

LLOYD GEORGE SEES LEAGUE'S POWER GONE

Late Crisis Too Much for Infant

Delicate Greco-Italian Troubles Should Not Have Gone to League Under Circumstances.

"Melodramatic Display"

BY DAVID LLOYD GEORGE
London, Sept. 15.—The volcano which broke out so unexpectedly on the Adriatic littoral has, for the time being, ceased to be active and the lava flow has been arrested and appears to be congealing at Corfu.

Signor Mussolini has not yet declared war against the league of nations. This is probably because the league has abdicated in favor of the council of ambassadors.

Whether the incident is closed depends on whether or not Italy means to stick to Corfu. It is not yet clear that Signor Mussolini means to give up Corfu, even if Greece humiliates her pride to the dust to propitiate this wrath. If he does go out, with his 100,000,000 lire and all the rest, then the whole affair will soon be forgotten and the troubled European eye will wander back to the Ruhr—provided always the Mussolini volcano does not break out in another direction.

The subterranean rumblings in the northern Adriatic are becoming more and more audible and angry. The Flume crater may, within the next few days, belch forth flames and throw out streams of lava which will not be as easily arrested as those at Corfu. So that the danger is by no means over.

Complication of Diseases.
If Italy remains at Corfu, or if she strikes out as Flume on any pretext or another, then Europe will, if it may vary the metaphor, have two more serious abscesses added to her other grave ailments. Poor Europe! How can she ever hope to get well with such a complication of diseases in her system!

But whatever occurs at Corfu or Flume, there can be no doubt as to the effect of the unhappy events of the last week on the fortunes of Geneva. The league of nations has suffered a severe shock to its authority. Its right to intervene in a dispute which had provoked an act of war by one member of the league against another has been repudiated with violent emphasis by the former.

A great power, which is one of the leading members of the league, has laid it down as a principle that the league has no right to interfere where one of the parties avers that a question of national honor is involved.

The assembly at Geneva has practically accepted that grave limitation on their powers by handing over their functions to another body, not known to any treaty. They have thus implicitly bowed to Signor Mussolini's challenge.

His contention took the form of not only telling them it was none of their business and that, if they persisted, Italy would withdraw from the league, but also of claiming it was a question for the council of ambassadors to deal with. To this view the league has, in effect, given its assent. The council of ambassadors is simply a gathering of diplomats who, for the time being, represent the leading allied powers in Paris. To this body has been referred, from time to time, questions arising out of the interpretation of peace treaties. It is indeed one chosen by Signor Mussolini in preference to the league. The council of the league acquiesced in their own deposition as an instrument for settling international disputes.

They may suggest terms and conditions, but they can no longer intervene. Henceforth, should any difference likely to end in war arise between nations, then, as soon as one of the disputants claims that it affects the national honor, the Italian precedent places that dispute outside the jurisdiction of the league. What then is left of the covenant?

More good causes have been ruined by injudicious advocacy than by powerful opposition. The league of nations is pre-eminently an example of this truth. Some of us who count ourselves sincere friends of the league have always urged gradual and cautious procedure with the league. We felt certain that any attempt to refer to it, in the days of its infancy, highly controversial questions on which great nations felt acutely for decision, would only break its back. The zealous scoffed at our timidity and attributed it to concealed dislike of the league. They have now had their way, and a pretty mess they have made of the league.

What could have been more mala-

droit and tactless than the handling of this delicate affair by the council of the league? It was a situation that called for the most skillful and circumspect manipulation. Italy was seething with unfeigned anger at the cold-blooded murder of her agents on Greek soil. Italian and Greek rivalries in the Mediterranean—as old as the days of Pyrrhus—Italian dislike and distrust of the Greek—perhaps still older—made the Italians ready to believe the worst as to the motives and origin of the bloody deed.

If there were statesmen who saw in this squalid episode the opportunity to secure a coveted citadel which would add to Italian security in the Adriatic, that was an added reason for moving wisely and cautiously. Instead of which, every blunder and crudity was committed of which a combination of fanaticism, vanity and temper was capable.

Thought Cards Stacked.
The council managed to convey the impression that it had already taken sides before it had even heard the parties. What greater mistake could a tribunal commit if it wished to command confidence. Then a novel experiment in adjudication has not yet established its influence, confidence is vital to its continued existence. By demeanor even more than by speech, the British representative managed to create the conviction in the Italian mind that he had already come to the conclusion that Italy was in the wrong. The contents of the Italian press were unanimous in their depreciation of the apparent prejudice of the case. The effect was so bad that it was impossible for Signor Mussolini to agree to refer the dispute to the decision of the league, even if he had desired to do so.

