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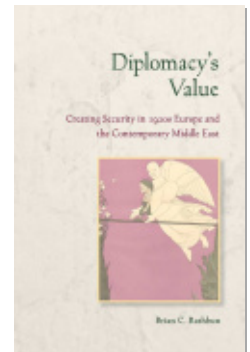
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*Turning the Tables*REPARATIONS, EARLY EVACUATION, AND  
THE HAGUE CONFERENCE

The French and Germans found it difficult to capitalize on the new spirit of Locarno following the return to power of the French right. Briand's leftist coalition was replaced in July 1926 by a conservative government. Briand remained on as foreign minister, but Poincaré returned as premier. The value creating that had prevailed between the two countries gave way to value claiming, making the pursuit of mutual gains much more difficult. The dynamics among the three countries from 1926 to 1929 show that the continuation of good relations marked by new achievements was contingent on diplomatic style and that coercive bargaining by any one side can undermine the potential for mutually beneficial agreement.

The preference of the French right for coercive bargaining undermined efforts by Briand to clear the table of all remaining grievances, which he called a "final liquidation of the war." In late 1926, he met privately with Stresemann in Thoiry, Switzerland, where the French foreign minister proposed a package deal covering the issues of reparations, the occupation, the return of the Saar, and the monitoring of German obligations under the Versailles Treaty after the removal of allied forces. In an indication of a liberal diplomatic style, he made concessions before Germany even asked for them and bluntly revealed the extent of the financial weakness of France, which had driven him to the table. When he returned home to Paris, however, Briand was forced to publicly disclaim the idea of an early evacuation from the Rhineland. The French right had turned the tables on the foreign minister.

There was still a simple package deal to be reached by linking reparations to the Rhineland, a win-win outcome for both sides, particularly because the occupation was of less and less value to France. As the

deadline for total evacuation in the Treaty of Versailles drew closer, less could be extracted from Germany in exchange for early withdrawal. And with the construction of the Maginot Line, Poincaré and his colleagues thought the occupation was unnecessary for French security. At the same time, the Dawes Plan on reparations was provisional in nature. It did not even identify a precise final sum that Germany would pay the allies. The German payments were also set to balloon, raising questions about its capacity to pay, creating an incentive for both France and Germany to revisit the issue. And Germany desperately wanted French troops out of the Rhineland.

Nevertheless, the two countries struggled to link the issues, much less to identify a mutually beneficial outcome, given the coercive diplomatic style of France. Even though it was of little value to him, Poincaré insisted on holding the occupation as a pawn to extract the greatest possible concessions from Germany. He offered to only gradually withdraw German troops as Germany steadily made payments. The Rhineland was to be held as a deposit to coerce the Germans.

The coercive bargaining of the French right induced distributive negotiating by the Germans. As hypothesized, coercive bargaining by one side induces coercive bargaining by the other. Stresemann adjusted to the new situation brought about by the French shift in diplomatic style by abandoning integrative negotiation. In early 1928, Stresemann embarked on a public offensive, demanding unilateral French withdrawal from the two remaining zones of occupation. The Germans turned the tables on the French. Stresemann and his colleagues refused any link between reparations and the evacuation, knowing that the French could use the former to stall the latter and the latter as leverage for a better deal on the former. The Germans knew that the two issues were effectively linked given France's greater bargaining strength and that they would eventually have to settle. They decided to use distributive tactics in which they misrepresented their private position with a high opening offer and an inflated reservation price. As had been the case between Britain and France in 1922, value claiming inhibited the trade-offs and information sharing that would have benefitted both sides more. A favorable distribution of interests was not sufficient.

The countries agreed only to convene technically separate but parallel talks on reparations and evacuation, which culminated in a conference in The Hague in August 1929. There the French refused to negotiate, holding the Rhineland issue hostage as leverage in the stalled reparations negotiations. In the end, British intervention was necessary to bring about an agreement. In the face of French intransigence, the leftist British Labour government also shifted to distributive bargaining, announcing that it would begin to remove British troops from the Rhineland in just a

few weeks, thereby leaving France alone with Belgium. The British turned the tables on the French.

Rather than bringing the Germans and French together by providing a significant concession, as they had in the Locarno negotiations, the British facilitated an agreement through coercion. Only following the British ultimatum did the French begin to negotiate the dates and conditions of the end of the occupation. Due to distributive bargaining on both sides, the negotiations could have easily failed had it not been for British intervention. Even so, in stark contrast to the Locarno negotiations, both the French and Germans engaged in brinkmanship negotiation until finally settling on a termination date for the occupation of June 30, 1930. And given the lowest-common-denominator aspect of Franco-German interaction, this time the outcome was more skewed toward French preferences because France held the better cards. Although the agreement reflected the distribution of power, this was true only because both parties engaged in distributive bargaining. Diplomacy is a necessary factor to explain this triumph of structure.

#### TEA FOR TWO: CONSOLIDATING FRANCO-GERMAN RAPPROCHEMENT IN THOIRY

For their efforts at Locarno, all three foreign ministers were awarded the Nobel Prize. Briand gave a riveting speech upon the entrance of Germany into the League of Nations, calling on nations to do away with their cannons and machine guns and make way for peace. The question was whether the three countries could consolidate their gains. At the time of the signing of the Locarno treaty, all three foreign ministers had made reference to the new spirit that animated their relations and that would propel them toward further reconciliation. Stresemann called this the “imponderable effect” of the treaty, that sense of good faith and goodwill that would contribute to better relations between the countries in a way that was hard to measure or pin down (Stresemann, Vol. 2: 88–95, see also 196–204). Briand stated, “If we had done nothing here but negotiate the terms of a treaty, and if we were then to return each to his own country, trusting to the hazards of fortune to realize the promises which it contains, we should have done nothing but make a futile gesture. If this gesture does not correspond to the new spirit, if it does not mark the beginning of an era of confidence and collaboration, it will not produce the great effects which we expect of it” (DBFP I, Vol. 27, app. 15). Chamberlain emphasized that “Locarno is a beginning, not a conclusion. It is not merely the written treaty, it is the spirit of Locarno that the world needs” (Stresemann, Vol. 2: 211). The mood in Europe was euphoric.

Stresemann and Briand each estimated that he had the support of three-quarters of his population (ADAP B1/2, Nos. 94, 173).

At the signing ceremony, Stresemann credited Chamberlain with making the conference "informal," thereby creating "the atmosphere of personal confidence that may be regarded as part of what is meant by the spirit of Locarno" (Stresemann, Vol. 2: 239–40). "It was not a relationship in which the three men consistently duped, tricked, or deluded each other," writes Jacobson (1972: 68–76). Value creating prevailed. And after Germany joined the League of Nations, the League Council meetings provided, as Chamberlain had envisaged, convenient opportunities for Briand, Stresemann, and Chamberlain to confer privately and informally to capitalize on the spirit of Locarno. Their face-to-face meetings became known as "Geneva tea parties."

