

What Do the American People Think of the League?

Congress Has Spoken, the Press Has Spoken.. What Do the People Themselves Say?

Speaking in New York this week, President Wilson said: "The first thing I am going to tell the people on the other side of the water is an overwhelming majority of the American people is in favor of the league of nations. I know that that is true."

demand that for the wrongs done this country Mexico shall pay in territory?"

A gentleman from Florida objects to destructive criticism:

"It would please me much better if those who are inclined to criticize the league of nations would restrain their desire to print except when they are able to offer something better than what has been already proposed."

From Massachusetts it is suggested:

"The Republican party, irrespective of Mr. Wilson's academic temperamental peculiarities, must do its part in framing and putting into effect the charter of a league of nations, and give it a chance to vivify the aspirations of a war weary world; and thus remove it from any possibility of being an issue in the 1920 campaign."

A theory comes from New York:

"It is not the league of nations that is objected to. It is simply the old slogan of 1916: 'Anything to beat Woodrow Wilson.' That's all!"

Another New Yorker proposes:

"Let us man the surrendered German warships with the noisiest and most irresponsible enemies of the league of nations. Then let the original proposal as to the fleet take its course—tow it out to sea and sink it. This is the 'Lodge-ical' solution."

But the time is going to come, a writer in Pennsylvania reminds us, when—

"President Wilson will receive credit from his innumerable critics as soon as they can see beyond their nose. But little should he care for them. The greater part of the people support him in his undertaking, anyway."

Never in Vain

This belief in the support of the people many of the impromptu writers state with particular confidence. "President Wilson has appealed over the heads of the politicians to the people," says a citizen of Dayton, "not for the first time, and he has never appealed in vain, for the people are with him, and the boys coming home are with him, heart and soul, to a man."

Hearing is believing is the opinion of a Massachusetts correspondent:

"Any one who heard the logical and impassioned appeals of ex-President Taft and Secretary Baker at the recent sessions of the league of peace conference in Boston cannot fail to stand back of President Wilson in his effort to do away with swiftness of war with every ounce of his influence."

From Bowdoin College in Maine comes the announcement that twenty-four out of twenty-five in the faculty have signed an appeal for the league of nations. A clergyman who "has had an opportunity of meeting ministers and Christian laymen in many parts of the country" has expressed himself that their desire for such a league "is apparently unanimous." He concludes:

"I believe that any one who is suspected of opposing this world plan for political or partisan reasons will eventually be buried under such a mountain of national indignation that there will be for him no political resurrection."

From Maryland comes this word:

"I may mistake the temperament of the people of this country. But I venture to predict that any Senator of the United States who shall vote against the treaty to bring an enduring peace to our distracted world will be serving his last term in Congress."

A New York man speaks for labor:

"The laboring men of the United States say: 'The Senate of the United States must sustain the league of nations or the United States will ask our aid in a future war in vain.'"

In Texas a correspondent makes a suggestion to the nations of the world:

"Up to this date our four-word axiom, 'The Declaration of Independence,' stands as the highest one in political economy, and I will now coin a new axiom.

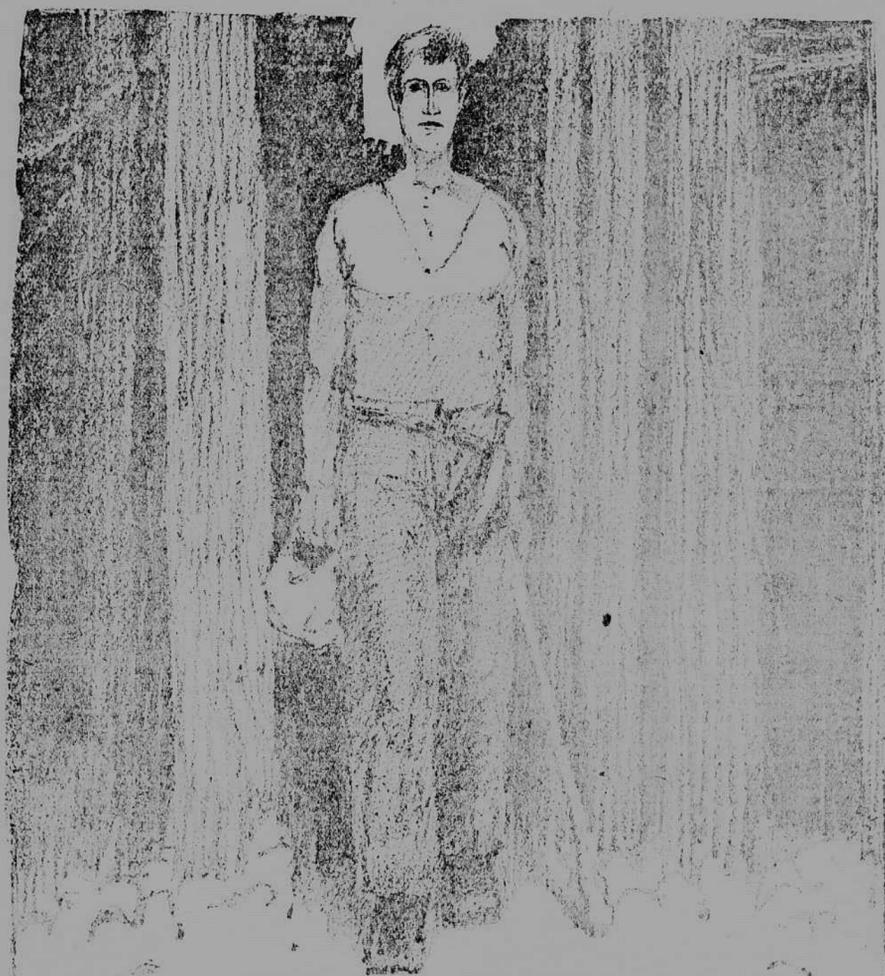
"The words that will make a perfect title for our world-wide wonder are 'the compact of nations,' and I here submit it to the nations of the world for adoption."

