

**LET FRANCE
EXPLAIN**

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Let France explain by Frederick Bausman

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PREFACE

LIBRARY SETS
IN the last three years there have been revealed about one thousand documents and diplomatic letters on the relations between France and Russia. All these with fatal uniformity show that between 1904 and 1914 the Government of France gave itself up to the dangerous policies of the infamous Court of St. Petersburg.

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Extraordinary though these revelations are, the world has heard almost nothing of them. Indulgent toward France, we have received them in silence. But her present Government drives Europe to desperation by claims based on outraged innocence. Nothing can be done to bring France to reason until the truth is known and her Government knows it to be known.

HARDING
That Government has been unwilling indeed to discuss documents so embarrassing. The scandalous secret treaty of 1917 made by the Poincaré administration with Russia has not, I believe, been discussed by them at all. Even the general treaty with Russia of 1892 was not published until two years after the outbreak of the war, when its bellicose terms were forced to the light. A special Yellow Book was then tardily issued concerning it. As to the French Cabinet between 1912 and 1914, the recent revelations of the Iswolsky correspondence have been ignored, but as the present work goes to press, we are told that a Yellow Book on that will be issued. The Yellow Books of the French Government have been of course only the Government's selection and not, as in the case of the German and

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Russian files, the result of search by hostile and censorious hands.

At the root of the international adjustments lies, in spite of everybody, the question of guilt. Even if Germany be guilty, there was undoubtedly guilt also in France, which lately shocks the United States, through no less a person than M. Loucheur, by the hint that after all France does not really owe us what she borrowed.

People must learn the truth, that the Poincaré Government, exulting in the creation of the greatest standing armies that either France or Russia had ever had, and in keen expectation of English aid, had their war party too. This party was in civil as well as military control.

Since the Washington Conference, moreover, there is spread in the United States a theory that the late horrible war was the fruit of skilful British intrigues for the crushing of Germany, and that France was a mere victim of the collision. Especially does there exist, even in circles friendly to England, an idea that by speaking out vigorously she might have prevented war. This book will show the error of that pernicious argument.

France is a spoiled child, and a dangerously spoiled child. She must be reminded of her Delcassés, her Millerands, and her Poincarés. She and the people of the world must be reminded of those banquets at St. Petersburg in furtherance of an alliance, the terms of which were kept secret so many years and which, after the Russian revolutionists made candour unavoidable, disclosed a really offensive arrangement by which Germany was so to be dealt with that she would have to defend "on both the east and the west at the same time."

The world must be reminded of the extent to which France armed Russia, of the immense simultaneous preparations of both, and of the reckless offensive conduct of French

public men toward Germany during a whole decade preceding the war.

Whatever may be the censure of recent French Governments and their pre-war policies in this book, no German suggested the work, no German contributed to it, no German ever saw the written page. It is the work of an American of stock long settled in the United States, who has but two friends in what was formerly the German Empire, and who has not been in Germany since 1913.

From an Ulster Protestant mother I have derived a perhaps extreme admiration for English institutions, and from a remote German ancestry a perhaps pardonable belief that Germans—though I have never got on very well with North Germans myself—have as good a record for peace as Frenchmen. A friend of France, I rejoice in her victory at the Marne; a friend of European civilization, I rejoice that the German Army was able to prevent the Russian despotism from enjoying its dark bargain of 1917 with France for the division of Central Europe.

The friends of Europe do not wish Germany to be destroyed. Yet under the Treaty of Versailles Germany has paid to this date the vast sum of 11,400,000,000 gold marks, of which nothing has been applied on her debt. Two-fifths have gone to support *the armies of occupation*, chiefly French.

THE AUTHOR.

ERRATA

- Page 61, line 2, *for* indefatigable *read* indefinable.
" 66, footnote 3, *for* 1913 *read* 1912.
" 105, line 11, *for* rights *read* right.
" 134, line 10, *for* latter *read* letter.
" 142, line 26, *for* bourgeois *read* bourgeoisie.
" 148, line 23, *for* has *read* had.
" 186, footnote, last line, *for* conceding *read* concealing.
" 190, line 21, *for* was *read* were.
" 192, footnote 2, *for* 272 *read* 271.
" 211, line 20, *for* of *read* to.
" 212, footnote, line 1, *for* come *read* came.
" 216, line 28, *for* had *read* would.
" 224, footnote, *for* 1914 *read* 1921.
" 226, footnote 3, *for* 9 *read* 49.
" 227, footnote 1, *for* Revue de France *read* Revue des
Deux Mondes, 1921, p. 248.

The typographical errors in the French text on pp. 34, 57, 73, 209 and 231 have been noticed, and will be corrected in later impressions.