

TURKISH EMPIRE AS BOOTY

Secret Deals Among European Nations, Each Striving to Seize What It Could—More Peace Conference Records From Wilson's Steel Box

AMERICA AND THE WORLD PEACE

By RAY STANNARD BAKER
(Eleventh Instalment)

The chapters of the two previous weeks concerned Europe's secret treaties.

WE come now to the most illuminating of all the exhibits of the old diplomacy—the group of "secret treaties," "arrangements," "conversations," by which the old Turkish Empire was to be carved up between the allied nations. We can now set forth not only the terms of these treaties but the whole enlightening history of their stormy progress through the Peace Conference, where in secret councils the real purposes of the nations were bluntly set forth.

Italy's Bargain in Turkey. So far, so good. But about the same time the Allies were raising heaven and earth to get Italy into the war. Germany and Austria had dangled glittering offers before the Italians to get them in on their side. Italy knew her power and drove a hard bargain with the Allies. She also looked with longing eyes toward the Turkish treasure-house and provided in the London treaty (also described in the last chapter) for a "right, in case of the partition of Turkey, to a share equal to theirs (Great Britain, France and Russia) in the basin of the Mediterranean—that part of it which adjoins the province of Adalia."

These "rights" and "shares" were vague, especially after Italy came in, and to the diplomats, particularly the French, extremely unsatisfactory. For the British were actually on the ground and had been negotiating with the Arab King, Hussein, as to the creation of an independent Arab State in return for Arab assistance in the war. The French were fearful that the British would be-

come too powerful in that part of the world, get too strong a grip on Turkey. Therefore, they began negotiating with their old friends the Russians, and at the same time demanded a "show-down" with the British. The result was two new secret treaties devoted wholly to the disposal of Turkey.

First, the Sazonov-Paléologue treaty between Russia and France (disclosed in a memorandum of the old Russian Foreign Office dated a year later, March, 1917) dealing with Northern Asiatic Turkey. Under this arrangement Russia staked out a vast domain, 60,000

square miles between the Persian frontier and the Black Sea, with rich resources of copper, silver and salt. The fortress of Erzerum and the important Port of Trebizond were included in this territory.

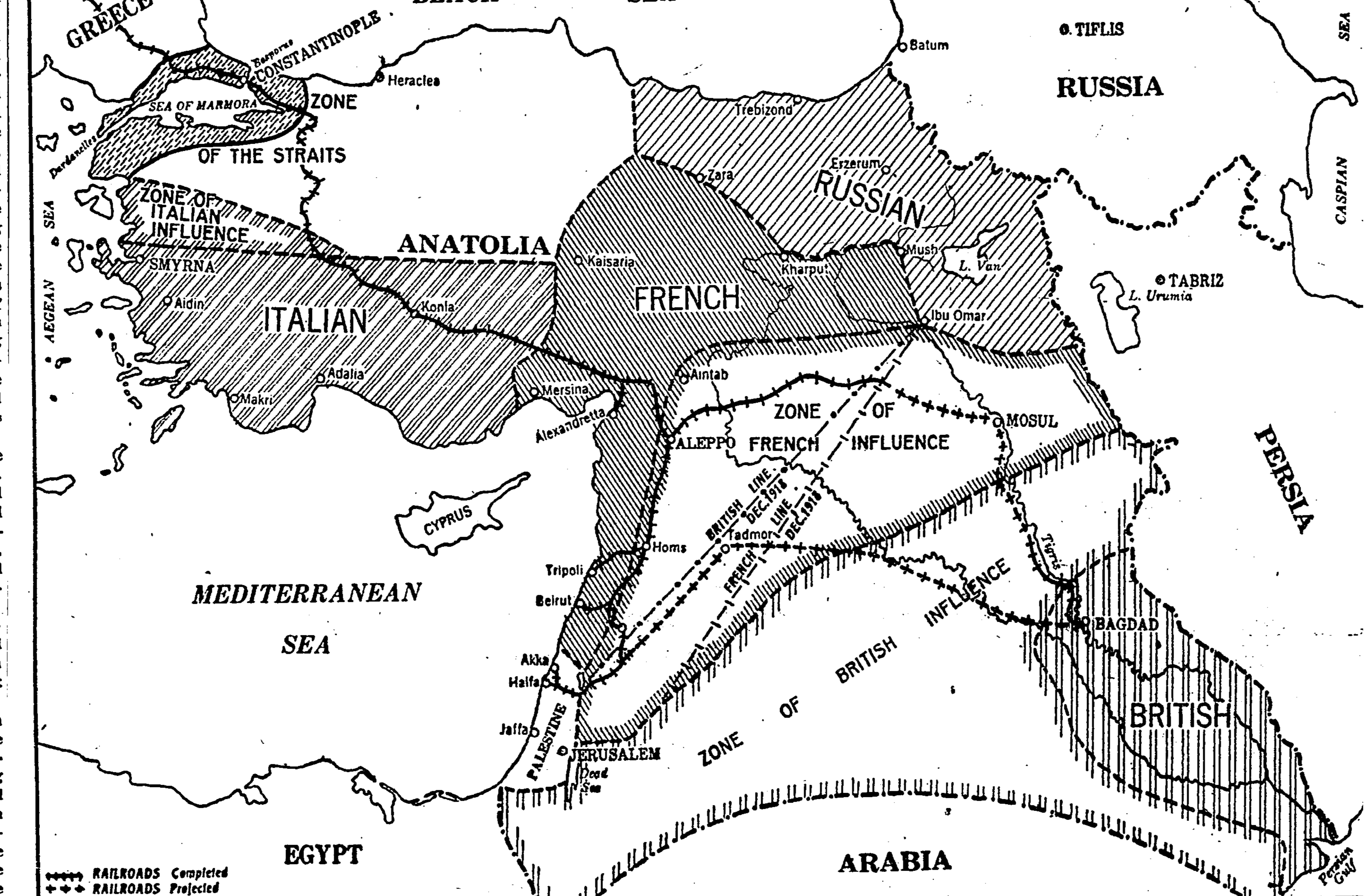
The French for their share were given a great slice to the south and west reaching to the Mediterranean, the actual boundaries of which she was to determine by arrangements with the British.

