1964

Prelude to Versailles

John M. Herrick

College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/honors_theses

Recommended Citation
http://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/honors_theses/754

Available by permission of the author. Reproduction or retransmission of this material in any form is prohibited without expressed written permission of the author.
WILSON AND CLEMENCEAU
PRELUDE TO VERSAILLES

BY

JOHN M. HERRICK

HONORS PROGRAM
SAINT JOHN'S UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
1964
PREFACE

I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to the following libraries for their assistance in securing my source material: The University of Minnesota Library, Walter Hall; The Minneapolis Public Library; The Saint John's University Library; The Saint Cloud State College Library; and the Library of The College of Saint Benedict. I also wish to thank Dr. Joseph Heininger for his patience and cooperation in helping me assemble my materials, for proofreading this paper, and for his criticism when it was needed.

John M. Herrick
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. WILSONIAN IDEALISM</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE REALISM OF CLEMENCEAU</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. IDEALISM VERSUS REALISM</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII.</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII.</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX.</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

When one is confronted by the spectre of the Versailles Peace Conference of 1919, the most obvious reaction is either one of disappointment with the unpreparedness of the Allied Powers or elation that the reasons for its shortcomings seem so clear. As we look from the vantage point of the present into the past, it is easy to recognize when diplomatic mistakes were made. But to understand a particular event or the motivations behind it, the historian must sift the facts to find an "objective" conclusion. In so doing he must assume the subjective role of the critic. He must study his subject by examining the available materials, much of which he will find prejudiced either for or against his thesis. The wealth of material written on the Peace Conference of 1919 contains many contradictory facts, particularly when recorded by men of different nationalities and cultural backgrounds.

This thesis attempts to prove that the Wilsonian principles, the Fourteen Points, were accepted only in theory by the peacemakers, never as a letter guide for negotiations. The French attitude as typified by Georges Clemenceau paid lip-service to the principles, but never believed that they were the basis for building a peace
settlement. This was the reason for President Wilson's defeat at the hands of the European diplomats at Paris.
CHAPTER I

WILSONIAN IDEALISM

In the late fall of 1918, the conflagration of the First World War was coming to an end. The German Empire was falling. In light of this situation, the termination of actual fighting and the prospect of a forthcoming peace settlement occupied the mind of President Wilson. As the war concluded, the President introduced American peace objectives that were the logical result of his zeal to make the world safe for democracy. Wilson felt that the United States had been fighting for the rights of mankind, for the establishment of a new international order based on the broad principles of right and justice. President Wilson believed that it was his mission to lead the world towards this new order of general welfare.

On January 8, 1918, the President appeared before the American Congress and presented his Fourteen Points. The first five were general in scope: open diplomacy, freedom of the seas; the removal of economic barriers; the reduction of armaments; and the adjustment of colonial claims on a fair basis. Then followed a series of formulas for applying justice to specific countries or areas. The fourteenth point was a declaration in favor of an
association of nations to guarantee world peace.

President Wilson had presented the principles which he wished to be the precedent for future American peace objectives. Later, in his speech of July 4, 1918, which was given at Mt. Vernon, he reiterated these aims. "What we seek is the reign of law," he said, "based upon the consent of the governed, and sustained by the organized opinion of mankind." The Fourteen Points were the basis of this conception of a new reign of law, culminating in the formation of the League of Nations.

Senators Johnson and Borah were vehemently opposed to American interference in any type of European affairs, especially in any agreements which might permanently bind the United States to Continental affairs. Senator Johnson once mentioned, "I hope that out of it (the war) will come a determination on the part of the United States to leave the nations beyond the seas the policing of the world hereafter, and to bring home our troops whenever our present obligations shall have been fulfilled."  

---

1 Ray Stannard Baker, Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1923), I, 12. Mr. Baker was President Wilson's official press secretary during the peace negotiations. His works are highly favorable towards Wilson, but they contain a great amount of unpublished primary source material. See Appendix I for the text of the Fourteen Points and Wilson's statement of original war aims. Appendix II and Appendix III give speech excerpts of February 11, 1918, and July 4, 1918, illustrating American war and peace objectives.

