PRESIDENT WILSON AND THE PEACE OF EUROPE

STOCKHOLM
NEUTRAL CONFERENCE FOR CONTINUOUS MEDIATION
1916
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Introduction

Never since the beginning of the world war in August, 1914, has the press of the belligerent countries occupied itself so much with peace discussion as during the fortnight following May 20. It was on this date that Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States, in a speech at Charlotte, N. C., made the following statement:

'The time has now come for the United States to offer its services to the belligerents and to ask them: 'Do you want to destroy your power in war or to consider the salvation of society by peace?'... I would like to think that the spirit of this occasion would be expressed if we imagined ourselves lifting some sacred emblem of counsel and peace, of accommodation and righteous judgment before the nations of the world, and reminding them, 'after the wind, the earthquake, and the fire, the still small voice of humanity.'

A week later, before the League to Enforce Peace, assembled in annual meeting at Washington under the chairmanship of Ex-president William H. Taft, Mr. Wilson in no uncertain terms declared his willingness to mediate, and outlined the general basis upon which mediation must be conducted if the United States be selected to bring the two belligerent parties together. This speech of May 29th is of such significance that the Neutral Conference has decided to reprint it and thus insure its wide circulation. It forms the first section of this pamphlet.
On the following day, May 29th, the Neutral Conference met in special session to prepare a statement concerning the matters touched upon in Mr. Wilson’s address. This statement, which was given wide publicity in the press of Scandinavia, Holland and Switzerland, forms the second section of this pamphlet.

On May 30th, the "Norske Intelligensedler" of Kristiania contained an exceedingly illuminating editorial on Mr. Wilson’s speech from the skilled pen of Dr. Christian L. Lange, General Secretary of the Interparliamentary Union, who asks the pertinent question, "Do not Europe’s neutral nations think the time has come to join?" On the same day, Mr. Edward Wavrinsky, socialist member of the Swedish Riksdag and leader in the Good Templar movement, communicated a similarly interesting statement to "Afton-Tidningen" of Stockholm and to scores of smaller Swedish newspapers. These two statements, which on the initiative of the Neutral Conference were reprinted in a number of countries, are republished in Section 3.

More important, however, than any of these utterances — excepting only the speech of Mr. Wilson itself — are the comments in the belligerent press. A flood of editorials issued forth spontaneously from Berlin and London, so that one wonders whether perhaps the two belligerent groups were not nearer to the possibility of an understanding than they themselves knew, and whether, had each known what the other was thinking, many obstacles to peace could not have been removed.

Unfortunately, in these days of delayed and censored mails, the newspapers and especially the cuttings from both sides arrive but very tardily at the headquarters of the Neutral Conference. Nevertheless, even at this late date, (June 12th), on which the British cuttings finally reached Stockholm, it would seem that a compilation of significant utterances from Berlin, London, Vienna, Manchester, Budapest and other centers of thought and influence might help in the direction of international understanding. Section 4 is therefore devoted to a compilation of excerpts from leading English and German newspapers.

The numerous editorials referring to the Wilson speech concern themselves, broadly speaking, with three topics: first, is the time ripe for peace negotiations; second, is Mr. Wilson acceptable as a mediator; third, what of the program outlined in his two addresses?

It matters little that the editorials are often more critical than optimistic. The great outstanding fact is that an unusual amount of peace discussion has been permitted on both sides. Anyone acquainted with the policy of the censorship appreciates the significance of this fact. To have the subject of peace introduced at all, it is often times necessary to treat the question from an apparently unfriendly point of view. The people in the warring countries have, however, developed a surprising faculty for "reading between the lines", as it were, for guessing at the real meaning intended by the editorial writer. The mere suggestion of the word "peace" helps to crystallize thought along constructive rather than destructive lines.

To the members of the Neutral Conference it is a matter of no small satisfaction, that a number of important dailies in discussing the various possible mediators — e.g. President Wilson, King Alfonso of Spain, Pope Benedict, a group of Neutrals acting jointly — include the Ford Conference as a factor to be reckoned with.

It is obviously not our purpose to emphasize by repub-
lication those utterances of the belligerent press which make for added bad feeling on both sides. We have limited ourselves, in Section 4, to reprinting only those editorial utterances that are, at least in some degree, animated by a spirit of saneness and fairness, and that give evidence of having been composed by a journalist possessed of the "international mind".

President Wilson's address
before the American League to Enforce Peace, Washington, May 28.

When the invitation to be here to-night came to me I was glad to accept it, not because it offered me an opportunity to discuss the programme of the League, but because the desire of the whole world now turns more and more eagerly towards the hope of peace, and there is just reason why we should take our part in counsel upon this great theme. It is right that I, as spokesman of our Government, should attempt to give expression to what I believe to be the thought and purpose of the people of the United States in this vital matter.

This great war, that broke so suddenly upon the world two years ago and which has swept within its flame so great a part of the civilized world, has affected us very profoundly, and we are not only at liberty to speak, it is perhaps our duty to speak, very frankly, of it and of the great interests of civilization which it affects. With its causes and its objects we are not concerned. The obscure fountains from which its stupendous flood has burst forth we are not interested to search for or explore. But so great a flood, spread far and wide to every quarter of the
globe, has of necessity engulfed many a fair province of right that lies very near to us; our own rights as a nation, the liberties, privileges, and property of our people have been profoundly affected.

We are not mere disconnected lookers-on. The longer the war lasts the more deeply do we become concerned that it should be brought to an end and that the world should be permitted to resume its normal life and course again. And when it does come to an end we shall be as much concerned as the nations at war to see the peace assume an aspect of permanence that will give promise of days from which anxiety of uncertainty shall be lifted and bring some assurance that peace and war shall always hereafter be reckoned as part of the common interest of mankind. We are participants, whether we would or not, in the life of the world. The interests of all the nations are our own also. We are partners with the rest. What affects mankind is inevitably our affair as well as the affair of the nations of Europe and Asia.

One observation on the causes of the present war we are at liberty to make, and to make it may throw some light forward upon the future as well as backward upon the past. It is plain that this war could have come only as it did, suddenly and out of secret councils, without warning to the world, without discussion, without any of the deliberate movements of counsel with which it would seem natural to approach so stupendous a contest. It is probable that, if it had been foreseen just what would happen, just what alliances would be formed, just what forces would be arrayed against one another those who brought the great contest on the world would have been glad to substitute conference for force.

If we ourselves had been afforded some opportunity to apprise the belligerents of the attitude which it would be our duty to take, of the policies and practices against which we would feel bound to use all our moral and economic strength, and, in certain circumstances, even our physical strength, our own contribution to the counsel which might have averted the struggle would have been considered worth weighing and regarding.

And the lesson which the shock of being taken by surprise in a matter so deeply vital to all the nations of the world has made poignantly clear is wholesome for diplomacy. Only when the great nations of the world have reached some sort of agreement as to what they hold to be fundamental to their common interest, and as to some feasible method of acting in concert when any nation, or group of nations, seeks to disturb those fundamental things, can we feel that civilization is at last in the way of justifying its existence and claiming to be finally established.

It is clear that the nations must, in future, be governed by the same high code of honour that we demand of individuals. We must, indeed, in the very same breath in which we avow this conviction admit that we have ourselves, upon occasion in the past, been offenders against the law of diplomacy which we thus forecast, but our conviction is not less clear, but rather more clear, on that account.

If this war has accomplished nothing else for the benefit of the world, it has at least disclosed a great moral necessity, and set forward the thinking of the statesmen of the world by a whole age.