Second, Northern Turkey having thus been disposed of, arrangements were made between France and Great Britain regarding the vast southern part of Asiatic Turkey. Sir Mark Sykes represented Great Britain and M. Picot represented France in these negotiations, and the resulting secret treaty of May, 1916, was called the Sykes-Picot treaty. Under this arrangement (see map):

France got all the important coast of Syria on the Mediterranean as far south as Akka, and all the ports—except that Alexandretta was to be free to British trade. France also got a great hinterland—a veritable principality—reaching east as far as the Tigris River.

Great Britain got for direct administration only the Mediterranean ports of Akka and Haifa and the portion of Mesopotamia between Bagdad and the Persian Gulf—a tidy bit of territory with great riches in oil and in agricultural land when irrigated.

Between these claims, and north of the Arabian peninsula, lay a great interior mass of Turkish territory still not disposed of, including the important



HOW TURKEY WAS CARVED BY SIX SECRET AGREEMENTS:

- The Franco-Russo-British Agreement of March, 1915, Gave Russia Constantinople.
- The Sazonov-Paléologue Treaty of April 26, 1916, Delimited the French and Russian Shares in Asia.
- The Sykes-Picot Treaty of May, 1916, Divided What Lay Beyond Between France and Great Britain.

- The Treaty of London, April 26, 1915, Gave Italy the Region of Adalia.
- The St. Jean de Maurienne Agreement, Completed in August, 1917, Promised Italy Smyrna and the Rest of the Territory Shown.
- The Clemenceau-Lloyd George Understanding of December, 1918, Transferred Mosul to Great Britain, but Left a Dispute as to Whether the New Line Should Run East or West of Tadmar.

SECRET
I.O.-162A
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NOTES OF A CONFERENCE held in the Prime Minister's Flat at 20 Rue Mitet, Paris, on THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 1919, at 5 P.M.

PROCEEDINGS

United States of America:	British Empire:
President Wilson:	The Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd George, M.P.
	The Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour, O.M., M.P.
	General Allenby:
	General Bells:
	Lt.-Col. Sir W. P. A. Mackay, K.C.S.I.
France:	Italy:
M. Clemenceau:	M. Orlando:
M. Pichon:	Baron Gombas:
M. Berthelot:	

Interpreter: Prof. F. J. Maitland.

would "have priority of right of enterprise and local loans and... shall alone supply advisers or foreign functionaries at the request of the Arab State or Confederation of Arab States. Was France prepared to accept that? This, however, was not a question between Great Britain and France. It was a question between France and an agreement which we had signed with King Hussein.