2 Ibid., p. 91. (Senator Lodge desired that Germany should pay heavy indemnities to the Allies in Europe and that the United States should be allowed to share in these war spoils.) See Appendix IV for the Congressional Record account of Lodge's address of August 23, 1918, giving his version of America's war aims and peace objectives.
While President Wilson was declaring that the United States had no selfish ends to serve except the reign of law, Senator Lodge of Massachusetts mentioned in the Senate that Germany must pay heavy indemnities to the Allies. But the Pre-Armistice Agreement, based on the Fourteen Points, specified that Germany need pay only reparations, not indemnities. The question of reparations versus indemnities proved to be one of the thorniest problems encountered by the peacemakers. Its resolution eventually resulted in an outward violation of the President's principles.

In September, 1917, five months after the United States entered the war, Colonel Edward Mandell House, later United States Commissioner Plenipotentiary at the Paris Peace Conference, at the request of President Wilson, began to gather a body of experts to collect and correlate data necessary for American participation in an eventual peace conference. The President felt that the United States needed specialists in geography, linguistics, ethnology, and economics.

The American Inquiry was established to lay the groundwork for a possible peace conference. David Hunter Miller, a New York attorney, became treasurer of the Inquiry and early in 1918, Walter Lippmann was appointed its secretary. When the actual peace conference was convened following the German surrender, this Inquiry became

\[\text{\textsuperscript{3}Ibid.}\]
known as the Territorial Section of the Peace Conference. 4

The President and his advisors tried to establish a basis for peace negotiations by the construction of this preliminary peace planning body. Thus, the United States was building the foundations for her future peacemaking activity at Paris. But when Wilson promulgated his Fourteen Points, he did so without previous consultation with the Allied Governments. When the German representatives offered to sign an armistice based on the Fourteen Points, they were appealing to principles which had been discussed but not fully accepted by France, Italy, or Great Britain.

A hurried conference was held to adjust this lack of correlation, and Colonel House, the personal representative of President Wilson, produced his "commentary" on the Fourteen Points which was accepted by the Allies with only a few minor revisions. Germany did not receive this "commentary"; consequently she believed that the peace would be based on the pure Wilsonian doctrines. This "commentary" was not a radical departure from the Fourteen Points, but it did illustrate a willingness to compromise Wilsonian principles in order to facilitate peacemaking. It was this propensity that would lead to misunderstanding between the members of the American peace delegation and the President, between Germany and the Allies, and between the Allies and the President. Both Germany and Wilson believed the Fourteen Points to be inviolable, while the Allies and the

---

4See Appendix V for a list of the members and sections of the Inquiry.
principal members of the American delegation did not.\textsuperscript{5}

The President's Fourteen Points were not, therefore, accepted in their original form by the Allies. Although they had agreed to them in principle by using them as the basis for the Pre-Armistice Agreement, they were in addition demanding the evacuation of occupied territories as well as the collection of indemnities. This violation or modification of the Fourteen Points would determine the extent to which they were implemented in the final peace terms. Wilson's refusal to allow the Allies to mutilate his principles completely when pursuing their traditional selfish interests precipitated the rift in the American delegation and the long arguments between himself and Georges Clemenceau of France.

But amidst misinterpretation, President Wilson's ideals were beginning to enjoy world-wide popularity. Millions heard his famous principles and saw in them a possible salvation for the world from future war and aggression. Leonard von Muralt, a German critic of the Versailles Settlement, writing in 1948, recalled Swiss attitudes toward Wilson's program. "In Switzerland," he wrote, "Wilson's program of international justice and safeguarding of peace was acclaimed with joy. We expected that the United States of America would have the power to translate such principles into political reality."\textsuperscript{6} But students of human


\textsuperscript{6}Leonard von Muralt, From Versailles to Potsdam (Hinsdale: Henry Regnery Co., 1948), pp. 16-17. See
nature and political ambition were more skeptical. Age-old prejudices and nationalist demands were inherent in the European mentality. Not even in America was there a unanimity of popular opinion for the Wilsonian principles. When the actual peace negotiations began, the assembled forces were ready to alter his objectives beyond recognition.

The Allied Governments had declared their willingness to conclude a Treaty with the German Government on the peace terms of President Wilson but with two qualifications. First, they desired clarification of the question involving "freedom of the seas." The second extended the Principle of "restoration" so as to cover all damage done to the Allied civilian population by the German armed forces. Thus, among the Allies there was unanimity, at least in principle, over the basis of the Pre-Armistice Agreement.

