

Text of President Wilson's Address Before Senate Urging League of All Nations to Enforce Peace in Future

Gentlemen of the Senate:

"On the 12th day of December last I addressed a solemn note to the governments of the nations now at war requesting them to state more definitely than there had yet been stated by either group of belligerents the terms upon which they would deem it possible to make peace. I spoke on behalf of humanity and of the rights of all neutral nations like our own, many of whose most vital interests the war puts in constant jeopardy. The central powers united in a reply which stated merely that they were ready to meet their antagonists in conference to discuss terms of peace.

"The entente powers have replied much more definitely and have stated, in general terms, indeed, but with sufficient definiteness to imply details, the arrangements, guarantees and acts of reparation which they deem to be the indispensable conditions of a satisfactory settlement.

"We are that much nearer a definite discussion of the peace which shall end the present war. We are that much nearer the discussion of the international concert which must thereafter hold the world at peace.

Security Must Follow Peace.

"In every discussion of the peace that must end this war it is taken for granted that that peace must be followed by some definite concert of power which will make it virtually impossible that any such catastrophe should ever overwhelm us again. Every lover of peace and every sane and thoughtful man must take that for granted.

"I have sought this opportunity to address you because I thought that I owed it to you, as the council associated with me in the final determination of our international obligations, to disclose to you without reserve the thought and purpose that have been taking form in my mind in regard to the duty of our government in these days to come when it will be necessary to guarantee and upon a new plan the foundations of peace among the nations.

"It is inconceivable that the people of the United States should play no part in that great enterprise. To take part in such a service will be the opportunity for which they have sought to prepare themselves by the very principles and purposes of their policy and the approved practices of their government ever since the days when they set up a new nation in the high and honorable hope that it might in all that it was and did show mankind the way to liberty. They cannot in honor withhold the service which they are now about to be challenged. They owe it to themselves and to the other nations of the world to state the conditions under which they will feel free to render it.

"That service is nothing less than this: to add their authority and their power to the authority and force of other nations to guarantee peace and justice throughout the world. Such a settlement cannot now be long postponed. It is right that before it comes this government should frankly formulate the conditions upon which it would feel justified in asking our people to approve its formal and solemn adherence to a league of nations.

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for peace. I am here to attempt to state those conditions.

"The present war must first be ended; but we owe it to candor and to a just regard for the opinion of mankind to say that so far as our participation in guarantee of future peace is concerned it makes a great deal of difference in what way and upon what terms it is ended. The treaties and agreements which bring it to an end must embody terms which will create a peace that is worth guaranteeing and preserving; a peace that will win the approval of mankind, not merely a peace that will satisfy the several interests and immediate aims of the nations engaged. We shall have no voice in determining what those terms shall be; but we shall, I feel sure, have a voice in determining whether the balance made lasting or not by the guarantees of a universal covenant; and our judgment upon what is fundamental and essential as a condition precedent to permanency should be spoken now, not afterward, when it may be too late.

Must Include New World.

"No covenant of co-operative peace that does not include the peoples of the new world can suffice to keep the future safe against war; and yet there is only one sort of peace that the peoples of America could join in guaranteeing. It is one that engages the confidence and satisfy the principles of the American governments, elements consistent with their political faith and the practical convictions which the peoples of America have made for all embraced and undertaken to defend.

"I do not mean to say that any American government would throw any obstacle in the way of any terms of peace the governments now at war might agree upon, or seek to upset them when made, whatever they might be.

"I only take it for granted that mere terms of peace between the belligerents will not be satisfactory even to the belligerents themselves. Mere agreements may make a peace, but it will be absolutely necessary that a force be created as a guarantor of the permanency of the settlement so much greater than the force of any nation now engaged in the present war. The force formed or projected that no nation, not even the combination of nations, could face or withstand it. If the peace presently to be made is to endure, it must be a peace made secure by the organized major force of mankind.

"The terms of the immediate peace agreed upon will determine whether it is a peace for which such a guarantee can be secured. The question upon which the whole future peace and policy of the world depends is this:

Peace Means Sea Freedom

"And the paths of the sea must, alike in law and in fact, be free. The freedom of the seas is the sine qua non of peace, equality, and co-operation. No doubt a somewhat radical reconsideration of many of the rules of international practice hitherto sought to be established may be necessary in order to make the seas indeed free and common in practically all circumstances for the use of mankind, but the motive for such changes is constant and compelling. There can be no trust or intimacy between the peoples of the world without them. The free, constant, unthreatened intercourse of nations is an essential part of the process of peace and of development.