It was at one of these Council meetings that Briand and Stresemann arranged to escape from the prying eyes of the press in Geneva and rendezvous in a tiny Swiss town called Thoiry in October 1926. They used subterfuge, each switching modes of transportation en route and traveling separately, so that they could arrive unseen and speak completely frankly. Briand had initiated the idea of discussing a "general settlement," a massive package deal that would clear the table of all of the remaining security issues between the two countries. He proposed the complete evacuation of the Rhineland within a year, the return of the Saar to German control, and the termination of the allied inspection of German disarmament. All he asked in return was an advance reparations payment by Germany, to be financed through the public sale of bonds that Germany had deposited with the Reparations Commission as security against default, for which the German railways served as collateral (ADAP B1/2, Nos. 94, 88; Kabinette Marx, Vol. 1, No. 83; Wright 2002: 374–80; Jacobson 1972: 87–90). As Briand conceived it, those bonds would be sold by Germany to private bondholders, mostly in the United States, and the proceeds would be given to France. This was, as Wright writes, a "bold proposal for a French foreign minister," and Stresemann recognized it as such (2002: 374). He understated when he told Briand that a "great gesture like the evacuation of the Rhineland would correspondingly strengthen the spirit of Locarno" (Wright 2002: 374; ADAP B1/2, Nos. 88, 94). The Thoiry scheme would, in one step, secure for Stresemann all the goals he had envisaged for the first stage of his long-term program of returning Germany to great power status.

Briand's immediate interest in a financial settlement lay in the deteriorating finances of France, which had precipitated a crisis in the value of the franc in July 1926 (Keeton 1987). Although this had added to the urgency, the French foreign minister had consistently supported such a deal long before the financial situation had become acute, indeed since

immediately after Locarno (Jacobson 1972: 86; Keeton 1987: 211–15).<sup>1</sup> A discussion of Briand's ideas was postponed due to the fall of the German government, which saw Luther replaced as chancellor by Wilhelm Marx in a minority government of the centrist parties. The discussion was then delayed further until Germany joined the League on account of a controversy over the admission of other permanent members to the League Council. The acute nature of the economic crisis surely added to Stresemann's leverage. Nevertheless, Briand's concessions seem to have gone beyond what we might have expected given the structural position of France.

More significant was Briand's diplomatic style, again liberal rather than coercive. At the beginning of the meeting, Briand promised "to completely and openly lay the cards on the table" and tell Stresemann the true French position (ADAP B1/2, No. 94). In a violation of the coercive bargaining style, Briand confessed that France's financial needs were acute. He wanted to see a "general agreement" on all outstanding points between the countries because negotiating issues individually would simply make it more difficult. It amounted to a series of never-ending "pin pricks," he explained (Kabinette Marx, Vol. 1, No. 83). Briand was trying to cultivate goodwill by making concessions and openly stating the French position rather than maintaining private information to hold out for a better deal.

Indeed, Briand offered Stresemann significant concessions before the German foreign minister even had a chance to ask for them rather than retaining them as bargaining chips. When Stresemann asked about the existing plans to hold a referendum to determine the status of the Saar before it was returned to Germany, Briand waved him off, saying that he "hasn't the slightest wish" to hold a plebiscite (ADAP B1/2, No. 94); it was "completely unnecessary" (Kabinette Marx, Vol. 1, No. 83). Briand dismissed the concerns of the French military about the good faith of Germany in meeting its disarmament obligations, another potential bargaining chip: "We occupy ourselves a lot with theories and see ghosts everywhere" (ADAP B1/2, No. 88).<sup>2</sup> Briand said the whole question of monitoring, such as through the League of Nations after the removal of the Inter-Allied Military Commission of Control (IMCC), was "pure

1. See the mentions in ADAP B/1 Nos. 2, 11, 15, 16, 24, 33, 110, 116, 225, 2270, 275, 276.

2. Briand told Stresemann about the thousands of files about German disarmament infractions that had been delivered to him by the War Ministry when he told the military of his intention to remove military control in Germany. Briand proceeded to throw them into the corner and asked to hear about on issues of genuine importance (ADAP B1/1, No. 94). He believed there were only a "few small questions" to resolve, after which he would have all military control lifted (ADAP B1/2, No. 94).

theory" and "academic." He reassured Stresemann that "No one is thinking of investigation through the power of the League Council" because "no one would dream of an investigation in the case of a League Power." They would find a solution that corresponded to the needs of Germany, he promised (ADAP B1/2, No. 94; Stresemann, Vol. 3: 17–27).<sup>3</sup> As will be seen later, Briand thought of inspection as a simple face-saving device for public opinion, with little actual value. But he told Stresemann this as a sign of good-faith diplomacy. Finally, Briand did not propose breaking apart the evacuation of the Rhineland into a number of steps to maintain leverage, as he might have.

The two foreign ministers agreed that they would make a joint statement indicating that they had discussed a general settlement of outstanding issues and would recommend such a deal to their own cabinets. If they found support, the two countries would appoint expert committees to deal with the technical details of a financial settlement and the evacuation (Kabinette Marx, Vol. 1, No. 83). The two statesmen were so pleased with their honest and open exchange and so optimistic about the prospects for peace that Briand said of the meeting, "Our souls were as white as the snow on Mt. Blanc" (Wright 2002: 377).

Stresemann returned home somewhat awestruck by the generosity of the French offer. The chancellor believed it was "almost too good to be true" (Kabinette Marx, Vol. 1, No. 83). But Stresemann had noted to Briand that "we both have to overcome glaciers." Whereas he had to get by President Hindenburg, Briand had to circumvent an even more difficult obstacle—Poincaré, who had returned as French premier (Wright 2002: 377). The domestic political environment in France had shifted under Briand's feet. As long as the domestic political constellation in the three countries remained consistent, there were great gains to be made. French diplomacy under a conservative government would be very different.

#### THE FRENCH TURN: BRIAND AND THE CONSERVATIVE UNION NATIONALE

The conservative Raymond Poincaré returned in July 1926, becoming both premier and finance minister, to stop the falling franc, along with a number of other rightist ministers such as André Tardieu and Louis Marin. Briand was again in the position of being the lone liberal in a

3. He maintained that it was necessary to have the League exercise a "certain control" but promised, "I agree in advance with what may be decided on the matter by the jurists, subject to your review" (Vermächtnis, Vol. 1: 17–27).

conservative coalition. Even though this meant the end of the Cartel des Gauches, Briand's Locarno policy was so domestically popular that he was essentially untouchable, and he stayed on in the Union Nationale government as foreign minister even though he ceded the premiership (Keeton 1987: 175). The German ambassador in Paris estimated that 75–80 percent of the French embraced Briand's appeasement policy (ADAP B1/2, No. 173). Briand recognized that in cabinet "he sits across from the intellectual elites of his political opponents" but believed that his high degree of support would nevertheless allow him to carry through his Thoiry scheme over Poincaré's objections (Kabinette Marx, Vol. 1, No. 82). Poincaré had never lived "among people," only "with files," and "pursues his ideas with tenacity," he told Stresemann. "But he does not know the feeling of the French people and he knows nothing of the spirit that is necessary for a new time" (ADAP B1/2, No. 94). The German foreign minister's only reservation about the deal at Thoiry was that stabilizing the franc would in turn strengthen Poincaré and allow him to stay on. Briand reassured Stresemann that Poincaré would soon fall. Only the foreign minister would be given credit for a diplomatic success of this type because "everyone knows that Poincaré does not like making concessions" (ADAP B1/2, No. 94; Kabinette Marx, Vol. 1, No. 83). Briand pledged to return home, touch base with his "party friends" and like-minded cabinet colleagues, and prepare the ground (Kabinette Marx, Vol. 1, No. 83; ADAP B1/2, No. 94). Stresemann doubted that Briand would succeed with this plan in a conservative cabinet but had little to lose by pursuing it (Kabinette Marx, Vol. 1, No. 75).