(At this point M. ORLANDO and GENERAL BILLS INTERFERED.)

M. PICHON said he wished to say one word. In the new arrangements which were contemplated no direct administration whatsoever was claimed by France. Since the Agreement of 1916, the whole mandatory system had been adopted. If a mandate were granted by the League of Nations over these territories, all that he asked was that France should have that part put aside for her.

MR LLOYD GEORGE said that we could not do that. The League of Nations could not be used for putting aside our bargain with King Hussein. He asked if M. Pichon intended to occupy Damascus with French troops? If he did, it would clearly be a violation of the treaty with the Arabs.

M. PICHON said that France had no convention with King Hussein.

MR LLOYD GEORGE said that the whole of the agreement of 1916 (Sykes-Picot), was based on a letter from Sir Henry McMahon to King Hussein from which he quoted the following extracts:-

"The districts of Hama and Alexandretta, and portions of Syria lying to the west of the districts of Damascus, Hama, Hama, and Aleppo, cannot be said to be purely Arab, and should be excluded from the proposed limits of boundaries. With the above modifications, and without prejudice to our existing treaties with Arab Chiefs, we accept these limits of boundaries; and in regard to those portions of the territories therein in which Great Britain is free to act without detriment to the interests of her ally France, I am empowered, in the name of the Government of Great Britain, to give the following Assurances and make the following reply to your letter:-

"Subject to the above modifications Great Britain is prepared to recognise and support the independence of the Arabs within territories included in the limits of boundaries proposed by the Sherif of Mecca." - (Extract from a letter from Sir H. McMahon to King Hussein, Oct. 24, 1915.)

M. PICHON said that this undertaking had been made by Great Britain (Anglo-Turkish) France had never seen it until a few weeks before when Sir Maurice Hankey had handed him a copy.

MR LLOYD GEORGE said the agreement might have been by England (Angleterre) alone, but it was England (Angleterre) who had organised the whole of the Syrian campaign. There would have been no question of Syria but for England (Angleterre). Great Britain had put from 800,000 to 1,000,000 men in the field against Turkey, but Arab help had been essential; that was a point on which General Allenby could speak.

GENERAL ALLENBY said it had been invaluable.

MR LLOYD GEORGE, continuing, said that it was on the basis of the above quoted letter that King Hussein had put all his resources into the field which had helped us most materially to win the victory. France had for practical purposes accepted our undertaking to King Hussein in signing the 1916 agreement. This had not been M. Pichon, but his predecessors. He was bound to say that if the British Government now agreed that Damascus, Hama, Hama, and Aleppo should be included in the sphere of direct French influence, they would be breaking faith with the Arabs, and they could not face this. He was particularly anxious for M. Clemenceau to follow this. The agreement of 1916 had been signed subsequent to the letter to King Hussein. In the following extract from the agreement of 1916 France recognised Arab independence:-

"It is accordingly understood between the French and British Governments:-

(1) That France and Great Britain are prepared to recognise and uphold an independent Arab State or Confederation of Arab States in the areas A. and B. marked on the annexed map under the suzerainty of an Arab Chief."

Hence, France, by this act, practically recognised our agreement with King Hussein by excluding Damascus, Hama, Hama, and Aleppo from the blue zone of direct administration, for the map attached to the agreement showed that Damascus, Hama, Hama and Aleppo were included, not in the zone of direct administration, but in the independent Arab State.

M. PICHON said that this had never been contested, but how could France be bound by an agreement the very existence of which was unknown to her at the time when the 1916 agreement was signed? In the 1916 agreement France had not in any way recognised the

Hedjaz. She had undertaken to uphold "an independent Arab State or Confederation of Arab States", but not the King of the Hedjaz. If France was promised a mandate for Syria, she would undertake to do nothing except in agreement with the Arab State or Confederation of States. This is the rôle which France demanded in Syria. If Great Britain would only promise her good offices, he believed that France could reach an understanding with Feisal.

