar's lecture summarized in the *Étoile Belge* of October 12. He has a respect for Painlevé and heard his views with interest. His view of our elections is that the Conservatives will either win or at least have the largest party in Parliament. But both Conservatives and Liberals hate coalition, and the Liberals may support the Conservatives by an agreement on general principles of policy. He thought that the combination of MacDonald and Herriot had been useful and had produced good results. He agreed with me that Germany is still the King Charles's head of French ideas and

that it still absorbs them. He said our Labor politicians were surprised that Herriot had not gone as far as they wanted to go. No Frenchman, H. E. thought, could go a great distance in their direction. The feeling against Germany was still too strong. He thought that our relations with France were now pretty good. We wondered who would be Conservative Foreign Minister if the Tories came in. He said that Curzon and Poincaré had no relations and that it was hard to say who hated the other most.

Lord Crewe thought that an accord between us and France was not technically against the law, but he did not know in what form regional accords had up to now been presented to the League of Nations.

Crewe thought aloud about the question of France and American friendship, and, without denying the importance of French amity, which he would be the last to decry, he was disposed to think an accord with America a more permanent interest to us. He also told me that the Bertie journals had been submitted to the F. O. and to Windsor and that a great deal had been cut out.

In the evening saw *La Crise*. Not wonderful. Can't find a topical piece like the one in which Loucheur and Mandel figured at King Edward's favorite theatre, the Capucines.

Thursday, October 16. — Saw M. Briand at 10 A.M. at 52, Avenue Kléber. His housekeeper admitted that Briand, who is a bachelor, is *très matinal* and gets up at 6 or 7 A.M. I found him

in splendid form and good health. I should say that his powers were as formidable as ever. He has lost nothing of his old fire and charm. He is quite contented to be the representative of France at Geneva, because the League is *une très grosse question* and, as M. Bourgeois is far from well, Briand has almost complete power. But I think he would not mind being back at the Quai d'Orsay before long, and he spoke in a friendly way of Herriot and his Government and thinks it will endure because it represents the true spirit of France, which wants, above all, peace, and an entente with England, which is regarded by the mass of the people as the basis of peace. He thought that Geneva had been a great success in September, but was anxious, as I am, about the Disarmament Conference. His policy at Cannes had been to get the Anglo-French accord first, but now things had been reversed. All the work of obligatory arbitration, the definition of the aggressor, etc., had been good at Geneva, but the Disarmament Conference was a great danger.

He, as Member of the League of Nations Council, admitted that the body was faced by a problem of almost insuperable difficulty — namely, how to prepare the coming Conference next autumn, and even how to formulate a questionnaire to the Powers for the November meeting, since postponed to December, which is to prepare this Conference. I said that my view was that such Conference should never have been called together, and that we should not go further than the terms of Article 8 of the League Convention,

first paragraph. But he objected that Ramsay MacDonald had *exigé* the present plan, and agreed that France, England, and Belgium should have a regional accord in the West of Europe to meet the case. Such accords were only communicated to the League of Nations in very general terms — a few lines only — and such details as military arrangements were not included. He thought that this could be done, and that the Staffs should then examine the problem and eventualities and agree together. He told me that Germany would certainly become a member of the League this year. It would be an advantage for the Allies, for a war of revenge was much more difficult to arrange when Germany was surrounded by all the machinery of Geneva. (This point should not be mentioned publicly.)

Briand did not think that the U. S. could long remain outside the League, and he thought that the Pacific Treaties, the accords, and the Protocol could be linked together and made the bridge to bring the U. S. in. It was our duty to facilitate her entrance, and he thought the U. S. must be uneasy that so many American republics, eighteen in all, were already in the League.

He described as *enfantillage* the craze of our Socialist Government for disarmament, and thought with me that this would only come in time, when confidence in the League was established by practical demonstrations.

He felt that air forces had greatly inclined the people toward peace, for they felt that they were all in a war, and that now they were not even safe

when asleep in their beds with a good cotton nightcap on their heads. Germany was still, for France, the great danger, and all her thoughts were centred on it. France had to lead affairs in the Centre and East of Europe because England was disinterested in these questions, and he allowed for the English point of view. He thought that the economical pressure of all States was a very severe form of pressure — for example, that of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden against Russia and Germany, even if these Allies of ours had no armies.

Briand agreed with Painlevé's ideas on an *armée de métier*. He thinks that finding a formula for armament reduction is like squaring the circle.