The repeated utterances of the leading statesmen of
most of the great nations now engaged in war have made it plain that their thought has come to this—that the principle of public right must henceforth take precedence over the individual interests of particular nations and that the nations of the world must in some way band themselves together to see that right prevails as against any sort of selfish aggression; that henceforth Alliance must not be set up against Alliance, Understanding against Understanding, but that there must be a common agreement for a common object, and that at the heart of that common object must lie the inviolable rights of peoples and of mankind. This is undoubtedly the thought of America, this is what we ourselves will say when there comes the proper occasion to say it. In the dealings of nations with one another arbitrary force must be rejected and we must move forward to the thought of the modern world, the thought of which peace is the very atmosphere. That thought constitutes the chief part of the passionate conviction of America. We believe these fundamental things:

I.—That every people has the right to choose the sovereignty under which they shall live like other nations.

We have ourselves, no doubt, once again offended against that principle when for a little while controlled by selfish passion, as our franker historians have been honorable enough to admit, but it has become more and more our rule of life and action.

II.—That the small States of the world have the right to enjoy the same respect for their sovereignty and for their territorial integrity that the great and powerful nations expect and insist upon.

III.—That the world has the right to be free from every disturbance to its peace that has its origin in aggression and the disregard of the rights of peoples and nations.

So sincerely do we believe in these things that I am sure I speak the mind and wish of the people of America when I say that the United States is willing to become a partner in any feasible association of nations formed in order to realize these objects and to make them secure against violation. There is nothing the United States wants for itself that any other nation has. We are willing, on the contrary, to limit ourselves, along with them, to the prescribed course of duty and respect for the rights of others which will check any selfish passion of our own as it will check any aggressive impulse of theirs. If it should ever be our privilege to suggest or initiate a movement for peace among the nations now at war, I am sure the people of the United States would wish their Government to move along these lines:

I. Such a settlement with regard to their own immediate interests as the belligerents may agree upon. We have nothing material of any kind to ask for ourselves and are quite aware that we are in no sense or degree parties to the present quarrel. Our interest is only in peace and its future guarantees. II. A universal association of nations to maintain inviolate the security of the highway of the seas for the common, unhindered use of all the nations of the world, and to prevent any war begun either contrary to treaty covenants of without warning and full submission of the cause to the opinion of the world—a virtual guarantee of territorial integrity and political independence.
But I did not come here, let me repeat, to discuss a programme. I came only to avow a creed and to give expression to the confidence I feel that the world is even now upon the eve of a great consummation when some common force will be brought into existence which shall safeguard right as the first and most fundamental interest of all peoples and all Governments, when coercion shall be summoned not to the service of political ambition or selfish hostility but to the service of common order, common justice, and common peace. God grant that the dawn of that day of frank dealing and of settled peace, concord, and cooperation may be near at hand.

Statement

by the Neutral Conference on President Wilson's speech
May 29, 1916

We have the speech of the President of the United States as yet only as it appears in the Swedish Press, and not in the original English nor in authoritative form, but unless this report of it is totally misleading it is an epoch making event.

In the first place it is a definite announcement that the United States is ready to abandon her outgrown attitude of isolation from world politics. At the same time it expressly disclaims any selfish purposes.

Secondly it states what principles would guide any American efforts in peace negotiations.

These principles are of the utmost importance to all nations, but most notably to the smaller neutral states. They coincide with the great lines toward which the thought of those concerned with international questions is converging in all countries.

First: A union of nations must be formed. It is more and more evident that the present war is the travail from which such a union must be born, but in this speech more explicitly than ever before the Head of a great state pro-
claims the desire of his country to be a member of such a union. Desire for such organization has been expressed by Sir Edward Grey, and in Germany individuals are advocating highly developed forms of international organization. But the world waits to hear an authoritative pronouncement in its favor from German government circles.

Only second in importance to the proposal to create such an organization is Wilson's definition of its aims.

First: it must protect the safety of the seas and secure that they should always be open for the use of all.

The second purpose of a League of Nations as proposed by President Wilson is insurance against war by jointly preventing war in three specific cases.

First: War contrary to treaty obligations;
Second: War made without warning;
Third: War made before submitting the casus belli for a preliminary international opinion on its merits (the principle of the Bryan treaties).

Another important point rather implied than expressed, (at least in the report of the speech now available), is the concern of neutral nations in the ending of the war and their interest, equal to that of the belligerents, in permanent peace. This would seem to involve their right to be represented in settling the terms of peace.

President Wilson, besides laying down the principles of the international organization which the United States will aim at in case it has a role to play in peace negotiations, makes other important statements of principle.

The fundamental principles are — first — the right of every people to decide its own form of government. England doubtless would accept this principle, and in explicitly doing so would refute the German fear that England desires to change Germany's political structure. Such a purpose is probably not entertained by any serious English statesman, certainly not by any who has any comprehension of the real Germany, but the fact that Germany believes that England desires this has its effect, nevertheless.

The second principle is the right of small nations to the same respect for their independence and integrity as the greatest power.

This right is to be secured, according to Wilson's proposal, by the international organization guaranteeing this independence and this integrity. Were international guarantees against wars of aggression secured, Germany's claim that her Eastern front is always in danger of attack from Russia would fall to the ground, and with it the chief support of her militarism.

The militarism of the last period, with its competing armaments, moved in a vicious circle, and when one essential difficulty is adjusted, the adjustment of the next is by the same stroke made possible.

So cautious and learned a statesman as Wilson, who has always shown himself also so shrewd a judge of what is practicable, is not to be accused of harboring Utopian dreams.

The World State is not created by his announcement, but at least a rudimentary phase of it is brought a long step nearer to actuality.

It would be very desirable to know how far the spokesmen of the belligerent governments would accept the principle laid down by Wilson. May Sir Edward Grey, von Bethmann-Hollweg, Briand and Sazonow take occasion
soon, leaving phrases aside, to state explicitly their opinions regarding the proposals of the American president. Though still so far apart as regards other aspects of the peace settlement, they may surprise the world by the extent of their agreement on these vital and wide reaching principles.


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Editorial

by Christian L. Lange in the "Norske Intelligenssedler"
of May 30, 1916

Mr. Woodrow Wilson’s speech of last Saturday on the foundation of the future order of peace will be mentioned not only in the history of this war but in the world’s history. Unfortunately, the telegrams concerning this speech, as given in our papers, are so easily misunderstood, it is necessary to make a few comments in order to explain what Wilson really means.

Wilson has not spoken to any "League for Re-establishing Peace". Such a league does not exist in America, so far as I know. He spoke to the "League to Enforce Peace", i.e. a league for securing and enforcing peace, in a word—a association that works for establishing such an international order that the world shall be saved from another catastrophe like that of 1914.

This League was founded at a big meeting in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, on June 17th last year. Ex-president Taft is chairman of the League, and it counts among its members the best representatives of American life: presidents of universities, distinguished judges,
the best known press-men, ex-ministers, religious leaders, and prominent men of business.

Its program runs:

Article I

"All justiciable questions arising between the signatory powers, not settled by negotiation, shall, subject to the limitations of treaties, be submitted to a judicial tribunal for hearing and judgment, both upon the merits and upon any issue as to its jurisdiction of the question."

Article II

"All other questions arising between the signatories and not settled by negotiation shall be submitted to a council of conciliation for hearing, consideration and recommendation."

Article III

"The signatory powers shall jointly use forthwith both their economic and military forces against any one of their number that goes to war, or commits acts of hostility against another of the signatories before any question arising shall be submitted as provided in the foregoing."

Article IV

"Conference between the signatory powers shall be held from time to time to formulate and codify rules of international law, which, unless some signatory shall signify its dissent within a stated period, shall thereafter govern in the decisions of the judicial tribunal mentioned in Article I."