Briand vastly underestimated the conservative resistance. Poincaré was an economically orthodox finance minister and willing to let his foreign minister at least explore a deal that would make it easier to balance the budget and stabilize the franc. The German ambassador reported that the French financial situation was so deleterious that even the "wild right [news]papers" did not reject any potential deal with Germany outright (ADAP B1/2, No. 109). But when Briand returned from Thoiry, he was hammered in the cabinet for the extent of his proposed concessions. His colleagues lambasted his "personal" policy and reprimanded him for going beyond his guidelines (ADAP B1/2, No. 106). Marin, perhaps the most conservative member of the cabinet, organized a behind-the-scenes campaign of the right-wing press against Briand's ideas, saying that the plan would leave France defenseless in return for "financial trifles" (Keeton 1987: 173). The conservatives backed coercive diplomacy to secure more gains (ADAP B1/2, Nos. 119, 142, 156, 157, 173). The right wanted to drive a harder bargain for Rhineland evacuation, by insisting on German recognition of its eastern frontiers, a permanent system of inspection of disarmament, and a comprehensive reparations agreement



that would guarantee French receipts rather than the simple one-time payment foreseen by Briand (Keeton 1987: 220; ADAP B1/2, No. 109). The continued occupation of the Rhineland could be used as leverage to compel greater concessions. Briand, as Stresemann later noted, "had ventured too far" given the ideological character of his government (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 73–77). The conservatives had turned the tables on their cabinet colleague.

Briand was too domestically popular for the French government to simply reject the proposed deal. The cabinet, however, issued the most tepid of press statements. It simply acknowledged what was discussed at Thoiry, claimed that Briand did not "lay down even the barest outline of an agreement," and reiterated again that complete compliance on disarmament was necessary for early evacuation (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 27). In coercive bargaining style, the statement noted how difficult it would be for the deal to be arranged. The German ambassador called the communiqué a "product of embarrassment" (ADAP B1/2, No. 106; see also No. 173). The cabinet agreed to convene committees of experts but, as the Germans noted, stacked them with conservative opponents of Briand's liberal diplomacy (ADAP B1/2, No. 106). Briand put up a fight, speaking, in the words of one anonymous source, with "staggering conviction" (ADAP B1/2, No. 106). But he was forced to retreat. His own liberal style of diplomacy could not be maintained against conservative resistance.

Under Poincaré's strict financial stewardship, French finances improved quickly, more rapidly than anyone had anticipated. This suggests a simple structural account, that France had offered significant concessions only due to its bargaining weakness, concessions that it subsequently retracted when its economy recovered. Certainly the improving situation of France lessened conservative interest in a deal with Germany. But, major conservative opposition to Briand's liberal diplomacy had been evident before this rebound and Briand's proposals preceded the onset of the crisis. It seems almost certain that Poincaré's government would have rejected Briand's proposal regardless of France's financial circumstances. In private, Stresemann himself attributed the failure of the Thoiry plans largely to politics. The "idea that only the economic necessities of France could induce that nation to adopt such a policy is to take rather too exclusively material a view. I fancy that, having regard to the mentality not only of the French nation but also of other nations, if the old atmosphere of hatred still persists, it cannot be removed by any sort of financial services rendered by Germany" (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 41).<sup>4</sup>

4. The failure of the Thoiry proposal was overdetermined. The technical aspects of Briand's scheme, as Stresemann had prognosticated in his very first conversation with the foreign

Briand's position in the rightist Union Nationale government continued to deteriorate, leaving him ever more isolated. At a "Geneva tea party" on the sidelines of the December 1926 League Council meeting, Stresemann and Briand arranged for the final removal of the IMCC in exchange for the resolution of some contentious issues of disarmament (Jacobson 1972: 91–98). Withdrawing allied military inspection without some kind of replacement meant that the allies no longer had any on-site presence for detecting rearmament or a remilitarization of the Rhineland. France would only have the legal right to request the League Council for an ad hoc inspection in cases of suspected violation (Jacobson 1972: 91–98).

Conservatives in the cabinet, led by Tardieu, insisted that the cabinet telegram Briand in Geneva to warn him not to exceed his powers (Jacobson 1972: 102–3). Briand had to threaten to resign to overcome the cabinet opposition for the deal he had worked out with the Germans (Wright 2002: 382; Keeton 1987: 176). He complained to Stresemann that he "had gone home . . . with thorns" and Stresemann "with laurels" (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 119).

On his return, Briand fought back, defending his liberal diplomacy in testimony before the parliament (Keeton 1987: 225–26). Both sides had been trying to reach an agreement that benefitted each party through open and honest discussion. "It is true that on certain points there were differences of opinion between Stresemann and myself. A talk between two Ministers in the dining-room of an inn<sup>5</sup> cannot at one blow alter the position of France and Germany, and wipe out a blood-stained past. The essential point is that there shall be good-will on both sides; and that the nations shall be able to say—'At last they are getting together'"

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minister, also helped sink the proposal (Kabinette Marx, Vol. 1, No. 89). The successful commercialization of the German railway bonds was predicated on adequate demand, which could be provided only by U.S. investors. Floating German bonds in the United States, however, required the authorization of the U.S. government, which was not interested in providing such permission unless the French first ratified a war-debt agreement that the two nations had recently negotiated (ADAP B1/2 No. 107, 119, Stresemann, Vol. 3: 41; Jacobson 1972: 87–90). Poincaré's rightist cabinet was hostile to the arrangement, which was concluded before it took up the reins of government, for emotional reasons. Conservatives, in particular, believed that France should not have to pay off loans to the United States considering the price paid in blood by its armed forces during the war on behalf of the Americans. Even if the U.S. government had been more forthcoming, however, there would have not been an agreement, due to Poincaré's coercive diplomacy. Stresemann later noted that the "alteration in the political situation *and* in the technical condition of the currency induced Herr Briand to ask me to abstain from positive proposals" (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 76, emphasis added).

5. In Thoiry, Stresemann and Briand had met at a small hotel.

(Stresemann, Vol. 3: 71–73). Nor was the occupation a bargaining chip that should be held to extract further concessions, as the French right felt it should be. “The occupation of the Rhineland is not a penalty. . . . The occupation can alter in character, and its duration can even be modified, if it has fulfilled its purpose,” asserted Briand (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 72).<sup>6</sup>

By January 1927, however, Briand was forced in a statement that had been unanimously approved by the cabinet to publicly disavow any support for withdrawing French troops ahead of schedule (Jacobson 1972: 138). Briand promised to consult the cabinet in the future and even denied having ever supported early evacuation, claiming that the Thoiry plans had been suggested by Stresemann (Jacobson 1972: 103; Wright 2002: 404; Stresemann, Vol. 3: 57–59, 73–77). The foreign minister’s wings had been clipped. The German ambassador wrote to Berlin, “Had he tried to go further with the Locarno policy, he would have suffered defeat” (in Jacobson 1972: 103). The Frenchman set his sights on the spring 1928 French elections, which he believed would oust the right from power and allow him to reinstate his liberal diplomacy (Jacobson 1972: 138, 146; Wright 2002: 390, 396; Stresemann, Vol. 3: 368). He asked the Germans for patience, stressing that he continued to be committed to the policy of understanding (ADAP B1/2, Nos. 156, 167, 173). Stresemann still trusted Briand, noting in a private memorandum that “however much a cynic he might seem to the outer world, [he] did in fact hold views that were based on an intention to bring about a Franco-German understanding” (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 41). He wrote, “I do not think there is much change in the man’s own mind. But he knows that French public opinion would not tolerate his speaking in the sense of his former utterances” (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 41). The spirit of Locarno was put on ice due to conservative opposition.