German nationalism is on the down grade, he thinks. If Marx would face it, he would win, but he does not, and the Nationalists try to gain their ends by political menaces. I asked Briand about his sudden resignation after Cannes. He said that he had resigned to prevent a Presidential crisis and for no other reason. Poincaré had given various other explanations, but this was the true one.

Maurice Pernot and I lunched at Maxim's and discussed his journey. He told me much of Italy. He said that Mussolini had bribed foreign journalists right and left. The syndicate of the foreign press had been bribed through its president, and then he, Pernot, and three others had left it. None of these four was an Englishman, but the others were American correspondents of English and American papers. Three Paris papers were also

bribed. He drew my attention to two articles in the *Observer* (August and September) on Italian finances, both of which were mendacious and inspired from Rome. He thought the *Temps* was now run by a man with some name like Reux and that its attitude was slippery. R. had been tackled by someone who had asked why a position defined on the first page was differently represented on the second. R. said that the *Temps* had four pages and so this must be allowed for. There was no individual permitted to write his own mind now. All was done to order, and the result was chaos. Gauvain, in the *Débats*, though he had attacked England bitterly, was given a free hand. So was Pertinax in the *Écho de Paris*. It was better that people should be allowed to state their opinions than that opinion should be misinterpreted by a man like R., who had organized Kruger's journey through Europe in old days, and was a dangerous man.

Pernot would hardly believe my statement that English papers were not bribed. He said that we bribed also the French press. I said that I knew no case of it. He had met Dawson of the *Times* in Rome and found that he could speak no word of any foreign language and might have stayed at home quite as well.

Friday, October 17.— G. Mandel, 17, Avenue Mozart XVI, at lunch. We had a great talk on history and the press. We are agreed that, with the information that we had in 1918, the Armistice terms were good and favorable. The contrary theory was born long after

the event. I have asked Mandel to give the *Daily Telegraph* the refusal of his historical story when it appears. Clemenceau's forthcoming book (two years hence) is called *The Place of God in World Religions*. Mandel very severe on the Bertie diary which is appearing in the *Morning Post*. He thinks it trivial, undignified, and untrue. Any concierge in Paris could have written one in the war time which had more truth and exactitude. So thought Clive to-day.

We had a long talk on the French press. Mandel said that it rarely represented French opinion. The press was a house of commerce in which each man who had bought a paper was out to make money. Each Government squared the press by giving it large blocks of publicity, whether in advertisement or by other means. The Head of the Agence Havas ran this business and distributed the loot to the press, most of which was more or less in favor, not of one Government, but of all Governments in turn. Mandel himself said that he favored the protection of independent papers, because without them we might not know what people were thinking. Some foreign Governments followed the French system, notably the Russian and Mussolini! The Germans had bought the *Journal* even during the war.

I mentioned Isvolsky's book, *Un Livre Noir*, published by the Communists from the Russian archives. It frequently mentions large sums paid to the French press. We thought that Isvolsky had a policy and that it was quite consecutive. Mandel did not defend or attack his exposure of the bribes

of the French press. Mandel thought that we bribed, too, but could not say where the sums expended were shown. French papers did not represent a *party* as ours do. He could collect articles of Sauerwein[1] which had supported many antagonistic policies.

[1] Foreign correspondent of the *Matin*.—EDITOR

(The diary will be continued in July)

tory. He really did not know how it stood. It would be a very dull document, he said. But it would have all the essential papers and would be of serious value to the historians of the war, but of little interest to the public.

'Are we really to be left so destitute?' I asked. 'I am trying just now to write a little story of the first Ypres battle in 1914, and I can find nothing worth reading.' Was the Marshal going to leave us nothing after such stupendous events? How could I, or anyone, write the history of the 1914 Ypres without his maps which he had shown me at Cassel in 1914?

'They are all there,' said the Marshal, pointing to a table near, 'and I am writing my own account.' I said that I was delighted to hear it; when would it be ready? 'I do a little every day, and it gets on,' he said. All the documents were there, and he worked at it when he had time. I said that he had an advantage which many women would like to have, because Marshals had no age limit; but would not the Marshal consider how important it was for him to complete the work before he began to grow old? He agreed that age would impair the clarity and force of his history, and was disposed to agree that he should hurry up his story.