As we see, the program is strictly limited. It only aims at the legal part of international life. The American founders of the League do not want to express their views on the many other questions raised by the idea of a future order of peace, such questions as for instance, have been taken up by the European society, "The Central Organization for Permanent Peace", viz: questions of nationality, of economic relations, etc.

It is of great interest that President Wilson in his speech has touched also on these questions. Contrary to the views of the American organization whose guest he was, he seems to believe that a movement aiming at permanent peace cannot be content only to establish an organization of justice, be it ever so perfect. It is equally important that the settlement following the world-war should be free from seeds of future wars.

Wilson looks forward, not backward. Therefore he says that "the causes of the European war are immaterial". It does not mean "unimportant", but only that he does not care to touch them in his speech. Neither has Wilson this time touched upon the subject of the possibilities of mediation.

One point of the settlement after the war he has nevertheless mentioned.

He makes a clear difference between the agreement among the belligerent nations themselves, that has to do with their own immediate interests, and a "general union of nations" that will deal with questions of future peace.

It was the same line of difference that Lord Haldane drew in his speech in London, 1915, a line at which the friends of peace always have pointed during the war as being perfectly natural.
If Wilson has really said that "every nation should have the right to choose its own form of government", he has expressed a revolutionary principle which will hardly be accepted by any European statesman. It seems to be difficult even for an American. What about the Philippines? Or Porto Rico? I think Wilson must have used a more cautious form, saying that if the war brought about a change in the political situation of a nation, the people should have the right to express their opinion on the change before it became permanent; in other words, an acceptance of the principle of plebiscite in questions concerning a change of frontier.

Together with this statement, Wilson emphasized strongly "the freedom of the seas".

The principle of nationality, the independence of small nations, an international order of justice — these are the principles the statesmen of the Entente Powers are standing for. The Central Powers are fighting for "the freedom of the seas". Wilson has with wise political sense taken in his program also the point that was likely to make the Germans and the Austrians favorable toward his aims.

This speech is not only an academic expression on far-away abstract problems. It is a political speech the more important because it was made in the midst of the electioneering season when Wilson comes forward as candidate for the next presidential term.

Wilson stated that the United States was willing to enter into any union of nations that was going to realize these plans and secure them against violation.

It is the head of the great power which at present is the strongest power of the world, who has thus accepted the program of the peace work as it has been formulated in Europe and in America during the war.

It is there that the world-historical meaning of Wilson's words lies. But these words will get a practical meaning only if other states join. One state only, even the greatest one, cannot make a union. The United States of America can certainly count upon getting the American republics to join.

But what about Europe? Do not Europe's neutral nations think the time has come to join, through their leaders, the line we have described here? They could thereby also facilitate the great settlement between the belligerents when the time finally comes.
Prospects of a Speedy Peace

The way opened for direct negotiations as well as for mediation. A statement of Edward Wavrinsky M. P.

The statements on war-purpose and peace-prospects made by members of the English and German governments as well as Mr. Wilson’s speech with regard to the conclusion of peace, no less in importance, have caused one of our co-operators to interview Mr. Wavrinsky in order to ascertain his views as to prospects of peace as they appear to him in the light of the above mentioned statements.

"Do you think that American interviews with von Bethmann-Hollweg and Sir Edward Grey, the latest speeches of Sir Edward Grey in the House of Commons and Bethmann-Hollweg in the Reichstag, and President Wilson’s speech justify the much cherished hope that we will have a speedy peace? And do you think such a development of the exchange of opinions between the Belligerent States through the intermediary of America, as is proposed, is possible at this moment and that the possibilities of a speedy peace thereby have grown?"

Most certainly, Mr Wavrinsky replied, these statements on the part of the Governments contain a great many things that in a favourable way differ from many previous statements. I will in particular indicate a few points. Sir Edward Grey has positively repeated what Asquith already said in his address to the members of the French Parliament, viz: that the expression "to crush the dominating Prussian militarism does not imply the crushing of the concordant and free Germany, as the Reichschancellor put forward in his speech on April 5th. The declarations of Asquith and Grey have now proved that such is not the case. It is to be hoped that this will have a beneficial influence on the opinion in Germany regarding the war-purpose and intentions of the enemy. It would, however, be a great step forward if the members of the English Government frankly would state, when, in the opinion of the Allies, the end of the war, that is, the destruction of the dominating Prussian militarism, has been reached, when consequently, according to their views, peace may be possible. Would this for instance be the case if the German Government with the consent of the German people, declared itself willing to accept the principle proclaimed by Asquith "that international problems must be treated by voluntary agreement, on equal terms, between free peoples".

Nobody can now assert that the crushing of Germany is the aim of England. But neither can the Entente Powers maintain the opinion that the aim of Germany is the annihilation of other nations and the usurpation of their territories. The Reichschancellor has denied this in plain words in his speech. "For the sake of Germany, not for the sake of a piece of foreign land the sons of Germany bleed", von Bethmann-Hollweg said. What does this mean? It can mean that the enlargement of German territory is not, practically taken, the aim of the
war, but it can also mean that the conquered territory will not be returned if it is found necessary to retain it for the future safety of Germany. We may hope that this interpretation is not the right one and that the German Government will make another statement fully excluding any doubt as to Germany's will to return the territories now occupied. This, of course, against the guarantee of the same kind of procedure on the part of the antagonist — a statement proving that the security Germany demands does not consist in new landwinnings but in that international organisation of justice which will prevent future wars. In this way there is a possibility of a coming together on these two important points, though the vague expressions still make it uncertain whether an agreement is possible now. At any rate a step forward has been taken. But before a definite approach can be expected, the question if any of the fighting parties is to be considered victorious in the struggle must be settled. Sir Edward Grey has in the House of Commons pointed out that one of the main reasons that the Allies continue the war is the fact that the German Government still claims that the Central Powers have won or at least will win the war next week and that the Allies have been conquered. "It is a fact, however", he says, "that the Allies have not been conquered and that they will not be conquered and that the first step in the direction of peace will be taken when the German Government admits this". This enunciation of Grey is rather moderate. Grey does not demand that Germany shall declare itself conquered, all he wants is that Germany admits that the Allies have not been conquered. Is it incredible that Germany will make such a declaration and thus take the first step on the road to peace?

However, another way to the opening of peace-negotiations has now been opened. If the English and German Governments do not wish to continue their exchange of opinions through the intermediary of American journalists, as is to be foreseen, they can take hold of President Wilson's last address with a view to bring about peace. President Wilson has presented a program for the future, which, if it can be realized, perhaps could safeguard the world — thus also the conflicting parties — against attempts to annexations, against the meddling of foreign states in the interior-affairs of another state and against offensive wars. No opinion can be formed so far, however, as to whether the Governments of the warring parties will accept the offer of mediation extended to them by President Wilson or as to whether the prospects to secure a durable peace will be greater in proceeding by direct negotiations rather than by mediation.

But, Mr. Wavrinisky concluded, if the one of the other of the Belligerent Groups really wish for a lasting peace, then they have now an extraordinary opportunity of showing their good intentions. All they have to do is to declare their approval of Mr. Wilson's peace-program. If one of the groups accepts it and the other group refuses to do so — well, then the world will know which of them is responsible for the continuation of the war. If both parties declare that they approve Wilson's program for the future, then indeed, peace is very near, the mediator already there and his position clear. If, on the other hand, none of the parties wants to take such a step, then the hope for a speedy peace will fade away and vanish.
The Economist, June 3.