#### THE GERMAN TURN: STRESEMANN AND THE FRENCH CONSERVATIVES

German diplomats in Paris stressed to their home office that Briand was isolated and that pushing the French too far would undermine their closest ally, someone genuinely driven by a belief in mutual gains (ADAP B1/2, Nos. 157, 167, 173). Only the Socialists in France firmly supported

6. The foreign minister even expressed admiration for Germany: “It has been accounted to me as an infamy that at Geneva I admitted a certain greatness and nobility in our former foe. If that is a blunder, then I regard myself as honoured by having committed it” (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 72).

the foreign minister (ADAP B1/2, No. 173). As the ambassador to France argued (and Stresemann accepted), the Germans could not get more from any other politician in France (Jacobson 1972: 116). Efforts should be made not to publicly embarrass him despite the short-term temptation because it would undermine long-term efforts (ADAP B1/2, Nos. 167, 173). This was classic realist diplomacy, pragmatic cooperation driven by instrumental self-interest.

Fear of undermining Briand at home and the shared hope that the French elections would work in his favor led Stresemann to refrain from publicly demanding at that time an immediate and unconditional evacuation of the Rhineland (Jacobson 1972: 138–39; Stresemann, Vol. 3: 180–82; Wright 2002: 382–82; Keeton 1987: 234). In an internal memorandum, Stresemann explained that he was handling the evacuation question publicly “only in the most general way, and always in a form that endeavoured to avoid creating any acute tension” so that “M. Briand should maintain the position of being able to do something soon, at least in the matter of the reduction of troops, without laying himself open to the reproach that he was giving way to Germany pressure” (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 149).

In public, Stresemann asked for a greater reduction of troops in the occupied zone but never a complete evacuation.<sup>7</sup> In speeches before the Reichstag in 1927, Stresemann defended Briand’s sincerity and noted that novel ideas such as Briand’s created conflicts between those “ahead of their time, and the rest, who are never more violent and ungrateful than towards those who utter a truth before the majority of the nation has given its *placet*” (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 63).<sup>8</sup> Stresemann directed his ill will toward the French premier rather than Briand. He asked, “What is the goal of Herr Poincaré, the Ruhr policy or the Locarno policy? One or the other is possible, but not one with the other” (VDR 326: 1101–9; see also Stresemann, Vol. 3: 179; Wright 2002: 406).

7. He used only moral pressure, in both private and public, arguing that the continuation of the occupation and the size of the contingents in the remaining zones were “not compatible with the spirit of Locarno” (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 116–19). It was an “anomaly” given the rapprochement transpiring between Germany and the western powers (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 143–44). “Either Locarno means peace on the western frontier or it does not have this meaning” (ADAP B1/2, No. 36). He told Briand privately, it “could not be understood why the peace between France and Germany needed to be backed by bayonets” (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 116–19).

8. In a speech, he proclaimed the significance of the fact “that the accredited representative of the French nation no longer regards the post-War policy hitherto pursued as compatible with the spirit of Europe today. This is the object for which Briand is resolved to work. He may meet with great difficulties in this struggle. But the mental wall is surmounted, and there has been much less opposition made than on many other occasions” (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 61–62).

Stresemann, however, was losing patience. The foreign minister cautioned privately in spring 1927, "Any further dilatoriness in these matters is impossible in the interest of both our foreign and internal policy. The centre-point of my foreign policy is the understanding with France, and this will be most seriously imperiled if something does not happen soon which can be taken as evidence that the French Government intends to continue it. . . . I cannot go on facing the Reichstag, when it again assembles, with vague promises that something will be done sometime" (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 149–50). He emphasized the "continuing regard which I have shown for Briand's situation" but that this "cannot go without reciprocation" (in Jacobson 1972: 116; see also Stresemann, Vol. 3: 143, 151).

The British were also growing tired of the coercive bargaining by France. Chamberlain sided with the Germans. In regards to troop reduction, he told Briand that the French had "behaved badly" and admitted that the allies were "guilty of a very ugly breach of faith" incompatible with the value creating that had prevailed (Jacobson 1972: 82). "I and all British opinion," he said to the French, believe that delaying troop reduction is "radically indefensible" (in Jacobson 1972: 82). He admitted to Stresemann that the British did not have "clean hands" (Jacobson 1972: 133) and had a "very bad conscience" (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 119–24). The German protests were "perfectly well-founded. The number of troops engaged was not justifiable" (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 119–24). At the June League Council meeting, in a "tea party" with Briand and Stresemann, he exploded, maintaining that Britain "could not acquiesce in this state of affairs. He wanted this question settled. . . . He could in no way counter the arguments put forward by the German Foreign Minister. . . . Herr Stresemann has the right to regard us in this matter as having given a common pledge to keep our express and solemn promises. It does not interest Herr Stresemann to know how many Belgian, English and French troops are still in the Rhineland; what interests him is the occupation as a whole. We must therefore meet and arrive at an agreed solution of this question" (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 168–69).

The British foreign secretary tried to broker a compromise without significant costs to either side. He urged the Germans to accept some sort of token inspection regime of the Rhineland to replace the IMCC as a face-saving device for the French that would facilitate an earlier evacuation (Jacobson 1972: 114). It would be a "very good bargain from the German point of view" if Germany permitted "a few gentlemen to kick up their heels in the Rhineland," he wrote to his colleagues (in Wright 2002: 383). Chamberlain, as a pragmatist, stressed that it would be more symbolic

than substantive; this would be “nothing but a gesture” for Germany (Jacobson 1972: 133). He envisioned “giving the French the minimum that they need to satisfy their public opinion that evacuation is safe and asking nothing of the Germans either in form or substance which they could not accept with perfect equanimity and without any serious inconvenience” (Grayson 1997: 133).

But in January 1928 domestic circumstances in Germany compelled Stresemann to break the “gentlemen’s agreement” to not raise the issue of the early and complete evacuation of the Rhineland until after the spring French elections (Jacobson 1972: 146). Axel von Freytagh-Loringhoven of the DNVP publicly attacked Stresemann in the Reichstag for his lack of diplomatic results, claiming it had led to a “cul-de-sac” (Wright 2002: 412; Jacobson 1972: 143). Although this opposition was hardly new, it had much more domestic political significance now because the DNVP had recently returned to the German cabinet as part of Chancellor Marx’s second coalition. Stresemann had opposed the inclusion of the party, preferring some sort of arrangement with the Social Democrats who, even when in opposition, were always the most loyal supporters of his policy. As before, his calculations about party politics were based on considerations about what most favored the implementation of his realist diplomacy. But Stresemann was outvoted by others in the cabinet. Nevertheless, Stresemann was successful in his insistence that the DNVP explicitly pledge support for the Locarno treaty and his diplomatic efforts, as well as indicating their willingness to accept the concessions that might prove necessary to achieve early evacuation (Wright 2002: 395). The Marx government declaration on foreign policy described its “abandonment of the idea of revenge,” replaced by a policy of “mutual understanding” (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 114–15). Therefore, the speech by von Freytagh-Loringhoven, one of the most reactionary members of an already very conservative party, was a breach of the earlier commitment of his party.

In two public replies, Stresemann defended the gains of his policy so far and noted that the DNVP had not offered any realistic alternative. However, he also demanded for the first time publicly that the allies remove all their troops from the Rhineland. The occupation was an “anomaly”; the spirit of Locarno was not compatible with its “opposite.” Alluding to Briand’s famous speech at the September 1926 League Council meeting, he accused the French of exhibiting a “bit of hypocrisy.” “Much has been said about discarding machine guns and cannons, but machine guns and cannons are still staring [Germany] in the face in the Rhineland,” he observed. The maintenance of allied troops was a “psychological obstacle” to rapprochement. Stresemann expressed his willingness to discuss an exchange of premature withdrawal for some kind of advanced payment of reparations. But he explicitly stated that he

would not agree to any “lasting measures that go beyond the Treaty of Versailles,” by which he meant any French proposal of a permanent commission of inspection in the Rhineland beyond 1935, when all foreign troops were scheduled to be withdrawn. Stresemann had switched to distributive tactics, making extreme demands, drawing red lines, and using public pressure as bargaining leverage (VDR 371: 12490, 373: 12556–60; Jacobson 1972: 143–47; Wright 2002: 412; Stresemann, Vol. 3: 350). Coercive bargaining by France had induced similar tactics by Germany. Briand wrote Stresemann, “I was horrified at your speeches. . . . They stood my hair on end” (in Jacobsen 1972: 148).

