

ENGLAND BACKS WILSON FOR A FREE HAND ON THE SEVEN SEAS

President Has British Delegates Solidly Behind Him in His Opposition to the Italian, French and Japanese Aspirations; Fails Completely to Put Through the Plan to End the Anarchy in the Russian Empire.

(Continued from page 1.)

Downing street, at the end of last December, to the president during the visit to London that was pregnant with the fate of the world.

He failed in his effort to formulate a lineal policy, though, since every other power that had a policy also failed. This point can hardly be counted against the president.

He modified very decidedly his views concerning the transfer of populations without their consent from one country to another in consenting to French control of the Saar coal regions. He promised, it is true, French annexation of all the regions on the left bank of the Rhine, but the arrangement finally concluded, whereby the Saar district passes under French sway for a term of years, appears to me a formula connected to save Wilson's face and cover over the abandonment of one of the 14 points.

He failed, as did all his colleagues separately and collectively, to bring about a working agreement between the various new and old nations in central and eastern Europe for the free passage of food and raw materials. The sad conditions of starvation and misery still existing throughout half Europe, result from jealousies and old hatreds across frontiers that the president was unable to surmount, though he tried hard and with some limited local success.

There are other questions, such as the indemnity problem, upon which it is impossible at present to fairly say president Wilson's influence. These I have named are those concerning which sufficient is known to make such an estimate as has been given. The amount of reparations to be made by Germany, I believe, very much what Wilson proposed. The other powers scaled down their demands enormously, not because of love for Germany, but because convinced that the enemy could not pay more without national bankruptcy that would have undesirable repercussions elsewhere.

In Anglo-American Peace. Wilson's success in making peace, in my view, is due to the attitude he took up towards the British statesmen whom he met in London on December 27. The peace is an Anglo-American peace, in its essentials, and it was on December 27 that the president was in his support the country which of all those among the allies was until that date the most reserved in approval of the Wilson policies.

For some weeks after the armistice and prior to Wilson's first trip abroad I was continuously in London, watching with growing apprehension the rising feeling in the island empire on the subject of the "freedom of the seas." This prevalent alarm

was by no means confined to the man in the street. It was even more rife in the highest circles. In the admiralty and in the cabinet. During the first week in December one of the greatest personalities in England what could be done to reassure Americans that America did not mean to attack the British navy at the conference. The British navy, however, mentions America now to men in the cabinet. When anybody says America to them, they jump. They are all bundles of nerves on the subject.

At the bottom of this feeling was the determination on the part of England that their fleet must be free in the future to act against a continental enemy as the conditions of the present might dictate. Secretary could not have been beaten, had the rights of neutrals as laid down in the declaration of London been scrupulously served, had Wilson's protests of 1915 and 1916 been heeded, had not our contraband rules been made in defiance of previously existing laws.

As in this war, so in the future, Britain demands the right to make sea law on the open ocean, and appeals to history to prove that she has not abused this privilege in the past.

After the armistice, Englishmen realized that the allies in turn had accepted the 14 points as a basis of peace. But Britain, at the supreme war council in October, had insisted that her consent to the Wilson basis of peace excepted his sea views. Following the armistice, secretary Daniels and certain American newspapers raised the sea issue, and their utterances were followed in England with a strained attention that could not have been understood in this country at the time. The critical press was unfortunately misinformed on the subject, or Americans would have taken alarm earlier and moderated their language.

Daniels Makes Statement. Secretary Daniels by statements that were construed in England as a threat that if Britain did not voluntarily draw her navy's teeth America would challenge her sea mastery brought about a strained situation that lasted several weeks. The foes of American peace ideals on the continent just no time in exploiting England's alarm, and while the president was preparing to cross the ocean there was an important conference in Downing street between the leading statesmen of Britain, France and Italy, and marshal Foch.

Were Heavily Seared. Gossip of the times in London drawing-rooms referred to this meeting as the "continental alliance" against Wilson. The truth was that the leading chiefs did not know what was in Wilson's mind, and they were badly seared. Britain was still more united a few days later by wireless press messages from the George Washington.

It was on Boxing day, the traditional British holiday on the morrow of Christmas, that the president came to London. Those who knew the feeling existing in England were on tip-toe with anxious expectation, especially as the president made a bad start. Misled by those around him who should have known better, he spent the entire first day of his capital sojourn high and low alike by arriving on a holiday when every Englishman was at home. "Most unfortunate, visit, sir," said an aged valet in my apartment house. "The king has to remain, sir. He had planned to go to Sandringham to shoot his pheasants, sir." And the feeling that a state welcome must be extended to the American president during the holiday plans not only of the royal family but of a million others.