I don't think the Marshal is very contented with his position, and he complained that he had never been invited to England since Henry Wilson's funeral. He got on all right at the Ambassadors' Conference, in which connection he praised Eric Phipps, but

otherwise was not much consulted now. He told me several stories about the war. One was about August 8, 1918. The Canadian folk in London had made Lloyd George wire to insist that the Canadians should not be used, owing to their losses. Foch had told no one what was in the wind for August 8, neither L. G. nor Clemenceau. L. G. had grown anxious, and had demanded that an officer should be sent over to inform him of the exact position not later than August 7. So Colonel Grant went. He was not sent for that day, but on August 8, at noon, went before the Cabinet. He told them, to L. G.'s angry disgust, that the Canadians were just then fighting a great battle. Fury of L. G. 'The battle has been a great victory,' Grant quietly added. Collapse of L. G. In the same way Clemenceau had been amazed and asked where Foch had found all the troops for the battle. 'I have rearranged them and we have won a victory.' The Tiger then ceased growling. Foch said that, when one was determined to attack, the dead recovered, the missing rejoined the ranks, the lost guns were discovered, and so on. 'It is with dead, missing, and lost guns that I have won victories,' he said.

I asked him if the Allied Generals had ever fallen out, for I knew no case except the Nivelle-Haig row. He said that all the Allied Generals were invariably in agreement and never fell out. The upheaval in the French Command at the end of 1916 was the greatest misfortune that had occurred to France. The war would have finished in 1917 but for that misfortune. That

was a political decision. London had not trusted my report on the position of military affairs.

We had a long talk for an hour and a half. On leaving the Marshal I gave a lift to one of his staff, who told me that Foch kept a diary all through the war and after it, and had it always at his elbow. In it he noted all those whom he saw and his conversations with them, as well as scattered thoughts on events. It was of course a confidential document and would not be published. I ventured to differ. Why should posterity have the absorbing interest of reading and learning the truth, and not Foch's comrades and contemporaries? I was sure that it would be published when Foch was dead. It will certainly be a gem. Foch said to-day that it was as possible to succeed in peace as in war, provided that all plans were made to ensure success in peace, as they were in war. I think that diplomacy needs a Staff College.

I had been to the Sainte-Chapelle and the Conciergerie yesterday and completed the visit by Notre Dame to-day. Saw the vestments of the priests at Mary Stuart's wedding when she married the Dauphin. Only one is original, but is the most perfect specimen of sixteenth-century embroidery, with pictures of Mary on it of the greatest interest and value. Was her hair so fair — almost golden — and so long? We have never been told so, except by the Janet miniature at Windsor, which agrees on the point of color. Morton's portrait does not show the hair, if I remember rightly. But in later years Mary wore wigs of

various shades.

In the afternoon I had a long talk with Marshal Joffre at the École Militaire. After compliments, I began by mentioning an allusion to Joffre in Lord Bertie's diary, published in the *Morning Post* on Wednesday last. Joffre does not understand or read English, and had not seen it. I told him one of Bertie's stories was that in 1914 Joffre had told Viviani that unless Messimy was unloaded he, Joffre, would commit suicide and leave a paper to state the reason. 'It is false; it is totally incorrect,' said the Marshal. I said that I was not surprised at the denial, as the Marshal was the last man in the world that I should have suspected of contemplating suicide. He said that Messimy caused him no disquiet and had been very helpful to him, going indeed further in Joffre's direction than anyone else had done. I said I supposed that Lord Bertie had heard what seemed to be a good story and had jotted it down.

Then I asked about war history, and found that the Marshal was another candidate for literary honors. He would finish his account of the war in a few months. It was his *déposition* for the benefit of posterity and he would leave it to his wife and daughter. He would not pretend that it would please everyone, but he had been scrupulously exact in every statement. I said that I was delighted. I had no history of the war from the French side that was worth anything.

We talked all round a variety of military subjects, including the 'black troops' quartered in France, on which

I gave the Marshal very serious objections. He thought that a nucleus of these troops in the South of France would not be a danger. I replied that it was not the *thèse boche* that I was advocating, but the question of the prestige of the white races, and the evil influence of any reduction of this prestige in Northern Africa. The whites had only a slight hold on Africa and a Mahomedan upheaval might spread far and fast. We seemed to forget how few whites there were in Africa.

Joffre is looking pale and softer than of old, but his brain is still good. He is aging, but may still go on for some time. He was most cordial, but will not let me quote him by name if I write. He has an honorific post and great worries, but nothing to do.