Though no reports of President Wilson's speech at Charlotte are yet to hand, the telegraphic agencies have been more favourable to the British public in regard to his speech at the League of Peace, over which ex-President Taft presided. The President spoke on Saturday night, and on Monday all our newspapers were full of his great pronouncement on peace. We have no complete reports as yet; but it is clear that the President is anxious to smooth the way to peace, and is ready, moreover, to take part in making a good and durable settlement. As the protection of small nationalities and of public international law in the future is among our chief concerns, President Wilson's new attitude will gratify and satisfy all right-minded men. Some of the London Press comments were a revelation of the utter irresponsibility which afflicts journalism. Everyone knows the injury done to the Allied cause by Punch's smart gives at the President. But the Times and the Morning Post are serious, like Mr Hughes, and like Mr Hughes, they want to carry on the war, as that prolific orator expresses it, "to the bitter end". And bitter as the end will be if Mr Hughes has his way, it will, unfortunately, be no end at all; for all the bitterness and suffering will be artificially prolonged until another war is brought by the "fighting tariffs" in which Mr Hughes wishes to involve this unfortunate country. But if the policy of the Times and the Morning Post and Mr Hughes is the right one, and we are to go on for years losing 1,000 men and five millions sterling a day, then they ought surely to be overflowing with politeness and courtesy to President Wilson and to the great people whom he represents. For without the friendly neutrality of America, where should we be in this war? How could the Chancellor of the Exchequer maintain the exchanges if the credit institutions of America did not cooperate, and how could we supply our Allies with food, munitions, and raw materials, but for the bankers and manufacturers of America? Really, the British Government, whatever its policy may be, is ill-served by the newspapers, which profess to have a monopoly of patriotism because they thump the war drum most loudly. We publish this week a letter from Earl BRasseY, whose devotion to the Navy and Imperial defence no one can question. The London Press, indeed, when it denounces "peace intrigues" no longer expresses the public sentiment. Peace is in the air, and a peace on honourable terms, which fulfils
reasonable expectations, will be more than popular. It will excite universal rejoicings. Neither in the City nor anywhere else do people wish the last man and the last farthing to be expended on such vain imaginations as still figure in the rhetoric of a few excitable journalists and politicians. Even the dispute between Dr Bethmann-Hollweg and Sir Edward Grey as to the merits of the diplomatic past arouses no interest. If the Foreign Office can now show adequate skill in the diplomacy of peace it will not be expected to ransom its drawers for evidence of peacefulness in the past. Perhaps the politicians and diplomats will fail. If so, another type of negotiator might be found. We remember that it was Lord Kitchener's soldierly good sense that ended the Boer War. The same belligerent is always balancing what he hopes to get against what he is bound to lose. The only thing certain is that at the end of every month we are all much worse off than at the beginning. Therefore, we must always be ready to discount the future. The German Chancellor talks about the war map, but he thinks about the sea chart and the barometer of finance. Pressure is universal. Peace may be near, and if either the City or the Army could be polled, the newspapers would lose all credit as the guides to public opinion. Mr Robert Fleming's declaration last week represents very correctly the attitude of thousands of intelligent and morally minded business men in all parts of the United Kingdom. It is the fresh air of common sense blowing through a stuffy atmosphere of stifled opinions.

"With regard to the war itself, I would like to say just one thing in closing these remarks. It is that, while thanking Mr Asquith for the clearer definition recently given by him of our object in joining in this war, I think it could be made still more clear, and more likely to bring the war to an end, by simply adopting the words of Herr Ballin, uttered some months ago in Germany. The men', he said, 'who will some day be entrusted with the duty of drawing up the terms of peace will have as their supreme task that of exterminating not only the war itself, which has destroyed whole generations, but also the fever of arms; or, at least, of restricting the latter within as narrow limits as possible in a Europe which will remain exhausted for decades'. This we have been fighting for long before the war began, and, unless it is accomplished, if Europe only ends this Armageddon by arming for another, the future is dark indeed. Let us hope that ere we meet again not only will the war be ended, but this 'fever of arms' will have run its course, and all the warring nations, freed from its blighting influence, will with redoubled energy seek to re-establish an international prosperity based on peaceful pursuits."

Mr Fleming is not a hare-brained sentimentalist, or a wild Socialist, or a visionary pacifist. He is one of the coolest and shrewdest business heads in the City. And it is only difference that prevents thousands of others from expressing themselves openly on the side of sobriety. The City assuredly will welcome the powerful aid of President Wilson towards the goal of permanent and honourable peace. America believes, said President Wilson, as fundamental (1) that 'every people have the right to choose the sovereignty under which they shall live like other nations'; (2) that this right is possessed equally by the small States; and (3) that 'the world has the right to be free from every disturbance to its peace that has its origin in aggression and the disregard of the rights of peoples and nations'. Moreover, the United States is "willing to become a partner in any feasible association of nations formed in order to realise these objects and to make them secure against violation". They seek nothing for themselves, but —

"If it should ever be our privilege to suggest or initiate a movement for peace among the nations now at war, I am sure that the people of the United States would wish their Government move along these lines:—

"First, such a settlement with regard to their own immediate interests as the belligerents may agree upon. We have nothing material of any kind to ask for ourselves, and are quite aware that we are in no sense parties to the present quarrel.

"Secondly, a universal association of nations to maintain inviolate the security of the highway of the seas for the common and unhindered use of all the nations of the world, and to prevent any war being begun either contrary to treaty covenants or without warning and full submission of the causes to the opinion of the world. This would be a virtual guarantee of territorial integrity and political independence." Let us compare all this with Mr Asquith and the German Chancellor:—

"The purpose of the Allies in the war is to pave the way for an international system which will procure the principle of equal rights for all civilized States." — Mr Asquith.

"Europe must be for all the peoples that inhabit it a Europe of peaceful labour. The peace which ends this war must be a lasting peace. It must not contain in it the seeds of new wars, but the seeds of a final
peaceful regulation of European affairs." — Bethmann-Hollweg.

And here we would make three observations:

1. It is more desirable to save France, Belgium, and Serbia than to ruin Germany and Austria.

2. Wherever the peace comes, it is as certain as anything human can be that it will be followed by bankruptcies, unemployment, misery, and discontent of all kinds. And in Germany all this wretchedness will be especially acute. It would be strange, indeed, if under these circumstances a vast moral and political revolution did not follow, during which the military caste (and, let us hope, the Yellow Press) will be swept away.

3. The only people who can punish those responsible for the war are their own people.

It is not fair to the British or to the French armies to continue a struggle which costs so many thousands of lives daily in the hope—probably a vain one—of being able to arrange terms under which the great criminals shall be executed or guillotined. The execution of 10, 20, or 50 of the persons mainly responsible for the war would no doubt be highly gratifying to the moral sense of the world. But there is no reason to suppose from the speeches and interviews of Sir Edward Grey, or M. Sazanoff, or Signor Salandra, or any of our other Allies that this is the purpose for which war is being waged, or that there is any suggestion that proposals will be made for the condign punishment of the persons responsible for the war, or for cruel and atrocious severities, or for violations of the laws of humanity. We write this because we have a letter from a correspondent who says that he agrees generally with our article last week, but is troubled by this very difficulty, that peace ought not to be concluded until "Germany" has been punished. But the people of Germany have been punished. They have suffered more than they have ever before suffered in historical times. Besides, the German peasant or workman, of course, has even less to do with German diplomacy than an ordinary agricultural labourer or factory hand in England has to do with British diplomacy. Those who are in search of revenge or retributive justice should make quite sure that our own Government is also in pursuit of this object. We are quite sure that it is not. They cannot court-martial and shoot foreign Emperors and Chancellors like the conspirators of an Irish Republic. We all know what the Russian and Italian Governments want. We

think we know what France wants, and we certainly know what Belgium wants. If all the territorial demands of our Allies could be satisfied to-morrow, and some arrangement could be made about the colonies, we should have peace, and we should hear no more about the punishment of those responsible for the war. It may be remembered that for many months the South African War dragged on because our Government demanded the unconditional surrender of the Boers. That policy was abandoned by the good sense of Lord Kitchener, who made the Peace of Vereeniging. In the same way, however long this war lasts, however many millions of homes are still to be devastated, however widely famines and pestilence may rage, however many more billions of debt are accumulated for redemption or repudiation, the war will still have to be ended by negotiation, by a series of bargains and compromises, which will satisfy none of the orators of war, but will, we hope, with President Wilson, serve as a charter of liberty, law, and peace to all the nations of Europe for many generations.


