

Feb. 2, 1923

Professor Albert Schinz,
Smith College,
Northampton, Mass.

My dear Sir:

I want to apologize for the delay in replying to your letter of January 23. It is the kind of letter that I like to answer at once, but the truth is I have been so occupied since I received it that it has been out of the question for me to give it any attention.

I have not seen a report of my talk at Holyoke on the evening of January 21, and I am always a little suspicious of what reporters make one say. They like to use phrases without their context - always misleading.

I did say that I mistrusted the present body of French politicians, and that I do not consider them as representative of the mass of the French people. I believe with you that Poincaré is an honest man, but I believe that his advisers, from January, 1919 on, have been steadily working on the understandable fear and despair of the French people to back them up in an advance to the Rhine.

I said at Holyoke, and I repeatedly say it, that there is no country except my own that I love as I do France. I, too, have seen the devastated region. I spent weeks of March and April, 1919 in a car going over the district. The horror of that experience will never leave me. But indignation and horror will not restore France or bring peace to the world. No more will efforts to punish a defeated foe or to wring from them more than they can give.

I have no doubt that many Germans have sent their gold to other countries. It is exactly what any human beings would do, under the circumstances. I believe Germany has been evading payment - it would be like her, at least in her present mood - the mood of the vanquished. We must admit that she has turned over to the Allies a goodly sum. Two and a half billions is something, and if the balance is to come, it must come through allowing her to work in peace.

I very much fear, my dear Professor Schinz, that there are not a few leaders in France, industrial and political, that, while they insist on reparations - as they should - cannot endure the idea of German industry being built up sufficiently to pay these reparations. I feel strongly, too, that, much as I love France, that

the group leading her has thought only of France in this trial, not of the world as a whole. In that the French have been doing just what the United States has been doing - thinking only of herself. I do not see the present situation as a problem of France alone or of the United States alone or of any one nation alone. If we are to steady up the world and give it a chance to repair itself, it has got to be done by coöperation; and in that coöperation Germany must be included, however bitterly we may feel towards the disaster that she precipitated, but for which she was not, in my judgment, alone responsible.

My dear Professor Schinz, the last country in the world which I want to misjudge is France. She has given already something to the world that no other nation has the genius to give, and that peculiar thing must be saved for the development of civilization. Her present course in the Ruhr seems to me to injure rather than protect her, it is for that that I deplore it. Anything that increases the bitterness, cynicism, despair, uncertainty in nations - anything that weakens the slowly growing readjustments between nations, Allies or enemies, is, in my judgment, a terrible mistake.

Do not for a moment think that I do not appreciate the situation of France, close to bankruptcy - the just indignation that she feels at delayed reparations; but, for her own sake, I believe patience and not armies is the surer means of working out her terrific problem.

It is a hard, hard question, over which there is bound to be sharp disagreement; but I beg of you to believe, my dear Professor Schinz, that in taking the position I do, I love France no less than I ever have.

Sincerely yours,