

President Wilson's Treaty Letter and French Criticism

The text of President Wilson's letter on the Peace Treaty written in response to a request that he confer with Senator Simmons of North Carolina, in charge for the Democratic side of the senate in current negotiations for a compromise, follows:

"My Dear Senator Hitchcock: I understand one or two of you colleagues do me the honor of desiring to know what my views are with reference to article 10 of the league of nations and the effect upon the league of the adoption of certain proposed reservations to that article: I welcome the opportunity to throw any light I can upon a subject which has become so singularly beclouded by misapprehensions and misinterpretations of every kind.

"There is no escaping the moral obligations which are expressed in positive terms in this article of the covenant. We won a moral victory over Germany, far greater, even, than the military victory won on the field of battle, because the opinion of the world swung to our support and the support of the nations associated with us in the great struggle. It did so because of our common profession and promise that we meant to establish an organization of peace which should make it certain that the combined power of free nations would check every invasion or right and serve to make peace and justice the more secure by affording a definite tribunal of opinion to which all must submit, and by which every international readjustment that cannot be amicably agreed upon by the peoples directly concerned shall be sanctioned.

CANNOT IGNORE SACRED OBLIGATION

"This promise and assurance were written into the preliminaries of the armistice and into the preliminaries of the peace itself and constitute one of the most sacred obligations ever assumed by any nation or body of nations. It is unthinkable that America should set the example of ignoring such a solemn moral engagement.

"I feel that I could not look the soldiers of our gallant armies in the face again if I did not do everything in my power to remove every obstacle in the way of the adoption of this particular article of the covenant, because we made these pledges to them, as well as to the rest of the world, and it was to this cause they deemed themselves devoted in a spirit of crusaders. I should be forever unfaithful to them if I did not do my utmost to fulfill the high purpose for which they fought.

"I think we can dismiss from our minds the idea that it is necessary to stipulate in connection with article 10 the constitutional methods we should use in fulfilling our obligations under it. We gain nothing by such stipulation and secure nothing not already secured. It was understood as a matter of course at the conference in Paris that whatever obligations any government assumed or whatever duties it undertook under the treaty would have to be fulfilled by its usual and established constitutional methods of action. Once or twice in meetings of the conference, when the treaty was under consideration, 'reservations' were made to that effect by the representatives of individual powers, and these 'reservations' were invariably received in the way in which men who have met for business and not for talk always receive acts of scrupulous supererogation—listened to with indifferent silence, as such men listen to what is a matter of course and was not necessary to say.

NO OBJECTION TO INTERPRETATION

"There can be no objection to explaining again what our constitutional method is and that our congress alone can declare war or determine the causes or occasions for war, and that it alone can authorize the use of the armed forces of the United States on land or the sea. But to make such a declaration would certainly be a work of supererogation.

"I am sorry to say reservations that have come under my notice are almost without exception not interpretations of the articles to which it is proposed to attach them, but in effect virtual nullifications of those articles.

"Any reservations which seek to deprive the league of nations of the force of article 10 cuts at the very heart and life of the covenant itself. Any league of nations which does not guarantee as a matter of incontestible right the political independence and integrity of each of its members might be hardly more than a futile scrap of paper, as ineffective in operation as the agreement between Belgium and Germany which the Germans violated in 1914. Article 10 represents the renunciation by Great Britain and Japan, which before the war had begun to find so many interests in common in the Pacific; by France, by Italy, by all the great fighting powers of the world of the old pretensions of political conquest and territorial aggrandisement.

NEW DOCTRINE IN WORLD AFFAIRS

"It is a new doctrine in the world's affairs and must be recognized or there is no secure basis for the peace which the world so longingly desires and so desperately needs. If article 10 is not adopted and acted upon, the governments which reject it will, I think, be guilty of bad faith to their people whom they induced to make the infinite sacrifices of the war by the pledge that they would be fighting to redeem the world from the old order of force and aggression. They will be acting also in bad faith to the opinion of the world at large to which they appealed for support in a concerted stand against the aggressions and protestations of Germany. If we were to reject article 10, or so weaken it as to take its full force out of it, it would mark us a desiring to return to the old world of jealous rivalry and misunderstandings from which our gallant soldiers have rescued us, and would leave us without any vision or new conception of justice and peace. We would have learned no lesson from the war but gained only the regret that it had involved us in its maelstrom of suffering. If America has awakened, as the rest of the world has, to the vision of a new day in which the mistakes of the past are to be corrected, it will welcome the opportunity to share the responsibilities of article 10.

"It must not be forgotten, senator, that this article constitutes a renunciation of wrong ambition on the part of powerful nations with whom we were associated in the war. It is by no

(Continued on Page 14.)