— — — The American President announces, so far as his Government is concerned, a change in the attitude of the United States towards international politics which amounts to a revolution . . .

First he lays down certain principles — principles with which we, of all nations, will be the least inclined to quarrel, for they are little more than a statement of the reasons why we originally went into the war: the rights of nationality, the moral equality of small States, and, finally, the right of the world to be protected against wars of aggression. But these excellent principles by themselves are of little avail. President Wilson goes on to speak of an association of nations which would have as its object the maintenance of these principles. The United States would become a partner in such an association. That is to say, it would league itself with those nations of Europe which desire peaceful development and the maintenance of national rights against militarism . . . .

How would a league of nations secure mutual peace and respect of right? There would have to be something more than an agreement to submit disputes to arbitration. There would have to be a contingent means for coercing a refractory member. Two such means are suggested
in Mr. Wilson's speech — armed intervention and the commercial boycott. Both methods present difficulties. The former seems to require the nations to keep armed; the latter would be ineffective unless very rigidly observed by the whole of the neutral world. But they are the only methods available or, for the present, imaginable. Their employment, however, supposes some central body, some general council of the nations, which has declared the aggressor an outlaw, has pronounced upon him the ban of the association and called on all members to fulfill their undertakings. The functions of this council would be more than those of occasional conciliation at a point when difficulties become acute. It would have to deal with the problems of international relations as they arise and before they reach the acute stage, and if it did so, it would seldom be idle. It would, in short, have the elements of a standing congress or parliament, and it is to such a parliament that the President's remarks point. This may seem a remote ideal fit only for days of profound peace. But that is not the case. The question is practical and affects our whole outlook upon the war. What Europe is asking for above everything is security, and no country is ready to see security in anything short of the utter destruction of its opponent. A league of the nations with the United States as a member would be a different sort of security, and if its realization were generally believed in, it would in consequence have a moderating influence upon the conflict.

The Nation, June 3.

'It is unfortunate that some British critics of Mr. Wilson's speech on the future peace of the world have missated its meaning, for it is an utterance of the utmost consequence, and of the most direct bearing on the issue of the war.

'The formation of the League is a capital fact in American politics. The League is a great organization, to which both parties and some of their ablest leaders have adhered. Its main object, as expounded by Dr. Marburg in The Nation, is the simple one of setting up something like an International Parliament or Court of Justice, armed with the power to enforce, not indeed the settlement, but the hearing of international disputes. This aim dissociates it from actual interference with the war, for its scheme can only come into operation after peace has been signed. The League proposes to guarantee that peace, not to bring it about by arms or by direct mediation. It is clear that to such a body the President could not address an examination of the causes of the war, still less a polemic upon it. He could hardly even commend to his hearers a direct mediating act. That may come, though not, we imagine, without formal or informal knowledge that the belligerents desire it.

— — —

We are not pedantic there may be some territorial readjustments in Europe and out of Europe, arranged, we hope, on the theory of compensations and of respect for the rights and desires of genuinely oppressed or aggrieved nationalities. The fighting that may still come will settle the general balance and complexion of these arrangements. But they are not in the centre of the quarrel. Modern society is industrial; it is fatally wounded by war; and its view of peace is an insurance against the mood in which, almost before the ink on the treaty is dry, each party to it will begin scrapping its war material and building more. We might just hope to arrive at such a peace after some more years or months of slaughter. It is a frightful expedient Europe offers its youth as Agamemnon offered his Iphigenia. The atonement may be vain; is it necessary? America offers at least a gentler dispensation. She will give us what we want without the bloodshed and the exacerbation. It seems to us that we can finally reject her tender only if we regard it as a proposal of rhetoric, and think that America does not stand behind the President, or if we are convinced that our victory over Germany is so certain, and will be so sweeping, as to enable us to inaugurate a definite reign of European peace on her substantial ruin and lasting subordination.

Westminster Gazette, May 29.

An association of nations which confined itself to mere paper declarations would evidently, in the present state of the world, be powerless against any aggressor which chose to defy it. The nations associating themselves must be prepared to use force against any one nation or group of nations which commits an act of aggression or refuses to submit its case to conference or arbitration. They must also be pre-
pared to take joint action against any nation or nations which were clearly threatening the peace by excessive military preparations, or burdening the world with an intolerable competition in armaments. Here economic weapons might come into play, and if the United States were joined with the European peace-keepers, altogether new possibilities would open up in this direction. It is altogether premature to enter into the details. It is sufficient for the moment that the United States announces through the President, that however much she may desire to remain neutral, she finds herself deeply affected by the results of the European struggle, and unable in any way to avoid its consequences and repercussions. The President starts his speech by propounding the theory of a European anarchy in which the United States is not concerned; he winds it up by declaring that in future the United States will be most deeply concerned to prevent this anarchy and to join with its neighbors in Europe in establishing a secure system of right and law. It would be a thousand pities if in irritation at the exordium of this speech we missed the importance of the conclusion. Nothing after the war will be so important as the establishment of a secure peace, and it is a fact to put on record that the President of the United States offers the assistance of his Government to establish the peace on the free and democratic principles for which we believe ourselves to be fighting.

The New Statesman, June 3.

| — — — Schemes for abolishing peace have always been reckoned to be legitimate occupations of diplomacy and statesmanship, but hitherto schemes for preventing war have been considered merely as a province of imaginative literature reserved for philosophers, dreamers, and cranks . . . .

Now President Wilson for the first time definitely brings the problem down from the clouds of the theorist's study to the regions of practical politics. He does this in a way which, we think, should appeal peculiarly to the people of this country, for he lays down certain general principles of international relationship which may fairly be claimed to embody the British ideal of what the foundations of international society should be, and he explicitly offers the alliance of the United States to any association of nations which may be formed to secure those principles against attack or violation.

The significant points in the President's speech are two: his definition of the principles which should form the basis of the international organisation for the prevention of war, and his offer of the partnership of the United States in such an enterprise . . . .

We hope that the attitude of America towards an Association of States, as announced in the President's speech, will receive officially from our side the welcome which its importance deserves.


President Wilson's speech at Washington offers an opening for a possible peace more hopeful than any that has hitherto presented itself. His address was delivered to a meeting of the "League to Enforce Peace". The fundamental principles underlying these proposals seem to be gaining almost universal acceptance, and even in Germany we find so prominent a man as Herr Maximiian Harden expressing emphatic approval of them. Under these circumstances would it not be possible to take at once some such step as the following — not waiting till the war is over? I suggest that a declaration might be drawn up by a few representative men from the leading nations, neutral and belligerent, enunciating the broad principles and the practical methods by which alone permanent peace, liberty and independence could be secured to all nations and that this manifesto should be submitted to the Governments of all nations, including the Central Powers . . . . The proposed declaration would contain no "terms of peace": from its nature and origin it could not, but it will establish principles upon which any terms of peace must be based.

