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have to be transferred back to the Germans, and perhaps territories as well, and our taxpayers may have to indemnify the expropriated British possessors."

We also quote from *Truth* (March 28th) which puts the matter in its proper light:—

"In his letters to the *Times* Sir George Craik, the managing director of the Commonwealth Trust, Limited, shows an extraordinary inability to grasp the reason why the Cabinet has decided that the properties now held by the Trust must be restored to the rightful owners, the Basle Trading Co. He asks for an enquiry into allegations of enemy sympathies or associations which were made against employers of the Swiss mission during the war. He does not seem to understand that those allegations, even if substantiated and even if they afforded sufficient grounds for war-time measures of control, did not justify according to international law the permanent expropriation of the properties in neutral ownership in the Gold Coast and in India. The French Government frankly admitted this in the case of the properties in the Cameroons, and the British Government is in honour bound to follow that example. The alternative is to wait for an adverse judgment of the Hague Tribunal—a humiliation for this country which the patriotic directors of the Commonwealth Trust are apparently ready to face with equanimity.

Sir George Craik says he does not see what business it was of the Colonial Office to question the action of the board of the Commonwealth Trust in voting £2,500 out of surplus profits (not yet earned) for the benefit of Indian missions. He says this in spite of the fact that in order to secure control by the Government the constitution of the Trust as a company expressly empowers the Secretary for the Colonies or the Secretary for India to remove from office all or any of its directors.

With what seems to be obtuseness Sir George combines some degree of offensiveness in his references to Viscount Templeton and to those members of the House of Commons who have asked questions on the subject. He wants to know how their curiosity was "inspired," and talks impudently about members of Parliament as "representatives" of a foreign company. The idea that they may be animated by a sense of public duty and a belief that the good name of this country requires the righting of the wrong that was done, even though it means the end of the Commonwealth Trust—and the end of the managing directorship—is, apparently, beyond the comprehension of Sir George Craik."

The shareholders' meeting has also given rise to some questions in the House of Commons as will be seen from the Parliamentary reports in the *Times* (April 3rd) from which we quote herewith:

"Colonel Wedgwood asked Mr. Amery if he was aware that, at a special meeting of the Commonwealth Trust, allegations were made concerning the methods by which the policy of the Colonial Office on matters concerning the trust was arrived at; and if he would call for a *verbatim* report of the proceedings.

Mr. W. Baker (Bristol E., Lab.) also asked if Mr. Amery was aware that during the extraordinary meeting of the Commonwealth Trust, attacks were made on certain members of Parliament and allegations were made about the methods of his Department; and whether he would request the directors to forward to him a *verbatim* copy of the printed speeches, in order that copies might be laid upon the Table of the House for the information of members.

Mr. Amery.—I will ask the directors if they can furnish me with any fuller report of the speeches referred to than that which has already appeared in the Press. I shall then be in a position to judge whether such report contains sufficient additional matter of importance to justify my laying it upon the Table of the House.

Colonel Wedgwood further asked whether, in view of the proposal made by the Government to repay part of the capital of the Commonwealth Trust with some further compensation, Mr. Amery would inquire as to the expense incurred by the trust in taking the great hall at Winchester House for a meeting of 13 shareholders, and the cost of putting a six-column advertisement in the *Times* to record Mr. Lionel Curtis's speech.

Colonel Wedgwood also asked if Mr. Amery was aware that, during the extraordinary meeting of the Commonwealth Trust, certain shareholders moved an amendment to the official resolution of the directors urging the board of directors to co-operate with the Secretary of State and, subject to certain conditions, to give him every assistance in a friendly manner in carrying out the decision of the Cabinet, and that, apart from the personal vote of the directors themselves, the amendment was only lost by a majority of one vote of those present; and whether he would call upon the directors to submit to him a certificate showing the number of shareholders, apart from the directors, present and voting at the meeting, coupled with a statement upon the proxies received from

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those who were unable to be present and to avail themselves of the information disclosed at the meeting.

Mr. Amery.—I do not think it necessary to make the suggested inquiries into the detailed administration of the company's affairs.

Colonel Wedgwood asked whether, seeing that the directors of this company were subject to the right hon. gentleman's approval, he was not therefore in a position of trust, so that he ought to be able to see whether the money of the trust was being wasted or not.—Mr. Amery replied that on major issues that was so, but he hardly thought that the trust would warrant his interference on detailed points.—Sir F. Hall (Dulwich, U.) asked whether, if any of these officers of the Commonwealth Trust lost their positions in consequence of the transfer, Mr. Amery would use his best endeavours to see that their interests were protected.—Mr. Amery: Most certainly.—Mr. A. Hopkinson asked whether, in view of the fact that Colonel Wedgwood had stated at the meeting that his only object was to get his money back, Mr. Amery could give Colonel Wedgwood the necessary assurance. (Laughter).—Mr. Skelton (Perth, U.) asked if Mr. Amery could say, in a word, what were the functions of the Commonwealth Trust.—Mr. Amery said that he was afraid that that word would be a very comprehensive one.