THE PROFITEER IN THE LOBBY

In a new item published below, the New York World calls attention to the successful lobbying carried on by the wholesale grocers. The people will soon know why it is so hard to get legislative action against the profiteers. The item reads:

"The gentle art of lobbying as it is practised by dealers' associations was revealed in a report for the year read before the New York Wholesale Grocers' association, in annual convention at the Hotel Astor, by Philip C. Staib, chairman of the committee on legislation.

"The association opposed thirty-one bills introduced in the assembly, according to the report, and only one of these was passed, and 'that affected us indirectly.'

"Mr. Staib read a list of food bills the association opposed, and the majority of which were killed in committee. Here is his account of the fate of a bill designed to give the Department of Farms and Markets power to 'inspect and supervise all factories, plants or places where food products to be sold or offered to the public are manufactured—and to adopt such rules as may be determined relative to the sanitary condition of such plants and places.'

"Passed Assembly and went to third reading in Senate April 5. Sent telegrams to members urging to wire their Senators. H. M. F. (Herman M. Foster, Secretary and General Manager) to Albany with E. L. Robertson of Syracuse to oppose the bill. May 13, 'Government' vetoed bill. Cost, \$368.75.

"Other bills opposed and killed by the association were those empowering municipalities to buy and sell food products at cost, and those imposing restrictions on the grading and packing of food products.

"Despite the direct benefits to our members, your committee feels that its work is too much

on the negative side,' the report continues, 'and it is felt that better results could be obtained by taking positive action. To help this our members should, by various means, establish closer contact with their Senators and assemblymen whenever opportunity affords, and even while the legislature is not in session.'

PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO SECRETARY BAKER URGING CAUCUS NOT TO MAKE TRAINING A PARTY ISSUE

Following is the text of the letter of President Wilson to Secretary Baker, which was read at the House caucus February 9:

The White House,

Washington, Feb. 7, 1920.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am told that a caucus of the Democratic members of the House of Representatives has been called to consider pending military legislation, and the suggestion has been made that a resolution be adopted committing the Democratic membership of the House against the policy of general military training. In the present circumstances it would seem to me unfortunate to make a party issue upon this subject, particularly since within a few months the party will assemble in convention and declare the principles upon which it deems it wise to commit itself in a national election.

The present disturbed state of the world does not permit such sureness with regard to America's obligations as to allow us lightly to decide upon this great question upon purely military grounds, while the demonstrated advantage to the use of the country which came from military service in the war plainly suggest that in the national interest, quite apart from military considerations, the moderate and carefully conducted course of military training may have the highest possible advantages.

In our discussion of the subject you will recall I gave my approval in principle to the various very moderate training projects suggested by the General Staff, and I would be very glad to have you convey to appropriate members of the House, who will attend the caucus, my strong feeling against action by the caucus which will tend to interpose an arbitrary party determination to the consideration, which this subject should receive from the best thought of the members of the House, considering alike the national emergencies which may confront us and the great disciplinary and other advantages which such a system plainly promises for the young men of the country. Cordially and sincerely yours,

WOODROW WILSON.

MR. BRYAN AND THE "WETS"

Whatever of hope the "wets" may have of securing a modification of the laws to suppress the liquor traffic will not be forwarded in any degree by onslaughts on William Jennings Bryan. He is irrevocably committed to prohibition, and he has all but pledged his party to that end. In fact, he is reported to have announced that the platform to be adopted at San Francisco will contain a "dry" plank. If that be true, the malcontents may as well make up their minds that the camel and the donkey will together pull the Democratic band wagon as far as it goes in the procession next fall. The revolt to be headed by Governor Edwards of New Jersey may come to pass, but it will not affect the purpose of the great commoner, who set his face towards the goal of a dry America long ago, and who has actually achieved what he undertook to bring about. The country is definitely dry, and, as the Baltimore American aptly says, the dying groans of the rum demon are not music but exasperating to the ears of Mr. Bryan.—Omaha Bee.

SENATOR GORE ON UNIVERSAL COMPULSORY MILITARY TRAINING

Washington, Feb. 28, 1920.

I hope that the President's letter to Secretary Baker on behalf of universal compulsory military training will not be regarded as committing the Democratic party to that principle. It is always pleasant to agree with the President, particularly with the President of your own political faith. But I am opposed to universal compulsory military training.

I regard such training as the egg of militarism and I want to crush militarism in the shell. I don't want it ever to hatch out its hateful brood in this land of the free. It is hard enough for the farmers now to keep labor on the farm. These training camps would cause another exodus of the farm boys from the farm.

T. P. GORE.