The usual assumption is that any such steps as those considered at Washington should be taken after the conclusion of the war, in order to prevent the recurrence of another such lawless outbreak. But, instead of prolonging the present appalling conflict to its terribly bitter end, would it not be more hopeful for the future to give the opportunity now, to both sides to share the credit of such a blessed transformation as that here contemplated.
Germany has unquestionably hinted more than once at a desire for mediation, but the Allies... refuse to consider terms such as she would require, and Germany refuses such as we could permit. But if an international tribunal could be founded by general consent, this insuperable difficulty would disappear. Neither the Allies nor the Central Powers would dictate the terms, and if any of these were hard to accept, they would at least come from an impartial court, and not be forced on humiliated peoples by triumphant foes elated with victory.

Is this attempt worth making or not, and can Christian nations refuse to make it?


— — — Mr. Asquith has spoken about an "international system which will secure the principle of equal rights for all civilized States". That is the aim of all the Allies, and it is apparently also the desire of President Wilson. If we are to have hope after the present hostilities of avoiding war even for a generation or two, we must have an international system based on the principle of law, and not on the balance of forces. The war now continuing has proved the futility of Alliances of great Powers to stop war, and that system must be replaced by the creation of a new international system.

The Star, May 29.

— — — Mr. Wilson's vision of peace is based upon a league of nations pledged to prevent any war begun without conference and in violation of treaties. Such a league would have prevented this war. When the German people are willing to enter such a league, and to submit to its judicial control, peace will be possible.

The Nation, May 27.

The second count in the indictment (by H. G. Wells) is that we cry "Peace, peace, immediate peace". We do. Then Mr. Wells asks: "Do you want this country to make an unconditional surrender to Germany?"... The real point is in the alternative question: "What are the minimum terms you would consider satisfactory?" To this we might fairly reply that the terms of ending the war are the business of those who made the conditions that made the war. But we will take no such refuge. We say that the duty of the Government is to approach Germany with immediate proposals for the evacuation by all belligerent countries of conquered territory and the subsequent submission of all disputed points to an international court of arbitration consisting of representatives of belligerents and of neutrals, with an impartial and neutral chairman. Is not that...
clear enough? Is that not fair enough? Is there anything for which our soldiers are being slaughtered that is not so right and just that an impartial judgment would accord it us? This is the cruel test — for if they are dying for something that its impartial judgment would deny us, they are being sacrificed wantonly and in vain.

What, Mr. Wells will say, about our Allies?

If they would agree to a fair settlement, well and good; if not, that is their affair, not ours.

What — it may still further be said — of our Colonies? Suppose they refuse to give back German colonies? Well, then, we might give Germany an equivalent elsewhere. "Is not Germany to be punished for her crimes of the last two years?" To this unchristian cry for punishment there are alternative answers. The Christian may answer: "Judgment is mine, saith the Lord; I will repay." The practical man may answer: "Yes; it will be right for us to shed blood for the sake of punishing all other powers for their crimes of the last twenty years." One last point: we shall be told that Germany would refuse the conditions we have outlined. But that is not the question in dispute; the question is whether Great Britain ought to offer them. Should Germany refuse, admittedly a new question would be opened. ... And, whether she did or not, no harm, and inestimable good would come of the offer."

The World, May 23.

As to the precise terms on which a peace could be arranged it is idle for the moment to speculate. But there are one or two broad principles which it behoves the people of Great Britain to insist upon as a preliminary condition of any negotiations. The first is that there must be no secret diplomacy... Any peace conditions, whether they be adjustments of territory, or indemnities, or economic arrangements, must be submitted to the House of Commons and the Press for the approval of the country before they are finally ratified. We have not sufficient confidence in the Government or in any of its representatives to trust them blindly on such an all-important subject.


During the last twenty months war has been revealed in all this horrors. All the glory, the glitter, and the glamour have gone; nothing is left but the naked ugliness... How is civilized mankind so to orga-
German and Austrian Comment

While the British Press, broadly speaking, concerns itself with the specific proposal of Mr. Wilson for a League of Peace and with other details of his May 28th speech, the German newspapers are more concerned with the general question of peace possibilities. When as conservative a paper as the "Kreuz-zeitung" devotes four columns to this question in its edition of May 31st, there is little doubt of the yearning of the German people for peace. Such nationalist papers to be sure, as the "Allgemeine Rundschau", "Post", "Neueste Nachrichten", "Reichsbote", "Vossische Zeitung", "Deutsche Zeitung", "Morgenpost", "Deutscher Courier" — all from Berlin —, or "Neueste Nachrichten" (Kiel), "Tageblatt" (Leipzig), "Anzeiger" (Harburg a. E.), "Post Zeitung" (Augsburg), improve the occasion to emphasize Germany's strong military position and her determination to dictate the terms of peace. Or they pay their respects to Mr. Wilson for his attitude on the question of the sale of munitions, or for his apparent desire to influence the terms of peace.

There is, however, a considerable body of newspapers — this is true especially of those from outside Berlin, and even more conspicuously so of the press of Austria, Bohemia and Hungary — which are moderate in tone, and which emphasize the desirability of an early peace.

A fact to bear in mind is that on May 26th, in other words, about a week after Mr. Wilson’s North Carolina speech, United States Ambassador Gerard gave an interview to the "Münchner Zeitung", in which he strongly indorses Mr. Wilson’s position and expresses himself very optimistically on the possibility of a speedy peace. This interview is referred to repeatedly in the utterances reprinted below.


The newspapers of the world are giving more space to peace news than in the past. During the last few days, the American ambassador has given public utterance of the peace views of the head of his government. If, in view of these facts, it is accepted that the peace wishes and sentiments will seriously be concentrated within the near future, then the people must be given the means of finding their bearings and to restore to public leaders the different faculties for the expression and improvement of their opinions.

However the peace may look — which surely must come some day — the greatest danger for the mood of the people will be a sudden cessation. Just at the present moment when the military position of Germany and her Allies is undisputable, our opinions can publicly be discussed without endangering either the military situation or without creating a false impression in foreign countries. In the heat of such a discussion, which is increased by the activities of the lungs and the other organs of speech, there will also be consumed a large amount of the poisonous elements which accumulate in human beings through the checking of speech and from their silent ill-will. And a thorough unpoisoning through the means of public utterance is sadly needed.

Die Welt am Montag, Berlin, May 29.

Herr v. Bethmann certainly did not imply even remotely, that the "war-map" and the "peace-map" should be identical. In that case he would have disavowed his own word about the "pawns"; he would have surrendered the German colonies; he would have given to Turkey
something impossible. If his intention is interpreted in this manner, the Chancellor is credited with something absurd. His intention of course was to say that in entering upon peace negotiations it is necessary to take cognizance of the facts. The form in which he has clothed this self-evident meaning can not be regarded as fortunate. To draw the war-map on the wall is undoubtedly not the most successful method to replace the "war-nervousness" through peace sentiments.

In the case of a quarrel between two individuals, even if the quarrel is over the smallest difference, a reconciliation is often postponed continuously, sometimes for life, because no one wishes to take the first step. If there is a third person, a friend of both, who will take the necessary step even at the risk of incurring the animosity of the two, and again bring them together, he will finally receive their hearty thanks.

If the war is continued according to the wishes of the "Kreuz-Zeitung", until one or the other cries with his last breath "I can no more", only one, of course, is bled white. But with the other one also so much blood has been lost that it will take ages to recover his strength, while the remainder of the entire and immense culture of the European world will in the meantime "go to the devil".