In what became known as the “winter debate,” the French foreign minister responded in kind with a speech before his own legislature, insisting that France needed guarantees of security and reparations before it could leave the Rhineland. Any assurance offered by Germany might not last past his government, and France needed something more permanent (Jacobson 1972: 150; Stresemann, Vol. 3: 352–54). Stresemann correctly attributed Briand’s tone to his “disabilities in the Senate, and probably in the Chamber as well” (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 355). Of Briand’s “personal goodwill I have no doubt,” wrote the foreign minister (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 150); however, this was no longer enough to justify German moderation. The pattern continued.<sup>9</sup> A spirit of value claiming had replaced one of value creating.

Rather than weakening the conservatives, the spring elections in France consolidated the right. The French Socialists, the one party favoring immediate and unconditional evacuation of the Rhineland, lost seats, as did the Radical Socialists. In contrast, the rightist parties of Marin and André Maginot increased their number of seats and augmented their influence in the Union Nationale (Jacobson 1972: 226). The Radical Socialists acted as a moderating force in the cabinet but dropped out of the coalition later in the year (Jacobson 1972: 303–5). Briand stayed on as foreign minister. Knowing the domestic popularity of Briand’s

9. At the League Council meeting in September 1928, the German Chancellor Hermann Müller, a Social Democrat, accused French policy of wearing a “double face”: “In international negotiations the mutual confidence of States in each other is eloquently proclaimed, and mutual understanding between the nations is celebrated as an event; on the other side . . . in practice things remain as they were, and that not one of the barriers that have arisen as a result of the War has been wholly removed” (in Stresemann, Vol. 3: 395–96; see also Jacobson 1972: 195). Briand responded with what became known by the Germans as his “angry speech.” Thinking that he personally had been called “two-faced,” Briand launched a diatribe justifying French fears of a sudden German attack and their demand for security (Jacobson 1972: 197).

diplomatic efforts, Poincaré disingenuously endorsed his liberal diplomacy during the election campaign, going so far as to falsely claim paternity of the Thoiry scheme (Jacobson 1972: 162; Keeton 1987: 198, 232). Once the election was over, however, the declaration of government policy omitted what had become a standard reference to the spirit of Locarno and even expressed suspicions of German revisionism (Jacobson 1972: 171).

#### SECURITY DEPOSITS: COERCIVELY LINKING THE RHINELAND EVACUATION TO REPARATIONS

There was a simple package deal to be made between France and Germany. Germany's annual payments of reparations under the Dawes Plan, the provisional reparations deal reached in 1924, were scheduled to balloon shortly, potentially exceeding the capacity of Germany to pay. This was in the interests of neither France nor Germany, and the head of the international reparations authority, Parker Gilbert, recommended a new scheme that would permanently set the amount of reparations Germany would owe. In the meantime, France had begun the construction of the Maginot Line, the series of fortifications on its eastern border that conservatives genuinely (and incorrectly) believed would provide them a degree of permanent protection (Keeton 1987: 229, 306). The occupation of the Rhineland was therefore of decreasing value to them in terms of security, and there was an incentive to cash in on it while it still maintained value for Germany. The Rhineland was scheduled to be evacuated in 1935; every year that passed made an early evacuation less and less meaningful for Germany. France could trade premature withdrawal for a final settlement on reparations that would cover its war debts to the United States and Great Britain.

The type of diplomacy pursued by both France and Germany, however, inhibited such a solution, in stark contrast to the Locarno period. The Poincaré government employed a coercive bargaining approach. The premier proposed to use the continued occupation of the Rhineland as a bargaining chip to ensure reparations payments from Germany after the conclusion of any deal. He wrote Britain that "for the Allies, the Rhineland occupation remains the only effective insurance of reparations payments" (in Keeton 1987: 307).

Even as the occupation was declining in value due to its impending expiration and the perceived increase in French security, Poincaré, backed by his conservative colleagues in the cabinet, Tardieu and Marin, proposed that the evacuation of the Rhineland would begin only after Paris began to receive advance payments of reparations. The German



debt would have to first be capitalized, commercialized, and gradually sold in the bond markets (Wright 2002: 413; Jacobson 1972: 157, 279, 301). A simple agreement on terms was not enough to begin the withdrawal; typical of a coercive bargainer, Poincaré insisted on, literally, seeing the money first. Even after the agreement went into effect, the evacuation would not proceed all at once. French troops would be gradually pulled out only if Germany continued to make its payments (ADAP B9, Nos. 139, 263; Stresemann, Vol. 3: 383–92; Jacobson 1972: 173–74, 193). By dividing up the withdrawal, France could extract more concessions from Germany.

Poincaré was transparent about his diplomatic style. He admitted to the German ambassador that security considerations no longer made a continued occupation necessary. But, under the terms of the Dawes agreement that had ended the Ruhr standoff, France no longer had the legal right to reoccupy German territory if Germany refused to pay. Therefore, France could abandon German territory only piecemeal if it were to maintain its leverage (ADAP B9, No. 139; Jacobson 1972: 173). As Stresemann described it, the occupation gave the French a “trump” that put France in a “power position.” It was a valuable “deposit” (VDR 373: 12556–60). The German ambassador called it a “pawn” (Jacobson 1972: 171).

When the German ambassador asked for an evacuation of the second zone two years ahead of schedule as a demonstration of French intentions in the Locarno spirit, Poincaré refused. “The French would not understand if France, suddenly out of high heaven, made direct sacrifices to Germany,” he said. “There must be an occasion.” When the ambassador suggested that this might be a reward to the German people for their repudiation of the nationalists in the recent elections and the construction of a grand coalition with the SPD, the French premier replied that this “was scarcely such an occasion.” “The French people demanded clearer reasons,” he stated. They—meaning, of course, Poincaré—opposed “any acts of spontaneous accommodation” (ADAP B9, No. 139; Jacobson 1972: 173). Every concession has a price in coercive bargaining.

Stresemann, the realist, was disgusted with Poincaré’s coercive diplomacy: “Not one of the responsible politicians in France has any real apprehension of Germany. The intention is to use the Rhineland as a bargaining point in order extract larger sums from Germany. Monsieur Poincaré, who decisively rejects the idea of Security, emphasizes the character of the Rhineland as a pledge for the fulfillment of a financial claim.” It was a “very short-sighted pursuance of a hand-to-mouth policy, without any attempt to look further head” (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 42). The Germans cautioned Poincaré that he was overplaying his hand given that the evacuation was to end just a few years hence. Stresse-

mann asserted genuinely that the incentive of Germany to maintain its financial creditworthiness would alone ensure that it paid its debts (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 383–92; ADAP B9, No. 263; Jacobson 1972: 193). But the French did not budge. In a coercive fashion, Poincaré even inflated his previous demands, asking for a permanent renunciation of any effort, even peaceful, by Germany to regain the territory of Alsace-Lorraine.