Washington
What would Washington, with his doctrine of entangling alliances, have done about the present league of nations? The proponents of the league believe he would have accepted it gladly. Revolutionary war politics, they assume, are out of date, anyway. Thus, in the opinion of one:

"If Washington were alive to-day, would he favor a league of nations? History tells us that both he and Lincoln were pretty strong on the idea of 'unity of power in maintaining peace.'"

Says another from Illinois:

"Present-day transportation facilities, modern machinery and international commerce have brought about such radical changes in the world situation since Washington's time that there can be but little doubt that Washington, were he alive to-day, would be the most enthusiastic supporter of a world league. In his day we were a struggling little nation, and instincts of self-preservation prevented us from meddling in the affairs of European powers."



THESE two cartoons, both from countries which remained neutral throughout the war, present an interesting contrast. The one above visions the world, a stalwart if not overpoweringly prepossessing youth, emerging from the intricate and dangerous depths of a vast forest and entering the open. It comes from "Nebelspalter," a magazine published in Zurich, Switzerland, and which for years has found little material of an optimistic nature available for its cartoonist. The lower drawing is from "Notenkraaker," of Amsterdam. It does not see quite so rosy an outlook for our distracted world. The war is over, and Death, packing up his kit-bag and throwing his mantle over his shoulders, remarks: "My task is done. I go." But the gentleman in the foreground, whose name is diplomacy, replies: "Happy voyage, comrade. I stay. They can't do without me yet!"

To-day we are a world power and, as Roosevelt has indicated, we must at times intervene to protect a weaker power."

And a New Yorker continues:

"Surely Washington would be even more determined than Woodrow Wilson. The Senator or citizen who cannot grasp the tremendous responsibilities the United States is committed to is indeed blind or a shameful coward; in a word, an un-American man or woman."

A fourth warns:

"Policies of a century ago are no guide to the policies of to-day, any more than the methods of business of a decade ago are sufficient for the exigencies of the business of to-day. The world moves apace, and it's absolutely rot for Senators Borah, Reed, et al, to attempt to put the clock back."

Nor will it endanger the Monroe Doctrine, according to a writer from Chicago:

"There is nothing in the league of na-

Uncle Sam's Mail Bags Have Been Heavily Freighted With the "Voice of the People"

forced to spend many billions of dollars to help in restoring order to the world. Now, when we are asked to agree to put ourselves where we may possibly be called on to spend a few millions to establish justice and maintain peace, Senator Borah says it is unconstitutional."

Says an ex-Governor of Florida:

"No man can join any society or organization without being subject, more or less, to its laws. No man can live in any part of the world without giving up some of his sovereignty. Even a Comanche's sovereignty to tomahawk other nations and the world at large must be abridged. A league to enforce peace will do it."

An inhabitant of Milwaukee inquires:

"If labor and capital should resign their liberty of unhampered action to another, why may not nations surrender their liberty to butcher one another to arbitration?"

It is all a question of sovereignty, some one suggests:

"Sovereignty is often confused with the functions of government. Senator Borah says the league would limit our sovereign right to maintain our army and navy and to make war, and would require us to incur heavy expenses for using force to maintain order in far away lands, all of which is unconstitutional. If by sovereignty the Senator means the exercise of such functions of government as he has named, unquestionably the league of nations would curtail them. That is the chief reason for creating it, to take away from us and from other less peaceably disposed nations the right to throw the world into chaos at any time."

Peace First

ASIDE from those actually opposed to the league are a number who feel that the actual peace with the Teutonic powers should come first, and a framing of the league afterward. "The cart," they feel, "is before the horse."

Here is the opinion of a writer from South Carolina:

"The cart is before the horse in any discussion of a league of nations at this time. Before peace has been anywhere nearly realized we have been subjected to an argument which has concerned man since time immemorial, while questions vastly more pertinent and pressing have been utterly disregarded."

From New Jersey:

"I do not like this great 'league of nations' project until the 'peace' business is entirely settled."

"A big batch of puling baby nations for the United States to wet-nurse and snuggles does not appeal to me—even a little bit."