"It is a problem closely connected with the limitation of naval armament and the co-operation of the navies of the world in keeping the seas at once free and safe. And the question of limiting naval armaments opens the wider and perhaps more difficult question of the limitation of armies and of all programs of military preparation.

"Difficult and delicate as these questions are, they must be faced with the utmost candor and decided in a spirit of real accommodation if peace is to come with healing in its wings, and come to stay. Peace cannot be had without concession and sacrifice. There can be no sense of safety and equality among the nations if great preponderating armaments hereafter are to be maintained, and there to be built up and maintained.

Plan for Peace as for War.

"The statesmen of the world must plan for peace and nations must adjust and accommodate their policy to it as they have planned for war and made ready for pitiless contest and rivalry.

"The question of armaments, whether they are to be limited or not, is an intensely practical question connected with the future fortunes of nations and mankind.

"I have spoken upon these great matters without reserve and with the utmost explicitness because it has seemed to me to be necessary if the world's yearning desire for peace with anything to find free voice and utterance. Perhaps I am the only person in high authority amongst all the peoples of the world who is at liberty to speak and hold nothing back. I am speaking as an individual, and yet I am speaking also, of course, as the responsible head of a great government, and I feel confident that I have said what the people of the United States would wish me to say.

"May I not add that I hope and believe that I am in effect speaking for liberals and friends of humanity in every nation and of every program of liberty? I would fain believe that I am speaking for the silent mass of mankind everywhere who have as yet had no place or opportunity to speak their real hearts out concerning the death and ruin they see to have come already upon the persons and the homes they hold most dear.

No Breach of Traditions.

"And in holding out the expectation that the people and government of the United States will join the other civilized nations of the world in guaranteeing the permanency of peace upon such terms as I have named, I speak with the greater boldness and confidence, because it is clear to every man who can think that there is in this promise no breach in either our traditions or our policy as a nation, but a fulfillment rather of all that we have professed or striven for.

"I am proposing that it be so that the nations should with one accord adopt the doctrine of President Monroe as the doctrine of the world: That no nation should seek to extend its policy over any other nation or people, but that every people should be left free to determine its own policy, unhindered, unthreatened, unafraid, the little along with the great and powerful.

"I am proposing that all nations henceforth avoid entangling alliances which would draw them into competitions of power, catch them in a net of intrigue and selfish rivalry, and disturb their own affairs with interferences from without. There is no entangling alliance in a concert of power. When all unite to act in the same sense and with the same purpose all act in the common interest and are free to live their own lives under a common protection.

"I am proposing government by the consent of the governed; that freedom of the seas which in international conference after conference representatives of the United States have urged with the eloquence of those who are the convinced disciples of liberty; and that moderation

of armaments which makes of armies and navies a power for order merely, not an instrument of aggression or of selfish violence.

"These are American principles, American policies. We can stand for no others. And they are also the principles and policies of a forward-looking man in any woman everywhere, of every modern nation, of every enlightened community. They are the principles of mankind and must prevail.

"Is the present war a struggle for a just and secure peace, or only for a new balance of power? It is only a struggle for a new balance of power who will guarantee, who can guarantee, the stable equilibrium of the new arrangement? Only a tranquil Europe can be a stable Europe. There must be not a balance of power, but a community of power; not organized rivalries, but an organized common peace.

"Fortunately, we have received very explicit assurances on this point. The statements of both of the groups of nations now arrayed against one another have said, in terms that could not be misinterpreted, that it was no part of the purpose they had in mind to crush the other. But the implications of these assurances may not be equally clear to all—may not be the same on both sides of the water. I think it will be serviceable if I attempt to set forth what we understand them to be.

Peace Without Victory.

"They imply first of all that it must be a peace without victory. It is not pleasant to me that I be so interpreted as to put my own interpretation upon it and that it may be understood that no other interpretation was in my thought. I am seeking only to face realities and to state them without soft concealments. Victory would mean peace forced upon the loser, a victor's terms imposed upon the vanquished.

"It would be accepted in humiliation, under duress, at an intolerable sacrifice, and would leave a sting, a resentment, a bitter memory upon which terms of peace would rest, not permanently, but only as upon quicksand. Only a peace between equals can last. Only a peace where the principle of which is equality and a common benefit. The right state of mind, the right feeling between nations, is as necessary for a lasting peace as is the just settlement of vexed questions of territory or of racial and national allegiance.

