

Many felt with George Bernard Shaw that Edward quit, "simply and solely because he hates his job and has had enough of it."

"What's the good of being Prince if I can't do as I like?" he protested as a youngster after riding his bicycle across his father's geranium bed. Innumerable incidents supported the popular impression that as Prince of Wales he had not looked forward to kingship with pleasure. Once, in a Paris club, he said to an American:

"How shall I behave here?"

"Like a human being." The answer roused his quick smile, but just then a Britisher came up, bowed from the waist.

"How can I?" Edward sighed.

Press Comment—Quickly building up George, the British press paused only briefly to comment on Edward's decision.

"Amid all his great qualities," the *Times* decided, "there was something lacking."

Edinburgh Scotsman: "This should not have been the end"

London News Chronicle: "The people felt that Edward had it in him to be a great King. But when the supreme decision came between personal choice and public duty, he lacked just the requisite fiber to stay the tremendous course."

Daily Herald: "The affection which this democratic people feels for its King springs only from this: that he serves rather than rules. . . . And a new King takes the throne at a moment when the nation has made it more plain than ever that it will not conceive of kingship on any other terms."

In the United States, Eastern papers on the whole blamed, the rest largely sympathized with Edward.

America's columnists minced few words, wrote many:

Hugh S. Johnson, United Feature Syndicate, Inc., in thirty newspapers: "With the world in riot and the British Empire in danger of being cut in two in the Mediterranean, would Stanley Baldwin have precipitated this crisis months before it was

EDWARD VIII

necessary and with no aim higher than the tongue of Mrs. Grundy?

"It doesn't make sense. This column lays claim to no special dope, but such as it has indicates that the opinion of the British Government was that the King was 'temperamentally unfit for Coronation'—that his mother precipitated the issue and that Dave Windsor, by his 'just-a-big-overgrown-boy' nonsense, gave his opponents exactly the opportunity they sought—to put a frozen-faced automaton in his place. That's what is needed under a modern Crown."

Walter Lippmann, *New York Herald Tribune* Syndicate, in 139 newspapers: "Tho there are still Kings and noblemen in the British Constitution, the Empire is no longer an aristocratic society, and a King who does not conform to the moral expectations of the British masses can, therefore, no longer be the King. The French Riviera and the drawing-rooms of London, Paris and even New York are populated with royalty who did not know how to adapt themselves to the rise of democracy, to its desires and its morals, and, if you like, its prejudices. They were unable to realize that the preservation of monarchy in a democracy requires that the public and the private life of the royal family shall conform to the standards which its subjects profess, that it shall reflect the image which the people have of royalty, renouncing the liberties which royalty used once to enjoy before the people could read or the newspapers were circulated."

Jay Franklin, *Des Moines Register and Tribune* Syndicate, in forty-five newspapers: "When Edward VIII succeeded his father, he was known to have a pronounced sympathy for the British underdogs. In particular, the fate of the Welsh coal-miners excited his compassion and he publicly announced his will to help them. Since some of the great Conservative peers live on coal royalties, this was not taken in good part.

"Almost at once British society began a whispering campaign about the King and Mrs. Warfield Simpson, whose friendship had hitherto been regarded with sympathetic toleration by the upper classes."

EDWARD VIII

Westbrook Pegler, United Feature Syndicate, Inc., in fifty-nine newspapers: "Mr. Baldwin probably has in mind the thought that a woman divorced twice in twenty years might be just naturally restless. The idea of a Queen of England packing off to Reno and then into the movies and selling her memoirs doubtless disturbs him, too. . . . There is nothing in the record to prove that Mrs. Simpson would run out on the King and the British Empire, but she just barely might, and the reliability of the Queen is no less important to the nation than to the King himself. It would be taking an unnecessary chance, and as Prime Minister it is Mr. Baldwin's duty to prevent needless risks. So why speak of love to Stanley Baldwin?"

Mark Sullivan, New York *Herald Tribune* Syndicate, in seventy-five newspapers: "In New York last week I noticed that the hat girl at the restaurant had arranged her hair and eyebrows and lips and dress to look as near as she could attain to the latest published photograph of Mrs. Simpson. Having observed the hat girl, I looked at girls in dining-rooms and offices. The Mrs. Simpson model is spreading. In this there is nothing new. Young girls have long been taking Hollywood heroines as their models of dress and carriage. The result has made any group of young women more attractive to the eye than were those of a generation ago. But, looking back over centuries, one reflects that it is a far cry to the time when young women took Joan of Arc and the saints of the Church as their ideals."

Paul Mallon, North American Newspaper Alliance, in 300 newspapers: "Masters of statecraft here [in Washington] have been looking forward to the abdication of Dave Windsor as a matter of little immediate international concern. Mr. Windsor is said to have been inspirational in developing only two British policies. He liked the Germans and sought to swing London closer to Berlin. . . . The only other issue he seemed to bother much about was strengthening of the British Air Force."

David Lawrence, New York *Sun*, and 160 other newspapers: "The British Navy is a valuable force in the maintenance of world peace, and British cooperation is an essential to American foreign policy in the

EDWARD VIII

Far East. Anything, therefore, which tends to break down the collective strength of the British Empire becomes a matter of more than academic concern for the United States."

H. L. Mencken in the *Baltimore Sun*: "I consider Edward an idiot. His abdication shows it."

And from England:

G. B. Shaw: "A frightful insult to the United States!"