Maurice Pernot of the *Débats*, and soon afterward Georges Mandel, Clemenceau's War Chef de Cabinet, came to see me and we had a long talk together. Pernot is undertaking his trip to Persia and Afghanistan next spring, and I hope that the *Daily Telegraph* may take him on. He is tired of Rome and says that Mussolini has lied to him and made him lie, I assume by false statements. He says that Fascism is in difficulties, not only from the Liberal revival, but from Fascism itself. He says that when he, Pernot, first occupied his rooms in the Via Giulio Cesare, where I have visited him, he thought it would be amusing to see incidents from the grand tier of the theatre, but that the continual shooting in his street was beginning to tire

him. He declares that from Venetia to Ancona there is unceasing violence on both sides, and that it cannot go on.

Pernot goes for a month to Egypt and will then work up to Peshawar. He hopes to do Afghanistan in March and April 1925. He will be acting for the *Revue des Deux Mondes* and will write a weekly letter for the *Débats*. He is bringing out a book on the Vatican and the war. He says the Vatican is the only institution that has realized that the old European colonial system will be dead in fifty years. They have transferred the bulk of their foreign missions to *native* hands with a view to the future, and only retain a general supervision in the hands of the whites. They are schooling the natives to initiate things. A very interesting movement, worthy of Cardinal Gasparri's sagacity.

Mandel says that Clemenceau has just finished a three-volume work on 'the place of God in world religions.'

Saturday, October 11. — Mandel had given me an introduction to the Conservateur of Fontainebleau, M. d'Esparbes, so I motored there to-day with some friends, saw the park and grounds first, lunched at Mme. Dumaine's Hôtel d'Angleterre and saw her great collection of nineteenth-century French and English prints, which are famous. I saw no specially excellent states, but the collection is unique and immense, and has been collected in the course of forty years by Mme. Dumaine and her husband. At 2.30 called for the Conservateur, who very kindly took us over the whole palace and showed many

rooms which are only shown to privileged visitors. Extraordinarily interesting, and I would not have missed it for a good deal. The rooms of Napoleon and Josephine and the washing, etc., arrangements were very strange indeed.

Marie Antoinette's boudoir is a dream, and Canova's head of Napoleon, aged thirty-six, is a great work of art. Boney's chairs in his severe little dining room are very perfect. Two very fine Bouchers and some perfect tapestries. There are two thousand rooms, and in spite of all the large area there are only ten caretakers! So many courts are becoming overgrown with weeds. This is almost the only royal palace in France which is furnished. Empire, of course, in the main. Napoleon began the restoration, and that is why it is all Empire. Louis Philippe's restorations are in bad taste. I wonder why the French neglect this palace so much. Diane de Poitiers's bedroom must have been lovely.

Much indebted to the Conservateur, who spent two hours in showing us round. He is a poet and an enthusiastic admirer of Napoleon, but not so great an expert on Boney's work with his Staff as Colonel de Philip, of whose work he had never heard. I managed before I left to get a secondhand copy and sent it to him. The little room where the abdication was signed and the Cour des Adieux, where Napoleon took leave of the Old Guard, are very impressive from their historical interest.

Tuesday, October 14. — Went to the Palais Bourbon to see M. Painlevé, now President of the Chamber. Heil-

bronner showed me over the reception rooms, which have some superb *boiserie* and ceilings, but the furniture and chimneypieces are poor and comparatively modern. The Chambers have no right to be called the Palais Bourbon. A pleasant garden. Met a nice Frenchman from the F. O. and afterward Franklin-Bouillon, whose appearance I did not much care for, as I am prejudiced against him, no doubt. He was very agreeable all the same, and said that France never forgot those who stood by her in dark days. He said that he and I might differ, but he was sure that we should each admit when we were wrong. I said I was perfectly sure that we should neither of us ever admit anything of the sort!

Found M. Painlevé much the same as in old days. Science keeps a man fit. After greetings he told me that he has not quite the scope he would like in his present post of Speaker, and does not mean to settle into it as a profession, but that he can do a good deal of good *dans les coulisses* and can even help this Government — and no doubt do the reverse to a Government of another color. We talked Army affairs first. P.'s view is that an *armée de métier* would cause fear in France. 'Why should it?' I asked. 'Our Army did not care a hang about politics and minded its own business. Why should it be different here?' France, said Painlevé, was not like England, with her old traditions. P. would like one year's service instead of eighteen months, and an extension of reëngagements. In fact he saw a conscript army