But the Allies had already made a number of secret treaties among themselves for disposing of enemy territory. They had no intention, especially after the long war years of suffering, of relinquishing their prospective plunder at the request of President Wilson. There was a general understanding among the Germans that Wilson spoke for all the Allies when he enumerated and enunciated his

Appendix VI for evidence showing the many appeals of the small, "forgotten" nations made to President Wilson.

plans and principles. Such was not the case.

Thus, it was quite natural for the Allied Governments to keep quiet during the German peace overtures. They could not realistically oppose Wilson's principles and proclaim their own secret ambitions. If they had done so, Germany would most probably never have accepted the Armistice terms but would rather have attempted one last minute offensive.

There were three notes exchanged between the Imperial German Government and the United States during October, 1918, indicating the German interpretation of the proposed Armistice terms. "The German Government believes," read the second note of October 12, 1918, from the Wilhelmsstrasse, "that the Governments of the powers associated with the United States also accept the position taken by President Wilson in his addresses"—in which the Fourteen Points were enumerated. 8

It was at this time that President Wilson should have announced that he was speaking only for the United States. The American replies ignored this point. If Wilson had made it clear that the Fourteen Points were not to be taken too literally, he might have dampened America's war enthusiasm, but he would have avoided the disillusionment which faced the American delegates at the Peace Conference. It was this conflict over theory and practice in the American peace program that resulted in the United

States rejection of the Treaty of Versailles. 9

The Armistice Convention was signed at 5 A.M. on November 11, 1918, and at 11 A.M. that same day it went into effect. The Agreement was supposedly based on the Fourteen Points, but this proved to be more fiction than fact when the negotiators met at the conference tables. Colonel House hinted at the possible debates that could result from this basic misunderstanding. "There are," he said, "so many key men in the Allied governments who, to put it mildly, are not sympathetic to this program. We shall hear from them later." 10

One of the first major problems of the American delegation was the decision made by the President to attend the Peace Conference in person. Robert Lansing, the Secretary of State, expressed his misgivings about the wisdom of Wilson's participation in the Peace Conference. In his personal reflections on the Peace Conference, Lansing wrote:

This intention of Mr. Wilson surprised and disturbed me, and I expressed the hope that the President's mind was not made up, as I believed that if he gave more consideration to the project he would abandon it, since it was manifest that his influence over the negotiations would be much greater if he remained in Washington and issued instructions to his representatives in the Conference. Colonel House did not say that he agreed with my judgment in this matter, though he did not openly disagree with it. However, I drew the conclusion, though without actual

9 Ibid., p. 32.
10 Stephen Bonsal, Unfinished Business (Garden City: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1944), p. 5. This is the diary of President Wilson's official interpreter at Paris.
knowledge, that he approved of the President's purpose,
and, possibly, had encouraged him to become an actual
participant in the preliminary conferences.\textsuperscript{11}

President Wilson felt that his personal presence
at the Peace Conference would contribute to the formation
of a peace based on the principles he cherished. Whether
or not he doubted the ability of the men whom he proposed
as American peace delegates is purely speculative. Colonel
House mentioned that the President looked forward to Paris
as an "intellectual treat."\textsuperscript{12} But when Wilson stepped
down from his American pedestal and prepared to deliberate
with the representatives of the other states on equal terms,
he lost his advantage. In lowering himself to the level of
the other Allies, he surrendered his enviable position as
an American prophet, who could moralize about peace with-
out having to formulate concrete settlements.\textsuperscript{13} "At Paris,"
said Harold Nicolson, the British diplomat, "a helplessness
descended upon him."\textsuperscript{14}

Before he left for Europe, President Wilson
received notes from Great Britain pertaining to the relief
of a starving Europe, a memorandum from the German Govern-
ment asserting that it had truly reformed itself, and news
of the formation of a republic in Austria. He also had

\textsuperscript{11} Robert Lansing, The Peace Negotiations (New York:

\textsuperscript{12} Charles Seymour (ed.), The Intimate Papers of
Colonel House (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1928),
IV, 114.

\textsuperscript{13} Nicolson, op. cit., pp. 53-59.