I becomes more and more evident that the neutrals alone can prevent this terrible war from ending in a more terrible result. Which one takes the first bold step is an unimportant matter. The most important point is that somebody finally decides to take the step. The best method of course would be if collectively they would direct a note to the belligerent nations, a common appeal of the neutrals to the belligerents asking whether they are ready to consent to peace negotiations with the objective of an international guarantee for a lasting peace.

In such an undertaking of the neutrals I cannot see any possibility of risk. For what country is there which would wish to appear in history and before humanity with the responsibility for continuing this fratricidal war through opposing its ending?

Die Post, Berlin, June 5.

During the last eight days, peace, or at least the hope for and prospects of an end of the world war, was the chief subject of discussion among the public and in the press, — a fact which is not surprising, if we remember that for nearly two years mankind has suffered from the most horrible war ever known in the history of the world. The war has already caused more losses of property and blood than many of the nations involved have suffered during the last hundred years. No wonder that the people, even those who are not directly involved in the war, receive with interest, yes with hopeful longing every sign that seems to indicate the return of peaceful conditions.

Reichspost, Vienna, May 25.

The role of mediator which President Wilson claims, may be taken seriously, not alone because it accords with the governmental power of the United States and is one which will give it a position more commanding than the most victorious war, but because important business and political interests will no longer look upon the conflagration of Europe as a pleasant display of fireworks netting them huge gate-receipts.

There are consequently important and weighty motives for supporting the mediating plan of President Wilson. — — — If Wilson is a statesman, he will be able to render his country a service like a Franklin or a Washington. And he will earn the sympathy and thanks throughout the entire world of those who did not enter upon war for war's sake, but for their existence, for their freedom, their worldly possessions, and also for the sake of a peace which will guarantee them justice and security.

Wien Extrablatt, Vienna, May 25.

President Wilson in a speech in North Carolina said yesterday that the time had come for the United States to offer her services for the ending of the war in Europe. The evidence for this assertion which be deduced from philosophy and history is of course his own affair, but it is to the President's honor that he feels that America has higher duties under the present circumstances than the production of munitions for our enemies.


Mr. Wilson has delivered a speech, not an ordinary political speech, but one which was given at some national celebration, in which he
declares that the time has come for the United States to offer its services for mediation. Certainly this important symptom of the present situation of the world's war cannot be slightly regarded. Of course it would have had more weight if Mr. Wilson had offered his services with that full authority that comes from not having diminished it by any acts of his. But if it is possible to forget — and after the war forgetting will become the chief endeavor of the people — then it can not be concealed that President Wilson spoke in such a manner as is expected of the president of a free country, one as yet entirely untrammelled by tradition.

Neue Freie Presse, Vienna, May 25.

One of the largest powers of the world now wishes to exert itself on behalf of peace. Nations who have lived through these two years of fear, and people, whose hearts have been cramped with anxiety, cannot receive the news of this change in American politics without some sense of emotion. For them President Wilson now vanishes behind the hundred of millions who live in America, who perhaps, overcome with sympathy over the terrible spectre of death, wish to subdue the passion of immediate gain at the expense of others, and restore the feeling of brotherhood. A mighty nations wants to assist in restoring the peace of Europe. ... Remembrance of the politics of the president which have been so unfavorable to the Central Powers will not make anyone among us doubt the importance of this event. The impressiveness of the speeches and notes of the Imperial Chancellor is illustrated by the wonderful occurrence that President Wilson, who only a few weeks ago was not far from a war with Germany and from joining the Entente Powers, now offers his services for peace. Forgiveness in diplomacy is however at times not less of an advantage than a watchful memory, for what was a mistake under other circumstances often becomes a matter of necessity.

Tribüne, Erfurt, May 29.

The greatest interest is shown and will be shown in President Wilson and his endeavors for peace, because in America the peace propaganda is very wide spread. Important reports have come to us of a speech by Wilson at a meeting where over 2,000 people gathered to discuss peace. There were present university representatives, business people, and labor leaders.

Neueste Nachrichten, Kiel, May 25.

This new custom has never been used to such a degree in the history of the world before, that great belligerent powers should allow themselves of the medium of the press in order to draw out of one another the first intimations as to the conditions under which peace negotiations could be started. This game of question-and-answer is played in full view of the public. Public opinion is thus afforded an opportunity to form itself in due time, even if, for obvious reasons, it cannot always express itself freely, or if the governments forbid all discussion about the aim of the war. This forced silence can of course not be kept up very long, when the leading statesmen themselves have begun to disclose their ideas.

Fränkischer Kurier, Nürnberg-Fürth, May 21.

Germany has no desire to cherish utopian plans of conquest because of her favorable position. It is true that there is a little group of politicians in Germany who want to change our war of defence into a war of conquest. They are, nevertheless, much smaller in number with us than with our enemies. Besides, it is not this group but the responsible leaders of German policy who have to decide matters. Herr v. Bethmann-Hollweg has shown by his last speech in the Reichstag that he dismissed all such plans most definitely. Of course there can be no question of a restoration of the status quo ante, after these enormous happenings. We have been attacked, and we must see to it that such attacks will not be repeated. But we shall not interfere with the freedom and independence of any nation — nay, we want on the contrary to give freedom and independence to a group of nations in the east.

Volkszeitung, Dresden, May 27.

Herr Gerard has spoken with great confidence. We can therefore assume that the American government has not been discouraged by the previous refusals, and this is surely a good sign, because the real intention of the English government is very likely known much better today in Washington than in London, and the intentions of the German govern-
ment much better known there than in Berlin. The ambassadors of the United States have an opportunity to hear things which are not yet mentioned aloud, and Mr. Gerard would not have spoken in such an optimistic way if he had drawn his knowledge only from the newspapers, which are watched with argus eyes by the censors in all countries. It is, certainly, no mere chance that the American ambassador in Berlin feels so confident because, as we know, Berlin is today the real center of the European peace efforts. Here the desire for peace has been officially expressed, and at least in general outlines, the broad outlines of the peace terms developed while Sir Edward Grey, according to his own admission, does not even know what conditions he wants to make.

Herr Gerard thinks, to be sure, that weeks and months will still pass by before peace can be concluded. Most likely we have to understand this to mean, that the Allies will still try, during the summer, to make the war situation change in their favor. There is not to be found, however, any desire for a new winter campaign, either among the French, English, Russian, or Italian peoples, nor on the other side. The more the summer advances the stronger the desire to conclude the war in the autumn will grow. If the people want to escape the horrible necessity of killing in order not to be killed, they must conclude peace on the principle of live and let live.

Badischer Beobachter, Karlsruhe, May 30.

It is no wonder that after two years of war the longing for peace becomes stronger and stronger both with the belligerents and the neutrals. During this whole war the friends of peace have also been at work to bring about an agreement between the belligerents. Very often they were ridiculed by those who were of the opinion that the people must become accustomed to "permanent war". Today the keen efforts of the friends of peace are no longer considered childish dreams, and the number of followers of those who preach war to the bitter end reduces itself, day by day. This change of mind, which has taken place among all belligerent nations, without exception, is a fact that has to be taken into account even by the statesmen. And they take it into account, in the belligerent countries as well as in the neutral countries. This is no doubt a great step forward toward peace.

Until now Mr. Wilson has always been very cautious when urged to act as peace mediator. Of late, however, the President of the United States no longer considers it necessary to be so cautious. He now speaks at meetings where he states that the time has come to mediate for peace.