PRESIDENT WILSON said that he would now seek to establish his place in the Conference. Up to the present he had had none. He could only be here, like his colleague M. Orlando, as one of the representatives assembled to establish the peace of the world. This was his only interest, although, of course, he was a friend of both parties to the controversy. He was not indifferent to the understanding which had been reached between the British and French Governments, and was interested to know about the undertakings to King Hussein and the 1916 agreement, but it was not permissible for him to express an opinion thereon. He would, however, like to point out that one of the parties to the 1916 agreement had been Russia, and Russia had now disappeared. Hence, the partnership of interest had been dissolved, since one of the parties had gone out. This seemed to him to alter the basis of the agreement. The point of view of the United States of America was, however, indifferent to the claims both of Great Britain and France over peoples unless those peoples wanted them. One of the fundamental principles to which the United States of America adhered was the consent of the governed. This was ingrained in the United States of America thought. Hence, the only idea from the United States of America point of view was as to whether France would be agreeable to the Syrians. The same applied as to whether Great Britain would be agreeable to the inhabitants of Mesopotamia. It might not be his business, but if the question was made his business, owing to the fact that it was brought before the Conference, the only way to deal with it was to discover the

THE MOST SECRET MEETING—These Extracts Are From Minutes Taken at an Informal Gathering of the "Big Four" on March 20, 1919. The Four Had Not Been Formally Organized as the Council of Four, and Their First Official Meeting Was on April 19—a Month Later. The March 20 Session Was Held in Lloyd George's Flat, Not at Wilson's House. The Minutes Were Never Bound With the Official Secret Volumes of the Paris Peace Conference. The Purpose of the Meeting Was to Discuss Turkey and the Near East.

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(Continued from Page 1.)

cities of Damascus, Homs and Aleppo. This was adjudged to some hypothetical "Arab State or confederation of Arab States," with which France and Great Britain were to come to an understanding later. But this territory also was divided into zones of influence in which the respective powers should have "prior rights over local enterprises and loans" and "be the only ones to furnish foreign advisers and officials."

There remained Palestine, and this was set aside also for future agreement.

Exclusive Nature of the Treaty.
But this secret treaty not only dealt with divisions of territory. It also contained a solemn agreement on the part of the French and British to allow no other nations any rights in all this great part of the old Turkish Empire—this undoubtedly meant their ally, Italy—and plans were made to begin economic development by building a new railroad from Bagdad direct to Aleppo, where Great Britain could get connection out to the sea at Alexandretta for her Mesopotamian oil.

No sooner were these secret agreements made between the French and British than the Italians, no doubt learning of the general provisions in the roundabout ways known to the old diplomacy, became much discontented. They saw that France was getting a much larger share in Turkey than was Italy, under the secret treaty of London. So new secret negotiations began, this time including the Italians, and dragged along during all the year just before the Americans came into the war and at the very time that allied statesmen were issuing declarations of unselfish war aims.

In April, 1917 (America declared war April 6), Mr. Lloyd George met the French and Italians at St. Jean de Maurienne and tried to patch up the disagreements and so satisfy the Italians. There were other important matters at issue here—proposals for a separate peace with Austria-Hungary just launched by the "Sixtus letters," and the prosecution of war in the Near East, in which France and Great Britain needed unqualified Italian support. And the Italians never gave their support for nothing!

To get this Lloyd George offered to give Smyrna and certain other Turkish territory to the Italians.

Mr. Balfour, his Foreign Minister, it will be remembered, was just then in America, helping to cheer along American participation in the war. He told Wilson and Clemenceau during a meeting of the Council on May 11, 1919 (Secret Minutes):

While I was away Mr. Lloyd George, no doubt for reasons which appeared to him sufficient, had, at St. Jean de Maurienne, agreed to let the Italians have Smyrna on certain conditions.

But even this did not satisfy the Italians. The negotiations dragged along and finally a secret agreement was reached giving Italy not only Smyrna, but also a zone of influence of great value north of it, inhabited chiefly by Greeks and Turks. This agreement was, however, to be dependent upon the approval of the Russians. But the Russian Government, which had just been overthrown by the revolutionists, never gave that consent. The result was that a vast controversy developed at the Peace Conference as to whether or not the promises to the Italians of St. Jean de Maurienne were binding upon France and Great Britain.

In January, 1918, the Fourteen Points were set forth by President Wilson as a proposed basis of the peace and Lloyd George told the world (Jan. 5) that the Allies were no longer fettered by the secret treaties in discussing the future of Turkey; yet these secret discussions kept right on, for the spoils to be divided were indeed rich.

The Negotiations Go On.

