

President Wilson Says People Want Peace

The Administration's Mexican Policy Defended in Notable Address of the President Before New York Press Club

An Associated Press dispatch, dated New York, June 30, says: President Wilson made it plain in his speech at the New York Press club banquet tonight that he will not countenance a war with Mexico until there is no other alternative for settling the border troubles.

Again he declared that he was ready to sacrifice his own political fortunes in order to carry out his convictions as to what would be the just course to pursue in the situation.

The President's audience, composed of newspaper men, state and municipal political leaders and others prominent in public life signified their indorsement of his position by repeated outbursts of applause. When he asked if the glory of America would be enhanced by a war of conquest in Mexico, shouts of "no" came from all parts of the banquet hall. A similar response was made to his query whether it is America's duty to "carry self defense to the point of dictation into the affairs of another people."

The President dwelt also on his efforts to serve the whole people, thousands of whom, he said, are appealing to him to maintain peace as long as possible.

"I have constantly to remind myself," he said, "that I am not the servant of those who wish to enhance the value of their Mexican investments, but that I am the servant of the rank and file of the people of the United States."

Bainbridge Colby, who placed Theodore Roosevelt in nomination for the presidency at the progressive convention at Chicago, paid President Wilson high tribute, but did not declare unqualifiedly that he would support him in the coming campaign, as it was reported he would do.

President Wilson arose from his seat and shook hands with Mr. Colby as he finished speaking. Mayor John P. Mitchel, Ralph Pulitzer and Irvin S. Cobb also spoke. The presidential party, which included Mrs. Wilson, occupied seats in the balcony. President Wilson did not begin to speak until almost 11 o'clock.

TEXT OF ADDRESS

The President's speech, in full, was as follows:

"I realize that I have done a very imprudent thing: I have come to address this thoughtful company of men without any preparation whatever. If I could have written as witty a speech as Mr. Pulitzer, I would have written it. If I could have written as clear a definition of the fundamental ideals of American patriotism as the mayor, I should have attempted it. If I should have been as appealing a person and of as feeling a heart as Mr. Cobb, I would have felt safe. If I could have been as generous and interesting and genuine as Mr. Colby, I should have felt that I could let myself go without any preparation.

"But, gentlemen, as a matter of fact, I have been absorbed by the responsibilities which have been so frequently referred to here tonight, and that preoccupation has made it impossible for me to enforce even what you would like to hear me talk about.

"There is something very oddly contradictory about the effect you men have on me. You are sometimes, particularly in your photographic enterprises, very brutal to me. You sometimes invade my privacy, even to the extent of forming my judgments before they are formed, and yet I am tempted when I stand face to face with you to take off all guard and merely expose myself to you as the fallible human being that I am.

PREPAREDNESS BEYOND DEBATE

"Mr. Colby said something that was among the few things I had forecast to say myself. He said that there are certain things which really it is useless to debate, because they go as a matter of course. Of course it is our duty to prepare this nation to take care of its honor and of its institutions. Why debate any part of that except the detail, except the plan itself, which is always debatable.

"Of course it is the duty of the government, which it will never overlook, to defend the territory and people of this country. It goes without saying that it is the duty of the administration to have constantly in mind with the utmost sensitiveness every point of national honor. But,

WILSON'S CLARION DEFT

In his brief speech to the Press club in New York June 30, President Wilson made the most virile and striking utterances of his career.

In simple, pointed language that went to the core of his subject; the President voiced his intimate views and purposes with regard to Mexico, and rose to a plane of moral courage and self-detachment that is calculated to leave his opponents gasping what to think or say.

The President dismissed as self-evident propositions that it is a nation's duty to protect its honor and defend its territory. The methods only are debatable. Should we act upon impulse and passion, or should we be guided by justice and reason and right principles, consult the opinions of mankind, plan the thing we mean to do, the results we wish to obtain, and forecast and control the consequences. It is the easiest thing to strike. Aggression is spontaneous—an impulse. But would there be any real glory for America in a war of conquest on Mexico? Do the American people wish war if the objects can be attained by more humane methods? The President does not own the government of the United States. He can not use it to wreak his passion or serve his ambitions. He is the servant of the people. He is concerned with what they desire, not with the interest of a few capitalists to "enhance the value of their Mexican investments." His personal and political fortunes must not be permitted to figure in the matter. He is concerned to do the right thing and with the verdict of history, not to be re-elected on November 7. It will make little difference whether he is President for four years more, but a great deal of difference if he should needlessly and wrongfully involve the two countries in war.