Lieut.-Com. Kenworthy.—Is the right hon. gentleman aware that a column of the *Times* costs about £75, and that the total amount spent on this publicity was £450, if it was paid for? Is that the way the money should be expended by a company not making profits?

Mr. Amery.—I do not know if that sum was spent.—Mr. A. Hopkinson: Is it not desirable that the shareholders should have an opportunity of knowing what the Colonial Office has done, and that therefore the expense was fully justified?—Colonel Wedgwood: Is it not desirable that an account of what the Colonial Office has done should come from the right hon. gentleman who conducts the Colonial Office, rather than from an ex-official of the Colonial Office who does not?—Mr. Amery: I hope to give that account.

In reply to Mr. Dummico (Consett, Lab.), Mr. Amery said: I have no information as to the number of meetings held by the trustees of the Commonwealth Trust. No sums have been disbursed from the surplus profits of the trust on behalf of native welfare in West Africa.

Lieut.-Com. Kenworthy.—Would it not have been a good thing if this £450, expended on the *Times*, could have been given to the poor natives of West Africa?

Dr. Karl Bohny.

The *Times* (March 29th) published the following obituary notice:—

"Dr. Bohny was a native of Basel, and was for many years Professor of Medicine at the University there. He was also a medical officer in the Swiss Army, in which he held the rank of chief medical officer of a division. In 1905 he was elected a member of the directorate of the Swiss Red Cross, and in 1914 was appointed chief surgeon of the Red Cross, in which capacity he had to organise the medical service of the Swiss Army, and to create a centre for Swiss convalescent soldiers. Dr. Bohny was also in charge of the transport of War cripples through Switzerland, of the exchange of wounded between the Allied Powers and Germany, and of the establishment in Switzerland of hundreds of Allied and German interned officers and men. His good humour and kindness were highly appreciated by the Allied interned, especially by the British. For his work during the War Dr. Bohny was awarded several foreign orders. Since 1919 he had been President of the Swiss Red Cross. He also belonged to the League of Red Cross Societies, of which he was a Governor."

Patriotic Poetry.

The following from the *Daily Telegraph* (March 27th) shows that the delicate task of eliminating points of friction still existing as a result of the War and entrusted to Swiss statesmen is fraught with many vicissitudes:—

M. Calonder, the Swiss chairman (appointed by the League) of the mixed German-Polish Commission entrusted with the task of supervising

the working of the 1922 Convention relating to the treatment of minorities in Upper Silesia, is just now the object of violent attacks in the Polish Press. The gravamen of the complaint against him, which may be brought up at Geneva, is that he recently prohibited the singing in the schools of the Polish part of Upper Silesia of a Polish patriotic song known as the "Rota."

In this song the Polish children exclaim, "No, we shall not leave the land which gave us birth!" M. Calonder holds that the song "might offend the national feelings of the German minority," and that "songs which express feelings of revenge, hatred, or contempt" towards another nation "cannot be reconciled with the spirit of the Geneva Convention." But it is very difficult to say what is and what is not legitimate in the poetic expression of patriotism, and such attempts at censorship are irksome.

A parallel case—this time with Germany on the other side—is the veto placed by the Coblenz High Commission on the singing by the Rhine-landers of the "Wacht am Rhein." Ten years after the war there should be enough mutual tolerance to remove all need for such petty restrictions."

An April Hoax.

From the *Daily Mail* (April 2nd):—

"Switzerland was hoaxed this morning by a Lausanne newspaper which published an article from its Berne correspondent purporting to describe the secret departure from Berne last night of Mittelholzer, the Swiss airman, on an attempt to fly the Atlantic.

With a wealth of circumstantial detail, the story explained that the project had been kept a profound secret lest the German airmen now waiting in Ireland should get wind of the affair and steal a march on the Swiss.

Mittelholzer, whom the correspondent "accidentally discovered" taking a last frugal meal in a teetotal café in Berne, was represented as saying that he would not allow anybody to accompany him, but as the aeroplane was about to rise a mysterious personage rushed up and jumped into the cockpit.

The mysterious personage, so the story went, was Zoubkov, the husband of the ex-Kaiser's sister, who had chosen this method of rehabilitating himself in public opinion.

Scores of people who during the day telephoned to the authorities and to various aerodromes asking for news of Mittelholzer's progress had the mortification of being reminded that it was April Fool's Day."

A Swiss Consulate in Soho!

The *Observer* (April 1st) contains a long article dealing with the medley of nations in Soho and its amenities. In the course of his nocturnal peregrinations the writer seems to have discovered a "Swiss Consulate" in Charlotte Street, as may be gathered from the following extract:—

"The real Soho seems to have moved to the north. Charlotte Street has always been the centre of a foreign quarter. There is an old German school nearby, and the Swiss Consulate and the Swiss Club and many restaurants and many artists in eccentric attire; and here, too, is one of the last café bars where half the people speak French or Italian."

We know the lure of the Swiss Club in that locality is very great and we doubt not that a consulate in close proximity would relieve the general anxiety for a prompt discharge of the military tax, but the official intimation of its opening has not yet reached us.

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