The French position was not a simple function of the structural bargaining position of France, however. French diplomacy was not endogenous to French power. This is evident in the fact that Briand had a different diplomatic style. Rather than proceeding by stages, as Poincaré envisioned, Briand advocated a total and comprehensive agreement (ADAP B9, No. 262; Stresemann, Vol. 3: 380–83; Wright 2002: 429). The French foreign minister attempted an integrative compromise. He suggested that the allies would evacuate troops from Coblenz as soon as a committee of financial experts was appointed to draw up a plan for a final financial settlement on German reparations, provided that Germany also consented to what he called a Commission of Verification and Conciliation. When experts arrived at a reparations settlement formally approved by the relevant countries, the third and final zone would be freed at once rather than over time (DBFP Series IA, Vol. 5, nos. 146, 152, 287; Jacobson 1972: 198, 233). The foreign minister disparaged his cabinet colleagues to his foreign counterparts. “The nationalists would always cry for the moon and it was better to ignore them and to search for some compromise,” he said (DBFP IA, Vol. 5, No. 156). He confessed, however, that he was “compelled to take up a position in conformity with the mandate which he had from his Government.” He promised that “so far as he was personally concerned, he would like to be able to meet the wishes of the German Government and he could assure the German Chancellor that he would approach the subject in the most liberal spirit” (DBFP IA, Vol. 5, No. 151).

This appears at first glance as a kind of coercive diplomatic exercise, adding an additional side payment from Germany. But the foreign minister did not believe that the commission had any real value for France, calling it a “ridiculous trifle” (Keeton 1987: 235) and a face-saving device for public opinion (Keeton 1987: 317) that would allow him to be more conciliatory on the other issues.<sup>10</sup> The Germans believed him (Jacobson 1972: 299). Indeed, Poincaré placed little value on monitoring

10. Briand even said publicly, “You can never stop Germany from having a population of sixty million. And you can never stop such a country from being a great power. . . . You can try in vain anything you want” (in Keeton 1987: 225–26). This made inspection unrealistic. “A nation of sixty millions cannot be controlled permanently and with safety” (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 72).

and, therefore, did not want to expend any bargaining leverage to get it (Jacobson 1972: 156, 305). Briand went out of his way to make the body as inoffensive as possible to Germany. It was an “entirely new departure” (DBFP IA, Vol. 5, No. 287), different from previous “exaggerated” demands by the allies (ADAP B10, No. 208). The name was softened so that it did not mention *investigation*. It need not be resident in the Rhineland. Its representatives would be civilian in character and include a German delegate. It needed only to be permanent and to possess the power to conduct immediate inspections without German permission (DBFP IA, Vol. 5, Nos. 146, 156; ADAP B10, No. 199; Jacobson 1972: 295–97).

The British again sought to broker a pragmatic compromise by pressuring both sides. They continued to urge the Germans to accept a token verification commission (DBFP IA, Vol. 5, No. 158; ADAP B10, No. 208). Three to five representatives would suffice, they thought (ADAP B10, No. 188). Chamberlain suggested that the Germans should present the ideas as having been suggested by Germany itself so as not to be regarded domestically as “an indignity put upon them by us” (DBFP IA, Vol. 5, No. 287). In bilateral meetings, however, the British simultaneously pushed the French to evacuate the second zone as a gesture, without any compensation from Germany (DBFP IA, Vol. 5, No. 158). Baron Cushendun, sitting in for an ailing Chamberlain, explained that “so far as the second zone was concerned the period was so nearly mature for its evacuation that it was really of very little bargaining value.” Therefore, it was best used as an object of goodwill, conceded prior to formal negotiations so as to “create a better atmosphere” (DBFP IA, Vol. 5, No. 152). In British eyes, the French were attempting to squeeze too much out of Germany through their coercive diplomacy, making an agreement more difficult.

When Briand suggested his compromise, the Germans held firm as part of their shift to distributive tactics. Reestablishing territorial integrity had been the very point of Stresemann’s diplomatic initiatives, and the pressure on the foreign minister had only increased. The leader of the Center Party, a reliable supporter of Stresemann’s diplomacy in the past both in the Reichstag and in the cabinet, had publicly criticized the foreign minister’s lack of results in the parliament, referring to the “undeniable failure of German foreign policy” (in Jacobson 1972: 229, see also 232; Wright 2002: 435; ADAP B10, Nos. 188, 199). This was the first defection of Stresemann’s center and center-left support base. In his private correspondence, the foreign minister was very black. The occupation was “driving everybody back to the German Nationalists. The ground here is slipping away under my feet,” he wrote. Locarno was a thing of the past, he lamented (in Jacobson 1972: 249–50).

Therefore, the foreign minister argued that it was inconsistent with the whole purpose of his policy of understanding, of no value to France, and impossible for the German government to accept a verification commission (ADAP B10, Nos. 188, 199). While in Geneva, Chancellor Hermann Müller officially inquired of his cabinet about the French proposal. The German ministers would consider a commission only under the conditions that it be terminated in 1935 (the year the occupation was set to end), restricted to the occupied zones (rather than the entire demilitarized zone), and exchanged for the complete removal of troops (Jacobson 1972: 197–98; DBFP IA, Vol. 5, No. 161). The Center Party threatened to leave the cabinet under any other terms (Jacobson 1972: 297).

In the face of French coercive bargaining, Stresemann instead backed the strategy laid out in a *Denkschrift* (“thought piece”) by his state secretary, Carl von Schubert. The spirit of Locarno gave France a “covering cloak,” allowing it to perpetuate the occupation without any public outcry by Germany, thereby removing from Germany the leverage it might gain by mobilizing sympathetic world opinion. Germany should demand a complete evacuation without any concessions in the area of reparations (Jacobson 1972: 164–68, 175–83; ADAP B10: 609–14; Wright 2002: 436). The government should also try to maintain an independence between the two questions because reparations were a much more complicated issue that involved other powers, most notably the United States, and would likely drag on, allowing the French to hold the Rhineland hostage indefinitely. In the face of these new circumstances brought about by a shift in French diplomatic style, Germany adjusted in a pragmatic fashion.

The German government recognized that France would never consent to this. The issues were de facto connected, but making such a positional commitment would put Germany in a stronger bargaining position when the two issues did become linked. Under no circumstances, however, would Germany commit to a final reparation settlement independent of a deal on the Rhineland (Jacobson 1972: 164–68, 175–83). The Germans also inflated their demands, insisting on a final settlement on the status of the Saar as part of any package (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 580; ADAP B12, No. 146; ADAP B10, Nos. 56, 208; Jacobson 1972: 171, 279, 292; DBFP IA, Vol. 5, No. 287). These were distributive tactics of a type that the German government had generally not engaged in under Stresemann because integrative negotiation was thought to be more fruitful. The Germans turned the tables on the French. The British noted the shift and complained that to separate reparations and evacuation was simply “not within the bounds of practical politics” (DBFP IA, Vol. 5, No. 151).

At meetings in Geneva in September 1928 and Lugano in December 1928, the British, French, and Germans discussed the issues of reparations and evacuation. Stresemann turned down a partial deal that would

make an evacuation contingent on progress on reparations agreements, which could easily break down and leave the French with too much leverage (ADAP B10, No. 208). The Germans consistently opposed the linking of the two questions and denigrated the value of the occupation for France, never yielding (DBFP IA, Vol. 5, Nos. 149, 161). Just as insistently, the French emphasized "it would be useless to approach the problem from the point of view of demanding the immediate evacuation of the occupied territory without offering some substantial *quid pro quo*," as Briand explained it (DBFP IA, Vol. 5, No. 146). The most that the three powers could agree on in September 1928 was a set of technically separate and parallel negotiations on reparations, early evacuation, and a monitoring commission for the Rhineland. The first would be based on the report of a committee of experts (Jacobson 1972: 195–200; DBFP IA, Vol. 5, No. 161). This solution allowed the Germans to publicly claim that the issues were not linked and that evacuation could and should proceed without a prior agreement on reparations (Jacobson 1972: 201, 225). The French could simultaneously tell their home audience that there was a de facto link (Jacobson 1972: 202, 221, 227; Wright 2002: 433).