If those who started the European war had used their heads and paid "decent respect to the opinions of mankind," before they plunged into it, how much remorse and misfortune they would have saved themselves and others.

Mr. Wilson, in short, is prepared to fight for the protection of our national honor and the defence of our territory from Mexican outrage and invasion, but he is not prepared to assume dictation of their national affairs or to wage a war of conquest on them either for glory or spoils.

The President's Press club speech is an open and mortal challenge to the swashbucklers, the jingoes, the would-be exploiters and imperialists, all and singular, who have striven and clamored for war with Mexico to serve their own selfish aims and desires, financial, political and otherwise. It serves notice on them that he is standing by his guns, that his policy of reason and patience is inexhaustible, and that while he does not arrogate the power to control circumstances and prevent war in the last resort, his ear will always be open to the counsels that may open the way to honorably and profitably avoid it, and falling that he will conduct and restrict its operations in the interest of humanity and with due regard to the rights of others.—Knoxville Sentinel.

gentlemen, after you have said and accepted these obvious things, your programme of action is still to be formed.

"When will you act, and how will you act?"

"The easiest thing is to strike. The brutal thing is the impulsive thing. No man has to think before he takes aggressive action, but before a man really conserves the honor by realiz-

ing the ideals of the nation, he has to think exactly what he will do and how he will do it.

GLORY IN CONQUEST

"Do you think the glory of America would be enhanced by a war of conquest in Mexico? Do you think that any act of violence by a powerful nation like this against a weak and distracted neighbor would reflect distinction upon the annals of the United States? Do you think that it is our duty to carry self-defense to the point of dictation in the affairs of other people? The ideals of America are written plain upon every page of American history.

"And I want you to know how fully I realize whose servant I am. I do not own the government of the United States, even for the time being. I have no right in the use of it to express my own passions. I have no right to express my own ambitions for the development of America if those ambitions are not coincident with the ambitions of the nation itself.

"And I have constantly to remind myself that I am not the servant of those who wish to enhance the value of their Mexican investments, but that I am the servant of the rank and file of the people of the United States.

"I get a great many letters, my fellow-citizens, from important and influential men in this country, but I get a great many other letters. I get letters from unknown men, from humble women, from people whose names have never been heard and will never be recorded, and there is but one prayer in all these letters: 'Mr. President, do not allow anybody to persuade you that the people of this country want war with anybody.'

FINDS MANY AGAINST WAR

"I got off a train yesterday and as I was bidding goodby to the engineer he said in an undertone, 'Mr. President, keep us out of Mexico,' and if one man has said that to me a thousand have said it to me as I have moved about the country. If I have opportunity to engage them further in conversation they say, 'Of course we know that you can not govern the circumstances of the case altogether, and it may be necessary, but for God's sake do not do it unless it is necessary.'

"I am for the time being the spokesman of such people, gentlemen. I have not read history without observing that the greatest forces in the world and the only permanent forces are the moral forces. We have the evidence of a very competent witness, namely, the first Napoleon, who said as he looked back in the last days of his life upon so much as he knew of human history, he had to record the judgment that force had never accomplished anything that was permanent.

"Force will not accomplish anything that is permanent, I venture to say, in the great struggle which is now going on on the other side of the sea. The permanent things will be accomplished afterward when the opinion of mankind is brought to bear upon the issues, and the only thing that will hold the world steady is this same silent, insistent, all-powerful opinion of mankind. Force can sometimes hold things steady until opinion has time to form, but no force that was ever exerted except in response to that opinion was ever a conquering and predominant force.

RESPECT DEMANDS REASONS

"I think the sentence in American history that I myself am proudest of is that in the introductory sentence of the Declaration of Independence, where the writers say that a due respect for the opinion of mankind demands that they state the reasons for what they are about to do. I venture to say that a decent respect for the opinion of mankind demanded that those who started the present European war should have stated their reasons, but they did not pay any heed to the opinion of mankind, and the reckoning will come when the settlement comes.

"So, gentlemen, I am willing, no matter what my personal fortunes may be, to play for the verdict of mankind. Personally, it will be a matter of indifference to me what the verdict of the seventh of November is, provided I feel my degree of confidence that when a later jury sits, I shall get their judgment in my favor. Not in my favor personally—what difference does that