In November, at the armistice with Germany, the President's program of settlement was accepted by every one as the basis of the coming peace. It included Point I, providing for open diplomacy, and Point XII, relating to Turkey. Yet these secret conversations between the British and the French relating to their Turkish claims kept right on. We have the most unimpeachable evidence of this in the words of M. Pichon, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, during a secret meeting of the Four in Lloyd George's apartment, on March 20, 1919. I shall speak further of this meeting later, for it was important in many respects. M. Pichon said at this time that after the agreement with the Italians in 1916 "there had been a long further correspondence and an exchange of many notes between France and Great Britain" concerning these Turkish claims.

Of course, these conversations were secret, and it appeared that it was the British now who were not satisfied. They were doing the brunt of the fighting without French help, and they wanted more concessions in Turkey. Lloyd George's immensely clever gesture (in January, 1918), of putting the old treaties regarding Turkey aside not only helped to reassure labor in England, whipped up recruiting in India where the Moslems were fearful regarding the future of Turkey, and gave evidence of support of President Wilson, but it also frightened the French to such an extent that they were willing to buy a confirmation of the Sykes-Picot treaty by consenting to its revision. Never was there a cleverer stroke. It did duty at once in three different causes and in both kinds of diplomacy! It backed up the open diplomacy of Wilson. It scored a point in the secret dealings with the French.

Here we have again Pichon's narrative (Secret Minutes, March 20):

As the difficulties between the two Governments continued, and as the French Government particularly did not wish them to reach a point where ultimate agreement would be compromised, the President of the Council (Clemenceau), on his visit to London in December, 1918, had asked Mr. Lloyd George to confirm the agreement between the two countries. Mr. Lloyd George had replied that he saw no difficulty about the rights of France in Syria and Cilicia, but he made demands for certain places which he thought should be included in the British zone, and which, under the 1916 agreement, were in the French zone of influence, namely, Mosul. He also asked for Palestine.

This was in December, 1918, after the close of the war, when, it must be remembered, all the Allies had accepted the Fourteen Points as the basis of the peace. It was also just at the time when President Wilson was ready to bail for Europe to help make the peace.

But even then the discussions were not at an end. They continued privately between the British and French (unknown either to the "associated" Americans or the "allied" Italians) even after the Peace Conference began to sit. The French hated to yield and

Clemenceau's final acceptance of the British proposal was not given until Feb. 15—a month after the Peace Conference meetings began. The difficulty lay in drawing the new line of demarcation. The French still wished to retain all the hinterland of Syria; while the British insisted that the line should run far enough to the northwest to give them the oasis of Tadmor and complete control of a line of railway (to be built) passing through it between Bagdad and the port of Haifa on the Mediterranean. In short, they insisted on having a railroad line entirely within their own sphere of influence, else in case of war their oil supplies from Mesopotamia might be held up by the French. On this point the transaction was still hanging fire when the conference of March 20 was called at Lloyd George's apartment and the whole entanglement was disclosed.

Crucial Meeting of the Council.
As I have said, this meeting of March 20 was one of the great and crucial meetings of the peace conference. It was held long before the policy of the small secret conferences of the "Big Four" had been formally adopted. The Council of Ten was then the official body. So that this meeting of March 20 was secret even from the other members of the ten, and the minutes of it were not even included with those of the "Big Four," and are not to be found there today. Most of the "Big Four" meetings were in President Wilson's study, but this was across the street in Lloyd George's flat in the Rue Nitot. President Wilson represented America; Lloyd George, Balfour and General Allenby represented the British Empire; Clemenceau, Pichon and Berthelot represented France, and Orlando and Sonnino, Italy.

It was evidently considered a vital meeting. President Wilson had only

first occasion, I believe, that President Wilson had ever heard of the Sykes-Picot treaty, or of the agreements at St. Jean de Maurienne.

I remember afterward of his speaking to me with great disgust of this Sykes-Picot treaty; said that it sounded like the name of a tea; called it "a fine example of the old diplomacy."

Clash of French and British.
Pichon opened the meeting with a long statement of the whole history of the effort to carve up Turkey, made a defense of French claims and objected to the British demand for more rights in Turkey. Lloyd George followed with a defense of British claims, at the same time charging that the French were preparing to encroach upon the Arabs. He argued bluntly that the British had done the fighting in Turkey almost without French help, and, therefore, ought to have what they wanted. Here are some of the things he said (secret minutes, March 20):

He had begged the French Government to co-operate, and had pointed out to them that it would enable them to occupy Syria, although, at the time, the British troops had not yet occupied Gaza. This had occurred in 1917 and 1918, at a time when the heaviest casualties in France also were being incurred by British troops. From that time on, most of the heavy and continuous fighting in France had been done by British troops, although Marshal Pétain had made a number of valuable smaller attacks. This was one of the reasons why he had felt justified in asking Marshal Foch for troops (for use in Turkey). He had referred to this in order to show that the reason we had fought so hard in Palestine was not because we had not been fighting in France.