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p. 59.
five or more reports regarding conditions in Russia and a letter from Cardinal Gibbons hoping that he would call on the Pope. Colonel House, who was already in Europe, sent messages to Wilson relating to the first meeting of Lloyd George, Clemenceau, and Orlando on December 2 and 3, to discuss plans for the coming Peace Conference. The President also had numerous reports and essays from his experts on the problems of settlements and the proposed League of Nations. 15

But Wilson’s peace program was essentially very simple. His famous Fourteen Points rested upon what he considered to be historic American principles. They were the product of a deeply religious, Presbyterian mentality, sincere of purpose and firm conviction. Wilson believed them to be morally correct; therefore, he did not conceptualize their modification or abandonment. He thought that the Allies not only believed them in theory, but that they were also ready to make the personal sacrifices necessary for their implementation in all the peace settlements.

Between the signing of the Armistice on November 11, 1918, and the formal opening of the Conference on the afternoon of Saturday, January 18, 1919, President Wilson visited Rome and London where he was greeted warmly and enthusiastically by the populaces. Yet some critics felt that these European tours were unnecessary for the President.

Mr. Nicolson suggested that Wilson became obsessed by the "eyes of the dumb people." He imagined that they acclaimed him as a symbol of the New Europe. The crowds at the Victoria Station and along the Corso in Rome cheered him as a symbol of popular victory. These visits convinced Wilson that all Europe was with him. The tide of public opinion was definitely for the Wilsonian principles, but only as long as they guaranteed that adequate revenge could be taken against Germany for her part in the war. They wished to incapacitate Germany, to render her impotent and unable to ever again "cause" a war.

When the actual Conference proceedings got under way in January, 1919, President Wilson did not use his advisers to any great extent. Ever since the United States had entered the war, he had a body of "experts" continuously studying such questions as might arise during the negotiations. But when the time came for using these experts, they were not as active as had been planned.

The President was a solitary worker. He had little appreciation of the need for explanation and team play. He began to quarrel with Mr. Lansing, an indication of his inability to recognize the validity of arguments contrary to his own beliefs. Lansing possessed a legalistic and conventional mind, his look was backward towards precedent. He could never understand or appreciate the prophetic, idealistic mind of Wilson, which was interested

---

16 Baker, op. cit., I, 146.
in the substance and the spirit of the matter and cared little for the method. It was not until January 8, 1919, that President Wilson asked his advisers for a list of subjects to be considered in the preliminary Conference sessions.17

There was another factor that influenced the President in his decisions at Paris. This was his almost pathological attraction for mystical things, affecting his otherwise rational disposition. He had a childish belief in the potency of the number thirteen and in the figure of the triangle.18 These things, not important in themselves, are indicative of the Wilsonian mind. He was confident that he was doing what was morally right. The Fourteen Points and the plan for the League of Nations were conceived by Wilson in order to create a New World order, based on moral hopes and aspirations. His adherence to his own principles and his own presence at Paris caused quarrels among the American delegation and resulted in a shaky, unspecific program of American peace objectives. Although the President felt assured of an American "victory" at the Conference tables, his interpretation of the Fourteen Points was not accepted by the Allies.19 As the Peace Conference commenced, the American delegation was unprepared

17 Ibid., 148.

18 Nicolson, op. cit., pp. 38-42.

19 See Appendix VII for a statement on the inherent differences in Wilson's program and the European objectives.
for the battles that would be fought at the Conference tables. Only the President stood undaunted, firm in his Fourteen Points.
CHAPTER II

THE REALISM OF CLEMENCEAU

One of the most interesting personages at the Versailles Conference was Georges Clemenceau, the Premier of France. He was an advocate of traditional diplomatic methods designed to promote national over international interests. In his hands was the awesome responsibility of overseeing the peace negotiations, of regulating order, and of guarding diplomatic protocol among the various representatives. Further, his role as Chairman of the Peace Conference gave him a diplomatic advantage. He could, to a large extent, determine those subjects to be discussed. His position gave him the power to limit debate, set the time of adjournments, and control other parliamentary procedures.