Briand did promise that the evacuation would begin immediately upon the convocation of the committee of experts (known as the Young Committee) and that negotiations on the final termination date of the occupation would continue even if financial discussions came to a standstill or failed (Jacobson 1972: 233). These commitments, however, were overturned by his more conservative colleagues, who favored coercive diplomacy. Even after the experts finished their deliberations, French troops stayed put. Holding the occupation issue hostage, Poincaré insisted that discussions on evacuation would begin only when the Young Plan was finalized, with withdrawal beginning after the German debt was successfully commercialized and sold in the private market (Jacobson 1972: 240). It was not until much later, in August 1929, that the powers convened in The Hague to negotiate a final liquidation of the war.

#### THE BRITISH TURN: LABOUR AND THE FRENCH CONSERVATIVES

In the interim, however, there was a major change in British domestic politics; another Labour government took power in May 1929. Although Labour still did not gain an absolute majority and governed again only as a minority with Liberal support, the election was the best result for the left ever and made Labour the largest party in Parliament for the first time in its history (Jacobson 1972: 280). It was a short-lived administration, governing for only twenty-seven months. But this gave it enough time to decisively influence Franco-German relations.

The Labour government was more ideologically committed to better treatment of Germany. Even before the end of the war, the party had condemned the harsh peace terms being contemplated and the exclusion of Germany from the League. It blamed the autocratic German leaders for the war rather than the German people and complained bitterly that the latter were paying too high a price for the sins of their officials. Labour objected to the eastern territorial settlement, which violated the German people's right to self-determination by placing German minorities in other countries, and the exploitative excision of valuable economic regions such as Silesia and the Saar (Labour Party 1919; also Winkler 1994: chap. 2). It was not that the party was "pro-German." Rather, it objected to the immorality of the peace settlement and its one-sided and, therefore, inequalitarian nature (Naylor 1969: 5). The Labour Party had a "tradition of sympathy for post-Versailles Germany, deriving from a characteristic concern for the underdog and from a rejection of the 'war guilt' thesis," writes David Carlton (1970: 34).

Before the election, Labour had castigated the Conservatives in the Commons for their European policy (Jacobson 1972: 209, 211, 214). In its manifesto, the party promised the "immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all foreign troops from the Rhineland, the continued occupation of which is indefensible in view of the fact that Germany has fulfilled her obligations under the Treaty of Versailles, that she is a member of the League of Nations, and that she is a signatory" of the Locarno and Kellogg-Briand treaties outlawing war (Labour Party 1928; also Jacobson 1972: 210, 242, 281-83). Germany had a "right" to the evacuation due to its good behavior (Jacobson 1972: 282). The French were not reciprocating German concessions.

The party had declared itself, even before the war ended, against the coercive use of the occupation, derisively calling it "the use of human beings as 'pawns'" (Labour Party 1919). France was, therefore, generally regarded by Labour Party members as perpetuating an unjust status quo. This led to a change in foreign policy goals. Arthur Henderson, now foreign secretary, told his permanent undersecretary that there could be "too much continuity in foreign policy" (Carlton 1970: 21). He had the party manifesto, *Labour and the Nation*, distributed to senior career bureaucrats, along with a note to make foreign policy consistent with it (Jacobson 1972: 282-83; Winkler 1994: 322).

The cabinet subsequently approved in July a decision that Britain would evacuate the Rhineland unilaterally, with a private deadline of Christmas that year. Henderson informed the French that "the examination of the problem of how to bring about the total evacuation of the Rhineland at the earliest possible date can no longer be delayed or made dependent on the settlement of contentious issues not immediately

arising out of it" (DBFP IA, Vol. 5, No. 189; see also No. 300). The Germans were, of course, delighted with this prospect because it would increase pressure on the French to evacuate alongside their allies and reduce the French ability to use the occupation as leverage in financial negotiations (DBFP IA, Vol. 5, No. 300). The leftist British government also stated that the commission on verification "is in no way indispensable in view of the machinery already provided for by the League of Nations and by the Treaty of Locarno" and refused to support France if it insisted on any kind of inspection regime lasting past 1935 (DBFP IA, Vol. 5I, No. 189). The British had turned the tables on the French.

#### HOSTAGES IN THE HAGUE: NEGOTIATIONS ON REPARATIONS AND THE RHINELAND

At the Hague conference, faced with German intransigence and lacking British support, the French conceded on the commission issue, which, of course, Briand had never thought important. There would be no permanent inspection of the Rhineland. Instead, Briand proposed and the Germans accepted that the arbitration procedures set up in the Locarno treaty also be given the task of resolving disputes over any alleged infraction of German obligations on disarmament and demilitarization of the Rhineland (Jacobson 1972: 332; ADAP B12, Nos. 155, 178, 197; DBFP IA, Vol. 6, No. 326). But, although the British helped to put this issue to rest, their coercive bargaining on the issue of reparations threatened to wreck the conference. Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Snowden revisited the numbers of the Young Plan, which were supposed to serve as the basis for the negotiation of the financial settlement. Snowden objected to the distribution of the total reparations receipts, particular the percentage of "unprotected" annuities that Britain would receive compared to France. These were the financial payments that the German government could not suspend even in the case of a crisis of the mark and capital flight out of Germany.

The British finance minister had received the endorsement of the cabinet prior to the conference to try to gain a larger share of the reparations pie. If he encountered resistance, however, he was obliged to report back to the cabinet. It would then advise him about the "degree of rigidity" to be taken, that is how much coercive bargaining to engage in. Snowden disobeyed these guidelines (Carlton 1970: 39). He was rebuked by James Ramsay MacDonald, the prime minister, in a telegram to the delegation: "I am relying . . . on you before break occurs to get into touch with me and perhaps we could arrange to meet before any action for adjournment is taken or if you prefer that one of you should meet me in London" (in

Carlton 1970: 44). But the message was mistakenly sent nonsecretly, and the entire conference learned of its content. This forced the prime minister to transmit a statement unequivocally backing the finance minister to restore his standing and credibility at the conference, making it subsequently impossible to rein him in (Carlton 1970: 45).

For his coercive bargaining, Snowden earned the acclaim of the permanent foreign office bureaucrats who accompanied him to The Hague. Maurice Hankey wrote, "The Chancellor the Exchequer is amazing. Never for one moment has he budged from his 100% demand, in public, in meetings with his colleagues, in private or (I ask myself) to himself! . . . One cannot but admire such fortitude, with all the great politicians in Europe. . . . If you were to ask me what the Chancellor would take, frankly I could not tell you—but I think it would be difficult to refuse 75% of our demand, if we ever got such an offer" (in Carlton 1970: 48). Not surprisingly, however, his Labour colleagues were upset at him for departing from their preferred style of reasoned dialogue. Lord Parmoor, now Lord President of the Council, threatened to resign. Beatrice Webb, a cabinet member, complained that the finance minister approached diplomacy like a conservative. Snowden was "playing up to the vulgar international individualism of Chamberlain, the Jingo Press—with the object of superseding J.R.M. [James Ramsay MacDonald]" (Carlton 1970: 45).