The president, however, received his historic welcome from the crowd, and disappeared from public view within the gates of Buckingham palace. It was on the morning of December 27, that he met Lloyd George, and the other members of the war cabinet. At the conference, which day Arthur Balfour was able with a quiet chuckle to insinuate an "I told you so" to his colleagues, for it had been known at Paris who from his knowledge of the president's mind gained during his American trip in 1917 refused to believe any of the anti-British settlements attributed in London to Wilson.

Two days later, in his Downing street residence, Lloyd George assembled a group of American correspondents who had been brought over from Paris. The Americans and British are at one upon every point. That statement was true, and meant much more than most of his before the world. It meant that the president had reached an understanding within 48 hours with his statesmen at Britain that completely cleared away misunderstandings and fears that had led England to seek counsel with France, and Italy a few days before. The "continental alliance," insofar as any policy against Wilson was concerned, had died on December 27. America and Britain, from the first day of the peace conference, were to be found shoulder to shoulder on every disputed issue of supreme importance.

Many versions circulated in informed London quarters of what Wilson had said, what Lloyd George had replied, during their historic talk on December 27 that changed the course of history. None of them are sufficiently plausible to be worth repeating. The main thing that did happen was that Wilson gave up, dropped completely, his theory of the "freedom of the seas" as that doctrine was interpreted by some of his supporters on this side. Whether he offered Lloyd George a frank surrender on this issue in return for support on everything else, whether he explained that the "freedom of the seas" never meant what Britons thought it meant, I do not know.

Long afterwards, in Paris, I was told by an informed Englishman that the president's line in London in December had been to pass the whole sea question up to the league of nations. His demand in the 14 points, the president is represented as having put forward, for "freedom of the seas" in peace as in war, "would not be pressed by America at the conference, because it was a matter not for one power to bring forward but for the whole world, as constituted in the league to debate and clear up at leisure."

England Plays Fair. Wilson's surrender, or change of mind, in London on the sea issue, was regarded by the British as a great victory. It implies, they believe, the virtual abandonment of the whole historic American position regarding the rights of neutral commerce in war times and the limitations of blockade. And Britain has held in full for the concession, backing up Wilson to the limit of her powers in every other issue that has come forward in Paris, pulling over one of her own dominions in line with American policy on the question of mandates for the German islands in the Pacific.

French annoyance with British behaviour at the conference, French and Italian complaints that "perfidious Albion" has backed her Anglo-Saxon ally against the latin races, are based in part upon the breakdown of the understanding reaching at the London conference before Wilson arrived. That understanding, British officials, was contingent upon Wilson pressing a sea policy that the president dropped at once—Copyright 1919, by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.

Lieut. Wolf Returns From Service Overseas

Lieut. Joe H. Wolf, son of Mrs. J. C. K. Wolf, who has been in France for the past six months with the aviation corps, has returned to his home in El Paso. He is a brother of S. K. Wolf and E. Carl, of El Paso. He will take up his former work as buyer for H. Lesinsky company.

ten to the effect that the president was in the attitude of "liberal" for the 14 points, by statements from the same source that the "freedom of the seas" was a cardinal point in his policy, and by what were regarded in London as the wantonly provocative speeches of Daniels, France, too, feared that the exaggerated idealism attributed by pacifists and Socialists to Wilson meant that the president would seek to deprive her of security, while Italy correctly interpreted the conflict between the 14 points and her aims in the armistice.

Accordingly, the phrases, "continental alliance," was not far wide of the mark. It made erroneous statements at the time and afterwards without such success to find out what had happened in the conference room, that I believe that in effect France had agreed to support Britain against any American demands that would weaken British sea power, and in return Britain promised France her voice towards the French aspirations that would weaken British sea power, and in return Britain promised France her voice towards the French aspirations that would weaken British sea power, and in return Britain promised France her voice towards the French aspirations that would weaken British sea power.

So in the middle of December the diplomatic situation looked dark for Wilson and America. Alarmed by what they thought to be our vague, impractical and utopian plans, the European allies had felt compelled to take counsel, either as to how to withstand the myriads of school teachers who was coming out of the west amid a storm of criticism from his own people.

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