As the major spokesman for victorious France, Clemenceau typified the French contention that everything should be fixed. Territorial lines should be settled, colonies should be distributed according to certain plans, and indemnities should be determined. All these should be accomplished prior to the actual start of the Peace Conference. More significantly, French aims were echoes of the general European consensus of what the Peace Conference
should accomplish. The Old Order wanted to maintain absolute control in the hands of four or five great powers. "They," as Lloyd George said, "had run the war," and they intended to regulate the peace settlements in order to satisfy the demands of their people.¹

Georges Clemenceau was dedicated to the defense and welfare of his beloved France. His view of the war was quite clear; Germany had caused it. Feeling thusly, his solution was simple. Germany must be incapacitated so that she would be unable to repeat her aggression. His approach was simple and direct, resulting perhaps from his long training for medicine. Here he had learned that if the cause of a disease were removed the disease would logically cease. His method would be to propose treaties incorporating and legalizing ends beneficial to France and adverse to Germany. Clemenceau realized that he would have to obtain Allied agreement to his proposals and that Germany and her Allies would have to sign the resolutions.

Clemenceau suffered no illusions about the difficulty of the impending Peace Conference. "Yes, we have won the war," he once replied to one of his aides, "and not without difficulty. But now we have got to win the peace, and it may well be more difficult still."² The


support of the French or English citizenry was necessary to insure the success of a peace settlement. On the one hand, the average man wanted a peace that was based on moral principles, a peace that would make the world a better place, one safe for democracy, founded on the Wilsonian Fourteen Points. Yet, on the other hand, the individual citizen of a national state seemed reluctant to make any sacrifices demanded by Wilson's ideas. The French insisted upon the return of Alsace-Lorraine and wanted the Rhineland, while the British desired the former German colonies. The majority of Americans were determined to keep out of any entangling alliances, a fact learned later by President Wilson in the debate over the League of Nations.

The statesmen at Versailles had to decide how to conduct the negotiations. They could follow the idealistic principles of President Wilson or they could pursue the vindictive ideas of France. Disregarding the Congressional Elections of November, 1918, which returned a majority of the isolationist Republican Party, President Wilson desired that it be the former. Lloyd George of Great Britain proclaimed that he was pro-Wilson, although the Parliamentary Elections of December, 1918, were won on slogans of "Hang the Kaiser" and "Make Germany Pay."

There were also more Conservatives than Liberals returned to office, thus indicating a lack of uniform support for Lloyd George's government.

Clemenceau's views were strictly anti-Wilsonian.

In a December 29, 1918, speech before the House of
Deputies, he said:

There was an old system which seems condemned today and to which I do not hesitate to say that I remain to some extent faithful: nations organized their defence. It was very prosaic. They tried to have strong frontiers. They went armed . . . . I was saying that there was this old system of strong and well-defined frontiers, armaments, and what is called the balance of power . . . . This system seems condemned today by very high authorities. Yet I believe that if this balance, which has been spontaneously produced during the war, had existed earlier: if, for example, England, America, France and Italy had agreed in saying that whoever attacked the whole world, this war would never have taken place . . . . At the Conference, each will defend its own interests. ³

This was entirely opposed to the Wilsonian idea of an unselfish peace, based on the Wilsonian principles which respected the equal rights of all nations. But Clemenceau knew that he could not make peace alone. France would need the support of the other Allies, including America in order to achieve her peace objectives. Clemenceau had sent a note to the American Government within three weeks of the signing of the preliminary armistice. In it he had suggested certain plans for conference procedure and the issues to be considered. He wanted a preliminary treaty covering all immediate questions to be drawn up by the four Allied powers and imposed on Germany. This would be followed by a General Congress of all Powers, including neutrals, to decide details and methods of application concerning the future. Referring to the French proposals, Winston Churchill said they treated high ideals as if they

³Ibid., p. 135. See Appendix VIII for a succinct view of Clemenceau's objectives, as he viewed them in a speech called "The Case of France," delivered in 1922.
were "a mere garnish to agreements on sound policy."^4

The "Tiger," as Clemenceau was nicknamed, received an overwhelming four to one vote of confidence from the French Chamber after his speech on December 29, 1918. He described what he called "la noble candeur" of the American President.5 Soon all of Paris was discussing the exact shade of meaning in the French phrase. "Candeur" could be translated as candor but it could also be translated as the "simplicity of the village idiot."^6 The President's principles had not fallen on friendly soil in France.

Unfortunately for the future of the Peace negotiations, Clemenceau and the other Allies had not yet decided on a unanimous plan of action for the Peace proceedings. The French Plan, presented to President Wilson on November 29, had stated:

Those principles of President Wilson which are not sufficiently defined in their character to be taken as a basis for a concrete settlement . . . will resume their full strength in the matter of the future settlement of public law, and this will remove one of the difficulties that might obstruct the Allies. The Fourteen Propositions which are principles of public law cannot furnish a concrete basis for the labours of the Conference.