Henderson objected to coercive bargaining because it imperiled a value creating deal on the occupation and reparations. As Hugh Dalton, his aide, later explained, "a few millions are dust in the balance, compared with the gains of the early and complete evacuation which will also certainly follow swiftly on a general acceptance of the Young Plan" (Carlton 1970: 40, see also 48). Memoranda from the previous summer indicate that Henderson foresaw such a problem far in advance. He cautioned that if the Hague conference failed due to the British position on reparations, the British "would find themselves isolated and held up in the United States as the Powers who for petty and selfish financial motives had sacrificed the interests of Europe and kept alive the discredited system whereby Europe is still divided into the two camps of victors and vanquished" (DBFP IA, Vol. 6, No. 182). In other words, he thought Labour should pursue diplomacy consistent with its prosocial motivation, promoting joint gains through consideration of others' interests as well as those of Britain. The "financial reasons for such a rejection must be absolutely overwhelming to justify a course fraught with so many dangers to the future success of Great Britain's foreign policy of reconciliation and co-operation" (DBFP IA, Vol. 6, No. 182).

It is unclear why Snowden took such a line. Scholars have pointed to the difficult financial circumstances in Britain, in particular the unemployment level and the need for a minority government to attract the



votes of other parties. Reparations agreements also have distributive implications at home in a way that security arrangements do not. And, of course, Snowden's bureaucratic interest was in protecting the British budget, not British diplomatic standing. All these factors probably mattered. Nevertheless, it does appear that the chancellor was the exception to the rule. "No other incident of this sort marred the government's behavior," writes Michael Gordon (1969: 60). And it speaks for the psychological argument that the main supporters of the finance minister's negotiating style were outside the Labour government—the right-wing press and Conservatives (Carlton 1970: 51).

Snowden's coercive diplomatic style led to a prolonged deadlock with France. If Britain were to claw back a greater share of reparations receipts, the difference would have to mostly come out of the share of France. As a consequence, Briand stalled negotiations in the political committee dealing with the evacuation question. To apply leverage, the French foreign minister would not even begin discussions on the potential terms of a deal, such as a beginning date for the withdrawal of French forces (ADAP B12, Nos. 155, 161; Jacobson 1972: 316; DBFP IA, Vol. 6, No. 313). This stands in sharp contrast to the way that diplomacy at Locarno proceeded, in which issues were dealt with sequentially rather than being held in abeyance before agreements on others and positions were openly and honestly revealed. Had the spirit of Locarno prevailed, Briand would have explored the basis of one element of the package deal, even while maintaining that all was contingent on agreements on all the issues on the table. This contrast in diplomatic style reflects the different diplomatic style of the cabinets Briand represented at the two conferences. The foreign minister stressed that he was now in charge of the conservative coalition that Poincaré had recently left behind when he resigned for health reasons. Most of the ministers are "comparable to Graf Westarp," he said, in an allusion to the ultra-conservative German politician and supporter of coercive diplomacy (ADAP B12, No. 168).

Stresemann objected to the French line, reiterating at the conference the German view that the two issues were not, in fact, linked and that there was no reason why division over financial questions should impact progress on the political ones (ADAP B12, No. 158; DBFP IA, Vol. 6, No. 313). He declared this publicly to apply pressure (Stresemann, Vol. 3: 580–82). Stresemann threatened not to recommend any financial deal to his cabinet if the parties at the conference had not set a definitive end date for the occupation (ADAP B12, Nos. 155, 161, 168, 178; DBFP IA, Vol. 6, No. 316). With no reparation deal in place to induce the French to negotiate, however, the Germans had little leverage.

It was only that this point, in the face of the lack of cooperation by France, that Henderson dropped his bombshell. Representing Britain

on the political committee dealing with the occupation question, he tried to coerce the French by announcing British plans to withdraw all their forces, regardless of the outcome of the reparation negotiations. The removal of troops would begin in mid-September, and all soldiers would be home before Christmas (ADAP B12, Nos. 157, 158; DBFP IA, Vol. 6, No. 316). Although military leaders had stressed to him that it would take months to even begin the evacuation, Henderson instructed them that the pull out was to commence in just a few weeks (ADAP B12, No. 167).

It is unclear whether this shift reflects a change in foreign policy substance or diplomatic style. As mentioned earlier, Labour did make better treatment of Germany a foreign policy goal. Despite this, the Labour government announced its policy at the conference only in response to French coercive bargaining, suggesting that the persistent French coercive bargaining had induced the same style on the part of the British, as expected by my theory. Reasoned dialogue is not based on unrequited concessions. Coercive bargaining induces coercive bargaining. In any case, given British leverage, the move helped unlink the two issues to some extent. The prospect of being left isolated in the Rhineland induced Briand to agree to begin the French withdrawal of the second zone alongside the British, irrespective of progress on reparations (Winkler 1994: 235).

The French still intended to save the final zone until after the ratification and implementation by all parties of a financial agreement, should it ever be concluded. And Briand still refused to name an end date for the occupation, leading Stresemann to suspect that the French would use the continued occupation as insurance against German nonpayment (ADAP B12, Nos. 157, 168, 178). Disingenuously, Briand stressed the logistical difficulties posed by moving troops in the winter (ADAP B12, Nos. 155, 196). More accurately, he noted that the French military wanted to buy time to finish the Maginot Line (ADAP B12, No. 161). The German foreign minister leaked the divisions between the allies to increase the public pressure on the French. This behavior stood in contrast to his previous preference for quiet and private diplomacy during the Locarno period (Jacobson 1972: 319).

France and Germany, now finally negotiating, were still engaged in value claiming. Two weeks into the conference, the French foreign minister finally proposed a date for the completion of the evacuation—October 1930. Stresemann deemed this unacceptable and countered with April 1, 1930 (ADAP B12, No. 188). Briand argued that he would be sacked if he accepted such an early date because it contradicted the statement he had made before parliament. He warned that he would be replaced by a thoroughly nationalistic and conservative government

(ADAP B12, No. 196; also Jacobson 1972: 327). Stresemann gave the same warning about what would happen in Germany if he conceded—the right would take over, undermining any efforts at Franco-German reconciliation (ADAP B12, No. 158). Rejecting the offer, he threatened to resign if Briand stayed firm (ADAP B12, No. 191). The use of threats and counterthreats was new for the two statesmen, who had never before engaged in such face-to-face value claiming. In a game of chicken, the two stubbornly held out for days before finally accepting June 30, 1930, as the termination date for the occupation, five years ahead of schedule.

The French and Germans had not reached a compromise through the open sharing of their positions and an exchange of benefits based on a desire for a mutually beneficial outcome. France and Germany found success at The Hague despite their negotiating styles, not because of them. At several points, it seemed that the entire set of negotiations would collapse. Unlike Locarno, The Hague was a combative conference. Had it not been for the Labour government's coercion of France, inducing it to move in the direction of Germany on the issue of the evacuation, the conference might very well have ended in failure. By shrinking the bargaining space of the French and creating at least the prospect of success, the British created the potential for a package deal. Indeed, without this diplomatic move, the two might otherwise have been so far apart that even a successful reparations deal would not have been enough incentive to settle the evacuation of the Rhineland.

Still the lowest-common-denominator bargaining between France and Germany meant that the final terms favored the more powerful French in a way that had not been true at Locarno. When value claiming negotiation prevails, deals tend to either fall through or reflect the distribution of power. Germany was forced to make some final financial concessions on reparations to bridge the gap between France and Britain. By reworking the timing of the payments, the Germans covered the difference between the final French and British positions (Carlton 1970: 50). The settlement on the occupation was accompanied by a final financial agreement in which the British clawed back 83 percent of the amount Snowden had demanded (Carlton 1970: 49), largely at the expense of Germany.