Germany has no reason to refuse a peace mediator, whoever he may be, and she will not do so either. The responsible statesmen of Germany, (who differ from the irresponsible ones of many newspaper offices) have, as the Reichskanzler recently emphasized an honest wish to end the horrible bloodshed, and they are ready to discuss in a practical way the problems of the war and of peace, with our adversaries. Practical discussion is, however, different from dictation. He who wants to dictate needs no discussion. The one excludes the other. But the Reichskanzler said nothing about dictating, only about discussing.

Peace will not come today or tomorrow. The fight has lasted too long and it has been too bitter to make this possible. Too great is also the hatred that has accumulated among the belligerents during the long war. But once the moment must come when the guns are silent and the negotiations begin, and this moment seems to have come much nearer, now.

Volkswacht, Breslau, May 27.

The war that the superficial prattler tries to extol as the highest expression of mankind, is called by the German Reichskanzler "a horrible bloodshed". What is the meaning of the war? Bethmann-Hollweg answers us: millions of victims dead, wounded, and crippled; a heavy debt of property and blood on the shoulders of this generation and of generations to come. This sounds different from the hymns of praise we have heard before, from others. It used to be considered treachery to speak about peace, but now the Reichskanzler confesses openly and bravely that all nations are longing for peace. With real satisfaction we have also noticed his conviction that we cannot go forward by talking about the past and that discussion as to who caused the war and who did not is aimless and worthless. That is very true, because you cannot discuss with your enemy who is guilty and who is responsible. That is a question to be settled between the governments and their own people.

Herr Gerard says that Mr. Wilson does not abandon the hope for peace, at least for peace after some weeks and months. If we had the opportunity to talk with Mr. Wilson we should give him only one bit of advice, — not to get discouraged. He cannot expect to find open doors.
anywhere. With us of the Central Powers his acts are suspect to begin with, because the Government of the United States certainly made mistakes as to neutrality. Again, the other side has no desire to surround itself by an air of refusal; the pretended resolution to carry on the war indefinitely is calculated to make the enemy afraid of the unknown, so that he will therefore be ready to cut down his conditions. Wilson will say all this to himself. He will therefore understand that this tree cannot be felled by one stroke.

Europe is today divided into two camps, and between them there lies an abyss across which no one can pass by his own power. A leader and a mediator is wanted in order to bring the adversaries together. This leadership and mediatorialship is, no doubt, one of the highest and most beautiful tasks history has ever offered to a mortal man. If the President of the great free States undertakes and carries through this task in an able way, he will have gained immortality for himself.

Prager Tageblatt, Prague, May 25.

President Wilson at a celebration in North Carolina made a speech which no doubt, though delivered to the citizens of the United States, will have a greater echo in Europe than in America. In this speech appears the remarkable sentence that the time has come for the United States to offer her services to the belligerent countries of Europe for the purpose of ending the war. It is the first time that a neutral country has publicly announced its willingness to mediate and also the first time that the President of the United States has emphasized the suitability of his country for this duty, and established its claims to it, so to speak, historically.

For the time being he has already rendered humanity a great service in that he announces his readiness to mediate; in fact there is no one else who could undertake this difficult task; there is no neutral power of equal authority upon the entire earth which could risk the attempt.

Tagespost, Graz, May 27.

The last speech of President Wilson seems to prove that Bryan has correctly foreseen events, that Wilson will finally do what he as Secretary of State had advised him to do, and what the president had obstinately refused to do. Wilson takes cognizance of this popular current. when, even though belated, he decided to initiate peace proposals. Better late than never — and it is possible to forgive much that Wilson has done if now he will approach the belligerent nations with an earnest and honorable offer, in so far as Sir Grey permits him, who in his last speech has, to be sure, sounded entirely different views.

Pester Lloyd, Budapest, May 25.

A single word, despised until now, has torn itself loose from its outlawed fastnesses where it was placed by hate and scorn, and resounds like the ring of a sunken bell in a deeply moved and listening world: — peace. The fact that it is possible to risk its utterance, points to a change in the spirituality of humanity. The counterspeeches of Sir Edward Grey and Bethmann-Hollweg, by means of the American press, and finally the speech of President Wilson, may be considered an indication that the men upon whom destiny has placed the terrible burden of responsibility for the present world catastrophe have begun to see the uselessness of further bloodshed. For twenty-three months the word PEACE has been outlawed, as if it were expurgated from the languages of the world. Now it resounds again, modestly, indeed, and groping; but the fact that in the midst of the thunder of battle it has obtained a hearing, and that, though yesterday it was but a lost memory, today it stamples the portals of consciousness, is a significant phenomenon which should not be underrated. The president of the United States wishes to offer his good services for mediation, for peace. Mr. Wilson has not confided this decision to the members of his cabinet in secrecy, but has announced it openly and solemnly to a hundred thousand people. That of course is not yet peace, not even the first step in the direction of peace. But hardened skepticism must admit this much, that in the speech of the American President there appears the intention that he will take this first step soon, and also the opinion that his initiative is indicative of the possibility of success.


The verbatim report of the peace-speech of the President of the United States is now before us. But it has found a joyous echo, not alone in the heart of the hundred thousand Americans who gathered last Satur-
day to celebrate some national holiday, but an universal echo. Again we can breath freely. At last someone has come, an entirely competent statesman, perhaps the most competent under the present difficult and complicated circumstances, to set in order the sense of reality of the Entente-Statesmen. At last there is someone, a son of the extremely practical American nation, an eminent man of real and concrete ideas, to lead the belligerent nations back to genuine conciliation. This man can restore peace, if he has the firm intention to do his utmost for this end. To-day, we have no reason to doubt the serious purpose of this human intention of President Wilson. War has lasted for a long time, and with unprecedented severity. America has made huge profits and to-day is more than satiated. President Wilson could therefore right-fully say that the time has now come for the United States to offer its services for the restoration of peace between the belligerent nations.

If we deduct from the speech of Wilson all that is mere phraseology there remains for humanity the kernel of a great deed. And it is entirely unnecessary to inquire whether the head of the free American people has undertaken this task out of pure humanitarian motives, or whether some other reason has compelled him to raise the question of mediation spontaneously. What will it matter to the bleeding men upon the battlefields, or the troubled mothers, or the anxious wives and children, that the American President now faces a new election, and perhaps has personal reasons to take practical steps in time in the direction of peace, before some other candidate anticipates him! After two years of such a terrible war it is natural that everyone longs for peace, both victor and vanquished.
NEUTRAL CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS

2. The Women’s Manifesto.
3. Projet international de médiation continue, (Exposé sommaire) par Julia Grace Wales.
4 a. Resolution of the Henry Ford Peace Expedition (in English)
4 b. ditto (in Swedish)
4 c. ditto (in French)
5 a. Appeal to the Governments and Parliaments of the Neutral Countries. (In French)
5 b. ditto (in English)
5 c. Appeal to the Governments, Parliaments and Peoples of the Belligerent Countries (in French)
5 d. ditto (in German)
5 e. » (in English)
5 f. » (in Swedish)
6. Activities of the Neutral Conference to May 15, by Carl Lindhagen
7. A Voice from Germany (by Maximilian Harden)
8 a. The Neutral Conference for Continuous Mediation, by Louis P. Lochner
8 b. Neutrale Conferenz für ständige Vermittlung von Louis P. Lochner
8 c. La Conférence des Neutres pour une Médiation Continue, par Louis P. Lochner
8 d. Den Neutrala Konferensen för ständig medling, av Louis P. Lochner
9 a. A Statement given out by the Neutral Conference on President Wilson’s speech of May 28:th.
9 b. Über die Friedensmöglichkeiten nach Präsident Wilsons Rede vom 28. Mai
10. A plan for a rehabilitation fund
11. Ueber Friedensmöglichkeiten
12. President Wilson and the Peace of Europe