Mr. Lloyd George then disclosed the fact of a secret arrangement of the British with King Hussein of the Arabs which was older than the Sykes-Picot treaty. And it instantly appeared that not even the French had previously

agreed to the inhabitants of Mesopotamia not to be his business, but if the question was made his business, owing to the fact that it was brought before the conference, the only way to deal with it was to discover the desires of the population of these regions.

2. He wanted a settlement on a basis not of secret diplomacy but of facts.

The present controversy broadened out into a case affecting the peace of the whole world. He was told that if France insisted on occupying Damascus and Aleppo there would be instant war. He therefore suggested a commission of inquiry in Turkey, and he gave his opinion of exactly what they should do.

Their object should be to elucidate the state of opinion and the soil to be worked on by any mandatory. They should be asked to come back and tell the conference what they found with regard to these matters. . . . It would convince the world that the conference had tried to do all it could to find the most scientific basis possible for a settlement. The commission should be composed of an equal number of French, British, Italian and American representatives. He would send it with carte blanche to tell the facts as they found them.

The President grew most enthusiastic and urgent in pressing this idea. M. Clemenceau said he "adhered in principle" to an inquiry—one of the favorite phrases of diplomacy—but if an inquiry was made he wanted it to apply not only to Syria and the French claims but to Palestine and Mesopotamia, where the British were. While Lloyd George also accepted the idea "in principle," and said he was ready to support such an inquiry, he was lukewarm. However, the President considered his suggestion accepted. I saw him shortly afterward, and he told me with enthusiasm about his plan:

"Baker, I want to put the two ablest Americans now in Europe on that commission."

He asked me if I could make any suggestions as to possible appointees. I went over hastily in my mind various men not already connected with important governmental or military work and finally suggested President Henry Churchill King of Oberlin College. I had long known of him as a man of sound judgment and high ideals. The President immediately asked me to get in touch with President King and he was appointed, with Charles R. Crane, as a member of the commission.

But the French refused to appoint their members, and the British blew hot and cold, and finally, after long delays, the American commissioners started out alone, made their investigations in Turkey and brought back a report.

Of further developments, however, in the Turkish controversy, I shall treat in a later chapter, my only purpose here being to present and illustrate the methods of the old secret diplomacy. Suffice it to say that President Wilson's proposal to base a final settlement on the findings of a disinterested commission bore no fruit in the end, for it was frustrated by the French with the tacit support of the British.

Mesopotamian Oil.

One more development in the struggle, however, must be noted because it illustrates vividly the concern of secret diplomacy not only with political and territorial expansion, but—far more important—with immediate economic exploitation. Although nothing was settled regarding Turkey, though no peace had been made, it suddenly emerged in the secret councils, May 22, that powerful British and French commercial interests were at that moment negotiating for the laying of a pipe line from the Mesopotamian oil fields to the port of Tripoli in the French zone of Syria. These negotiations had been initiated by the British—represented by Mr. Walter Long—though Lloyd George told the council emphatically that he (Lloyd George) had not been spoken to about them. On the part of the French they were managed by M. Beranger, and Clemenceau also denied that he had known anything about them.

He [Clemenceau] had only heard this very morning [narrates the secret minutes] of the negotiation between M. Beranger and some British petroleum people for laying a pipe line to the coast. He knew nothing of the details of the arrangement. He was not very much interested in this matter, as Lloyd George had erroneously assumed on the previous day.

To this Lloyd George replied:

Of the pipe line he knew nothing, and was very annoyed when he first learned of it. There seemed to have been some negotiation between the people in Paris interested in oil and those in London. Consequently, at the moment when M. Clemenceau had said that he did not like the arrangement (M. Clemenceau interjected that he had referred to something quite different), he had canceled it. He did not want to be mixed up with oil trusts in London or America or Paris, as he was afraid it would vitiate the whole business. Consequently, on the previous afternoon, he had written to M. Clemenceau to cancel the whole of these oil negotiations.