"The equality of nations upon which peace must be founded if it is to last must be an equality of rights; the guarantees exchanged must neither recognize nor imply a difference between big nations and small, between the strong and the weak, and those that are weak. Right must be based upon the common strength, not upon the individual strength of the nations upon whose concert peace will depend.

Expect Freedom of Life.

"Equality of territory or of resources there, of course, cannot be; nor any other sort of equality not aimed at ordinary peaceful and legitimate development of the peoples themselves. But no one asks or expects anything more than an equality of rights. Mankind is looking now for freedom of life, not for equalities of power.

"And there is a deeper thing involved than even equality of right among organized nations. No peace can last, or ought to last, which does not recognize and accept the principle that governments derive all their just powers from the consent of the governed, and that no right anywhere exists to hand people about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were property.

"I take it for granted, for instance, if I may venture upon a simple example, that statesmen everywhere are agreed that there should be a united, independent, autonomous Poland and that henceforth the principle that governments derive all their just powers from the consent of the governed, and that no right anywhere exists to hand people about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were property.

Would Uncover Realities.

"I speak of this not because of any desire to exalt an abstract political principle which has always been held very dear by those who have sought to build up liberty in America, but for the same reason that I have spoken of the other conditions of peace which seem to me clearly indispensable—because I wish to uncover realities. Any peace that does not recognize and accept this principle will inevitably be upset.

"It will not rest upon the affections or the convictions of mankind. The ferment of spirit of whole populations will fight subtly and constantly against it and the world will sympathize. The world can be at peace only if its life is stable, and there can be no stability where the will is in rebellion, where there is not tranquility or spirit, and where there is, of freedom, of and of right.

"So far as practicable, moreover, every great people now struggling toward a full development of its resources and of its powers should be assured a direct outlet to the great highways of the sea. Where this cannot be done by the cessation of territory it can no doubt be done by the neutralization of direct rights of way under the general guarantee which will assure the right of every nation to be shut away from free access to the open paths of the world's commerce."



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PRESIDENT SHOWS HIS NEW PEACE PROGRAM

Asks Europe for Guarantees that Can Receive Joint Support of America.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE.

lery Mrs. Wilson and Miss Helen Woodrow Bones smiled tensely over the record.

"Declaring his belief that he owed it to the Senate to disclose his "thought and purpose" the President outlined the duty of this government "when it will be necessary to lay afresh and upon a new plan the foundations of peace among the nations."

Reveals Role of America.

"It is inconceivable," he said, "that the people of the United States should play no part in that great enterprise. They cannot in honor withhold the service to which they are now about to be challenged. They do not wish to withhold it. That service is nothing less than this: to add their power and authority to the authority and force of other nations to guarantee peace and justice throughout the world. Such a settlement cannot now be long postponed. It is right that before it comes this government should frankly formulate the conditions upon which it would feel justified in asking our people to approve its formal and solemn adherence to a league for peace."

As the President launched into the full stream of his address the silence in the Senate chamber became tense—almost painfully so. He spoke for nearly twenty-five minutes. The words fell from his lips with the impact of a well-measured precision that Congress has grown to expect from him.

"When the President finished, Senators looked into each other's eyes more in bewilderment than astonishment, and agreed it was the biggest shock and the biggest sensation they had had in many a long day. The Republicans applauded freely, then retired to the cloakrooms to scoff at the President's speech as Utopian and academic; the Democrats clapped with ardor and declared with Southern exuberance that the President's message, like the shot of the minute-men at Concord, would certainly be "heard around the world."

Mrs. Wilson in Gallery.

Mrs. Wilson, accompanied by Miss Helen Woodrow Bones, arrived just before 1 o'clock and took a front seat in the President's gallery.

So many members of the House came into the Senate chamber to hear the President's address that the session began to assume the appearance of a joint session of Congress.

Despite the news that the President would discuss foreign relations, the diplomatic gallery was almost deserted. Only two women were in it.

Large arm chairs were brought forward and placed in a semi-circle about the Vice President's desk.

President Wilson came into the Senate chamber on the arm of Senator Stone, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, and followed by the other Senators appointed to greet him.

In accordance with the Senate rule against applause, he was received in silence and throughout his address there was no demonstration on the part of the audience.

When the President ended his speech, the Senate broke the applause rule and Senators clapped their hands for a few seconds.

In the confusion following his address, Senators quickly formed in little groups to discuss the President's speech.

The President left the chamber immediately, on the arm of Senator Stone.

After the President had departed the Senate resumed debate on the legislative appropriation bill. No action was taken in regard to the President's address.

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