^6Ibid.

This was a frank appraisal of the President's program by America's French ally. But Wilson even refused to acknowledge these criticisms or to reply to their peace suggestions. He believed that his own enumerated principles were the guiding lights for the American peace delegation and would also be followed by the Allied governments in their negotiations.

As a result of this lack of a definite plan of action, Clemenceau seemed discouraged and made no further attempts to arrive at a substitute for the original French program. "Is not the return to the past," said Clemenceau, "the first impulse of countries whose power is founded upon the force of traditions?" Clemençeau was himself a veteran of many French political battles and like most European statesmen pursued a course of Realpolitik in his diplomatic maneuverings. He was always ready to reaffirm his belief that "peace is but war pursued in another manner." It was this militaristic, cold manner and method that Mr. Ray Stannard Baker readily contrasted to the more idealistic aspirations of President Wilson.

Clemenceau believed that due to the unique geographical position of France, she should have had a great deal to say about the peace conditions directly concerning Germany. He insisted that if another war should threaten, it would not be any small nation that would be as vulnerable

---

8 Baker, op. cit., I, 282.

9 Ibid.
as France. Therefore, in his eyes, there was no reason why tiny states like Honduras should be given equal voice with the Allied powers in the peace negotiations. Since he presided over the confusion of the first plenary session of the Paris Conference, he was literally able to dictate what the smaller nations should vote for or against. He would rapidly say to them, "Y a-t-il d'objections? Non? . . . Adopté" and they had little recourse to formal objection. At the second plenary meeting, he specifically outlined their position.

When Clemenceau was questioned by Sir Robert Borden, the chief Canadian delegate, regarding the role of the great Powers in the peace negotiations, he replied:

Yes, we have taken decisions into our own hands. The five Great Powers (France, England, the United States, Italy and Japan) . . . have lost dead and wounded that have counted in the millions, and if . . . we had been led to consult no one but ourselves . . . who can pretend that it would not have been our right? 10

President Wilson yielded to the accepted European plan for conducting the discussions on various issues by delegating them to various Commissions. But the decision-making power was to be concentrated in the hands of the five Great Powers. Wilson acceded to this procedure because he believed that the still embryonic League of Nations would soon solve the problem of general world-representation in a world-regulatory body. Time would demonstrate how far-removed his dreams were from the

10 Jackson, op. cit., p. 138.
American conception of national policy, which would revert to its former state of isolation.

While the President realized that it would be impossible to accomplish anything in the preliminary sessions if all nations were allowed to express themselves, he feared that the Conference might evolve into a dictatorial body, desiring to regulate the world in a manner which the war had been fought to avoid. The Fourteen Points implied that the League of Nations would care for the demands of all nations, not merely the Great powers.

Very definitely, the statesmen at Paris realized that the Treaty was not to be an unchangeable thing. When they drafted the Covenant for the League of Nations, they inserted article nineteen, which facilitated actual peacemaking. The article read:

> The Assembly may from time to time advise the reconsideration by Members of the League of treaties which have become inapplicable and the consideration of international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world.\(^{11}\)

This brought about the passage of many peace proposals, since argumentation was postponed for the sake of expediency in the good faith that the particular problem would be settled later. Thus the article was of supreme importance for it enabled something concrete to be accomplished while the actual Treaty was being formulated and drawn up.

Clemenceau still clung to the French plan, to protect France from all future military invasions by incapacitating Germany both economically and militarily. Wishing France to replace Germany in the world, he never lost sight of these objectives. When President Wilson's Fourteen Points were accepted in theory by the Allies in the Pre-Armistice Agreement with Germany, Clemenceau never dreamed of surrendering what he considered legitimate French claims against Germany. It was this attitude of Clemenceau that presupposed the violation of the Fourteen Points during the Conference deliberations of 1919, especially when President Wilson returned to America from mid-February until mid-March for the closing of the Sixty-Fifth Congress.