In this connection it is to be noted, as evidence of the trend of the times, that these private compacts are becoming more and more predominantly economic in character. The Sykes-Picot agreement was political in its main features, though with a strong economic flavor pervading all its terms; the latest Franco-Turkish treaty (1921) is almost wholly economic—indeed, the French renounce a narrow political position in return for broader economic advantages. In the negotiations concerning the railroads and pipe line which followed the Sykes-Picot treaty, economic considerations overrode political transactions. It is such economic "deals" that are undoubtedly going on in every corner of the world today. Although concerned primarily with the production and exchange of commodities, they often profoundly affect the destinies of large local populations and the whole scheme of international relations. Although frequently negotiated by industrial and financial, rather than diplomatic, agents, Governments stand behind them with the armed force of nations. The old order changes its methods, but not its spirit.

Such were, in general, the desires, needs, ambitions of the allied Governments set forth in the secret treaties. So they intended, if they won the war, to divide up the world; so they actually tried to divide it up at the Peace Conference. Though outwardly they were combating imperialism as symbolized by Germany, they were themselves seeking vast extensions of their own imperial and economic power. They kept these agreements secret from their own people, fearing their effect on the great masses of the workers and the liberal groups; they kept them secret also from their smaller allies, like Serbia, and they kept them secret from America both before and after America came into the war. These treaties, partly disclosed in enemy countries through the publication of the Bolsheviks, and greatly exaggerated there, were powder and shot—army corps!—the enemy, for

direct. It was curved out towards Mosul and drawn so as to prevent the British from having the oasis of Tadmor. This would put the British/railway entirely at the mercy of the French oil interests. All that was asked was that the line should go direct and give us Tadmor. He did not wish to be at the mercy of oil interests, whether they were British or French. Unless the map he had presented was agreed to, he would have to await the report of the Commission before withdrawing the British troops. If they reported that the British were not wanted there, then the British would have no right to stay, neither would the French if the report was against them.

M. CLEMENCEAU said he must deal with two or three of Mr. Lloyd George's arguments. First, there was the question as to whether the Sykes-Picot agreement held. He claimed that it did, of course. Mr. Lloyd George had not questioned it in London. He had declared that this was the Treaty to which he intended to remain faithful and that the word of the British Government was engaged. A Treaty was a Treaty and could not be departed from, but he declared on his honour that Mr. Lloyd George had said repeatedly he would remain faithful to it, so he, himself, adhered to it.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE asked whether this included Damascus? when he gave Mosul he realized he would share in Damascus and Aleppo on corresponding terms. Of course, he recognized that Damascus was Arab. He had two things to say. When he had agreed that Mosul should be included in the British zone, Mr. Lloyd George had never told him that it involved this considerable alteration in the line. He would never have agreed

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FROM "BIG FOUR" SECRET MINUTES.

Extract From a Discussion on May 22, 1919, Showing How the European Diplomats Placidly Told of "Giving" Cities to This Country or That in the Course of Their War Bargaining.

just returned from America. Before he had gone away he had done two very important things. First, he had forced the adoption, after fierce controversy, of the mandatory principle for the control of the "old empires" and of the former German colonies. Second, he had made (Feb. 1, Council of Ten) a blunt declaration of the American attitude toward the old secret treaties, although at that time he knew definitely of only a few of them, and had no idea of the vast web of secret diplomacy yet to be revealed: "As the United States are not bound by any of the (secret) treaties in question they are quite ready to approve a settlement on a basis of facts."

There had evidently been some hard thinking about these pronouncements of the President while he was away. What did he mean? How far did he intend to go? For if the mandatory system were to be sincerely adopted as the policy of the world it meant a knock-out blow to many of the advantages of foreign spheres of influence in which the old diplomacy was so deeply interested. It meant, for example, the "open door"! And of what use was colonial expansion without economic control or privilege?

And a settlement on a "basis of facts"! The old order wanted possession, not facts. They would let in at once inquiries, not of what they, the Great Powers, wanted for themselves, in oil, silver, copper, pipe-lines, but what the people who inhabited all these vast regions, of whom nobody was thinking, what they wanted, and how their true welfare was to be secured. Facts meant all sorts of embarrassing inquiries into oil supply, control of railroads, domination of ports and sea-channels, armament of natives, fortifications, even customs duties and finances.