Things were made much worse by premature discussion, which was arranged to take place in public, with histrionic effects, to show up Italy's attitude, and ostentatiously to put it in wrong in the sight of the civilized world. The drama—together with the demonstration from the clique of league sympathizers who congregated on these occasions—all irritated Italy to the point of frenzy, and the publicity made it impossible for it to retreat from its uncompromising position.

The movers in this melodramatic display ought to have known that, had Signor Mussolini surrendered after this exhibition, he would have been done for in Italy.

League Should Have Investigated.
The league ought never to have intervened at all without prospecting the ground thoroughly before taking the first step. One of three things ought to have been assured by the council before it committed the prestige of the league.

1. It ought to have been ascertained that both parties would have accepted the arbitration of the league. Failing satisfactory assur-

ance on this point, then the council ought, at any rate, to have been certain either that—

2. The other powers—and notably Britain and France—would have been ready, in the event of either of the disputants refusing to submit to the league, to enforce respect for the covenant or, if agreement among the powers was not practicable, then—

3. That at least one power with the requisite strength at its command was prepared to take whatever measures were necessary to force the recalcitrant to submit.

Short of one of these alternatives, it was madness to rush in. As to No. 1, Italy had made it clear that it would have none of the league. As to No. 2, the British representative

ought to have known that France could not just now afford to quarrel with Italy. The Mussolini government knew that before they—hounded Corfu. The invaders of the Ruhr could not force the invaders of Corfu to take their case to Geneva for decision. The retort would have been too obvious: "If Greece, why not Germany?" M. Poincare did not mind our quarrelling with Italy. Is it too unkind to say that it suits him? Whether it is or not, I am afraid it is true.

There was, therefore, nothing left but No. 3. Had Lord Robert Cecil authority to commit the British fleet to action? If he had not, then why in the name of common sense did he insist on committing the British gov-

ernment to such vehement emphasis to a course neither he nor they were prepared to back?

It had damaged the British name and it has destroyed the authority of the league of nations.

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W. C. T. U. Delegates Named for County Convention
Delegates have been elected by the Frances Willard post of the W. C. T. U. to attend the county convention Monday, September 17.

They are:

Mrs. E. Covell, Mrs. C. J. Roberts, Mrs. R. Ward, Mrs. N. Martson, Mrs. H. N. Craig, Mrs. C. S. Johnson, Mrs. D. J. Burden, Mrs. E. P. Brazz, Mrs. W. F. Poff, Dr. Alice Karl, Rev. Ada Anderson, Mrs. G. H. Blev, Mrs. E. P. Brazz, Mrs. W. S. Bloom, Miss Gladys Harden, Mrs. E. S. Potts, Mrs. Charles Cain, Mrs. G. W. Cavender, Mrs. John Crawford, Mrs. W. J. Catlin, Mrs. Isaac Douglas, Mrs. A. N. Eaton, Mrs. Mary Emory, Mrs. E. M. Freeman, Mrs. Ed. Gibbs, Mrs. Frank Gordon, Mrs. C. E. Gray, Mrs. C. F. Harison, Mrs. N. S. Hodder, Mrs. C. C. Howe, Mrs. L. B. Hoyer, Mrs. Clara Truesdale, Mrs. N. H. Hawkins, Mrs. J. M. Hamilton, Mrs. S. C. Irwin, Mrs. A. F. Johnston, Mrs. T. C. Kerschner, Mrs. J. J. Mellick, Mrs. A. S. C. Moore, Mrs. Anna E. Nelson, Miss Minnie Nelson, Mrs. H. B. Ricks, Mrs. J. B. Roberts, Mrs. W. C. Riffe, Mrs. E. Reveal, Mrs. John Smart, Mrs. Jennie Salmon, Mrs. Sandwall, Mrs. Homer Stunt, Mrs. Sidney Smith, Mrs. George Tickner, Mrs. J. M. Travis, Mrs. C. S. Teator, Mrs. J. M. Tallaferris, Mrs. E. O. Widover, Mrs. G. A. Westerfield and Mrs. J. F. Woolery.

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