At least one man in Alabama believes:

"The President would now have us 'sign on the dotted line' in haste and leave the rest to him so that he can hurry back to take up the problems pressing for solution in Germany and, in fact, all Europe. That these problems are growing and are dangerous all the world knows and that they should have been disposed of the first thing at the peace conference all the world is beginning to know; but with all this, can America afford to act hastily on a matter involving future generations?"

A query from Massachusetts:

"Are we not allowed to look about to see if some other simpler and less nebulous plan cannot be worked out that will attain the major object, which is keeping the world at peace and at the same time leave America to work out her own salvation in the Western hemisphere free from outside interference?"

Punish Germany first:

"President Wilson has conceived a vast scheme of unknown and unguessable possibilities for the purpose of preventing war in the future, or punishing those who shall indulge in it, by means of a league of nations. But already there is a criminal at the bar, of whose hideous guilt there is not a shadow of doubt, and already there is a league of nations with ample power to punish him."

Nor do the Senators go entirely un-

defended. A Bostonian writes:

"Our Senators are not a company of autocrats that have been 'wished' upon us; they are our spokesmen, elected by all the people, the 'plain' and handsome, the industrious and lazy. And as the spokesman of 100,000,000 people it behooves us not to fear at their efforts to keep our ship of state to a safe course and to prevent eventual shipwreck."

Why ask the league opponents for a war preventive comes the inquiry from Baltimore:

"Do not the defenders of the league of nations ask a childish question when they ask what the opponents of that visionary scheme have to offer as a substitute panacea against war? The opponents of a league of nations do not believe that there can be a cut and dried plan to abolish war any more than that there can be a plan to abolish death. War is gradually becoming more and more abhorrent to mankind, to be undertaken only when it is forced upon an enlightened nation, and in that evident fact

exists as much assurance for continuance of peace as can be obtained."

And as to threats, a correspondent asks:

"Would it not be more statesmanlike and more judicious to avoid 'threats' in view of the prejudice and resentment such threats naturally create? Does it not occur to the President that these 'threats' from statesmanship are calculated to generate an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust in the peace council at Paris, to say nothing of the feeling that will be aroused in the free representative parliaments of Europe? Does the President realize that his action gives 'comfort to the enemy' in proportion as it irritates the governments and people of friendly allies?"

"I think it is time," a descendant of a "1830 American" writes, "Europe understood that when Mr. Wilson speaks he doesn't necessarily speak for the American people." In fact—

"he seldom voices their true sentiments. Mr. Wilson is only one-eighty-millionth part of the population. And if by such 'speaking for the American people' he is causing so much misunderstanding and possible trouble for us abroad, it is time some one else spoke who really and truthfully voices our sentiments. How about retiring Mr. Wilson while the retiring is good?"

Against

THE traditional eloquence of the nation, its independent doctrines, even its Constitution, many believe the league threatens with extinction. America is bound, they prophesy, to become subservient to the will of Europe. Even before the league is formed they see a beginning of the loss of our sovereignty. Discussing the mandatory system a gentleman in Utah believes that—

"the sense of fair play in America will not stand for this style of handling things. Nor will America be willing to be mixed up with matters in Europe and Asia in this style. I personally would prefer a world league based on five units, one of them being pan-America and the other four Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania. This is sensible and in accord with the law of organic evolution."

A New Yorker sees the beginning of

autocracy:

"I am an old-fashioned American, a worshipping at the shrine of George Washington, and see with apprehension the evident tendency of what assumes to be a democracy to run into autocracy and to violate the wise injunctions of the Farewell Address of the greatest patriot that ever honored the earth by his presence."

"But in view of what I read in some papers of the extra-legal progress of some people I need enlightenment."

A Pennsylvanian asks:

"Has human nature changed so much since Monroe's day that it is wise to throw away our weapons and trust ourselves to an association which may turn out as badly as the former one?"

Another foresees humiliating exploita-

tion:

"That a league would have been formed in any case in due course is undoubted—a league of England, France and Italy, to which other countries would probably have had some relation, but in which control would have lain in the hands of these three nations, bound inseparably together by years of united struggle and by the need for a common protection."

"And this is, in fact, what this union of sentimental idealism on the one hand and practical, intelligent diplomacy on the other has brought forth, with the addition that it gives to England, which by securing admission to the league of possessions and colonies, will have five votes, the determination of the size of our naval and military forces, their control in all international affairs and the right to discuss of them whenever, wherever, to whatever extent and for whatever purpose they may see fit; to direct, under certain vaguely expressed conditions, not only our economic policy, but even our tariffs, and, finally, to take over absolutely the supervision and control of the political affairs of this hemisphere, that we have always jealously insisted on as our right under the Monroe Doctrine. Could a more humiliating exploitation of this country be imagined?"

Aliens—Immigration

Under the league what will we do with undesirable aliens? Says a Spokane, Wash., letter writer:

"Consider a condition which confronts us at the present time. There has sailed—or is about to sail—a ship from New York carrying numerous subjects of foreign governments. We deport them because they are a menace to our peace and welfare. We propose to deport more. But a foreign government has entered protest against such action and other governments are very liable to do the same."

And as for the immigration of cheap labor, another observes that—

"Japan has already started the ball rolling and will probably find support in some of the European governments. The subject of

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