These two principles of the President, then, if carried out, would knock the old diplomacy sky-high, and rob the secret treaties of every shred of their importance or value.

Hence the importance of this meeting of March 20. The French had put up on the wall of Lloyd George's study a large map of Asiatic Turkey with territories colored to show the entire history of the secret negotiations. This was the

known of it. It was secret from them! Here is what Pichon says:

M. PICHON said that this undertaking had been made by Great Britain (Angleterre) alone. France had never seen it until a few weeks before when Sir Maurice Hankey had handed him a copy.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE said the agreement might have been made by England (Angleterre) alone, but it was England (Angleterre) who had organized the whole of the Syrian campaign. There would have been no question of Syria but for England (Angleterre). Great Britain had put from 800,000 to 1,000,000 men in the field against Turkey, but Arab help had been essential; that was a point on which General Allenby could speak.

General ALLENBY said it had been invaluable. . . . M. PICHON said that this had never been contested, but how could France be bound by an agreement the very existence of which was unknown to her at the time when the 1916 agreement was signed?

At this point, the controversy having become heated, President Wilson broke in with a blunt inquiry as to why he was at the conference.

President Wilson said that he would not seek to establish his place in the conference. Up to the present he had had none. He could only be here, like his colleague, M. Orlando, as one of the representatives assembled to establish the peace of the world. This was his only interest, although, of course, he was a friend of both parties to the controversy. He was not indifferent to the understanding which had been reached between the British and French Governments, and was interested to know about the undertaking to King Hussein and the 1916 agreement, but it was not permissible for him to express an opinion thereon.

Wilson Proposes an Inquiry.

He then made observations in which he again set forth clearly the American position and program.

First, the right of self-determination of these people. Here are his words:

The United States of America was indifferent to the claims both of Great Britain and France over peoples unless those peoples wanted them. One of the fundamental principles to which the United States of America adhered was the consent of the governed. This was ingrained in the thought of the United States of America. Hence, the United States (wanted to know) whether France would be agreeable to the Syrians. The same applied as to whether Great Britain would be

they were used to prove the contentions of the German war lords that the Allies were really fighting to gobble up the world.

And finally they bore a crop of suspicion, controversy, balked ambition, which twice, at least, nearly wrecked the Peace Conference, poisoned its discussions and warped and disfigured its final decisions.

Wilson's Labor for Remedies.

I am conscious that this makes a pretty dark picture, but it is necessary to look squarely at it in considering the atmosphere in which the Paris negotiations were carried on. And yet, though it all, the President not only combated, steadily and with determination, settlements based upon these old secret desires and agreements, but patiently worked out provisions in the Covenant of the League of Nations which, in future, should wipe out the entire disgraceful old system. Article XVIII of the Covenant reads:

Every treaty or international engagement entered into hereafter by any member of the league shall be forthwith registered with the secretariat and shall as soon as possible be published by it. No treaty or international engagement shall be binding until so registered.

This provision, if once all the nations go into the league with determination and good-will, is of an importance that can scarcely be exaggerated. It would cut away all secret diplomacy; it would usher in the new era of open diplomacy.

Yet everything depends upon the good-will and sincerity with which the nations support and carry out these provisions. President Wilson could help give the world an instrumentality for expressing its good-will, but he could not give them good-will. Since the League of Nations came into existence more than 150 treaties have been registered under this provision—a great step—and yet we know that "secret arrangements" are still being made, all or parts of which have not been registered.

I have endeavored thus to set forth the ripe products of the old diplomacy. To a certain extent, of course, these arrangements were forced upon the Allies as a measure of war; for Germany also was making secret offers to Italy, to Rumania, to Bulgaria, to Turkey, and probably to Japan, which had to be countered. We know that Germany even tried secret diplomacy with Mexico. Leaders of liberal and progressive minds on all domestic issues, like Asquith and Grey, were forced, owing to the antiquated and evil system of the old diplomacy, to take part in such secret practices.

In the high emotional time of danger and suffering, under the leadership of President Wilson these old aims, these secret desires, were apparently forgotten, apparently disclaimed. The whole world was momentarily lifted to a higher moral plane. The people of the world were with the President. But the moment the war closed the reaction began. The old Governments and the old system were in control, and there was a portentous "slump in idealism" which I shall describe in the next chapter.

Next Sunday's instalment will be a chapter on the slump in idealism coincident with the opening of the Paris Peace Conference.

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