It is interesting to notice the demands of the radical French militarists, led by Marshal Foch, and their effects on Georges Clemenceau. Foch considered that although Germany was defeated, she was still strong while France was very weak. Germany had a population amounting to between 64 and 75 millions. This population was naturally bound together by common language, and therefore by many common ideas. In the face of this German force, Belgium, Luxembourg, Alsace-Lorraine, and France could combined muster approximately 49 million people. "Only with the cooperation of the countries on the other side of the sea," said Foch, "can we reach the level of the enemy's figures, as we did in 1914-1918, and yet this help must be waited for ... especially for the United States."12

Thus Marshal Foch was advocating the classic military view of peace. His solution for the problems of France was the military incapacitation of Germany by making the Rhine River the permanent strategic frontier of France. He believed that this would remove any possibility of further German preponderance on the Continent and would secure France as the leading European military power.\textsuperscript{13}

Foch, as well as a large segment of the more conservative and traditional members of the Allied military staffs, felt that these proposals would hold Germany at arm's length from France, preventing her from ever again delivering a surprise blow at her innocent neighbors. They would also, by removing from Germany the rich and populous Rhine provinces, weaken her politically and economically. Marshal Foch refused to admit any French desire to annex this German territory, but proposed the creation of "new autonomous States" there. These "States" would be provided with economic outlets, since they would be united with the other Western European States by customs systems.\textsuperscript{14}

There were even rumors that Foch would like to continue the war in order to guarantee France's gaining possession or control over these Rhine provinces. What he wanted was the complete severance of this rich area from

\textsuperscript{13}Jere Clemens King, Foch versus Clemenceau, 1918-1919 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), pp. 21-30; 114-120.

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid. See also, Baker, op. cit., II, 1-22.
Germany and its economic union with France. This was obviously a contrast to the Wilsonian ideal of a just peace settlement, where no nation would emerge preponderant in European affairs. He envisioned free and open covenants, not the furtherance of traditional selfish aspirations. Certainly, Germany did not wish to surrender control over some of her richest areas.

While Clemenceau did not advocate the continuance of war against Germany as some of the radical militarists demanded, he was responsive and acutely aware of the demands of Foch. He had to appease them and at the same time successfully formulate peace settlements that would be acceptable to the Great powers. In this sense, he remained loyal to this alliance with America and Great Britain; he had to in order to succeed in getting anything accomplished. But as far as Wilson's Fourteen Points were concerned, they would be little match against Clemenceau's realistic diplomacy. His policies primarily related to the welfare of France and in this sense they were selfish, unlike the moral principles evolved by President Wilson.

Later in his life, Clemenceau wrote:

Economic war seems to me to be an accurate definition of our armed peace, which is actually only another form of war, though slower in its effects. I do not see that the peace of the strongest, with its treaties—'scraps of paper'—has produced any

---

appreciable degree of security. . . . Is not a good system of defense the highest security?\textsuperscript{16}

Clemenceau was not deluded by a grandiose scheme of world peace; instead, he saw that men were human and were subject to error and had to be treated accordingly. "To what extent," wrote Clemenceau, "can we count on the heroism of an executive body made up of incongruous elements to exercise a superhuman equity in the decisive hour when tragedy or self-interest shall speak louder than sentiment?"\textsuperscript{17} Perhaps this was an excuse for the violations of the Fourteen Points and the noble "sentiments" which Clemenceau and the Allies perpetrated at Paris in their pursuit of traditional political self-interest.

Although the Fourteen Points were accepted by the French and the other Allies in the Pre-Armistice Agreement with Germany as the basis for peace, this was not a guarantee that they would be followed on all occasions by the peace negotiators. It was inherent in the French position to demand for her destroyed lands and economy equitable retribution from Germany. The French Chamber meeting on June 5, 1917, had unanimously declared,

The war imposed on Europe by the aggression of German imperialism, must lead to the liberation of invaded territory, the return of Alsace-Lorraine to the mother country and to the just reparation of damages.\textsuperscript{18}


\textsuperscript{17}Ibid., p. 437.

\textsuperscript{18}Andre Tardieu, \textit{The Truth About the Treaty} (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company Publishers, 1921), p. 82.
It was the question of reparations that led to the wholesale violation of President Wilson's principles. It was this section of the Peace Settlement that Professor Keynes would describe as "Carthaginian" in its treatment of Germany and the problem of indemnity or just reparation.\textsuperscript{19} For Georges Clemenceau, there was only one criterion for justice at Paris. That was whether or not a given proposal would be advantageous for France. If it would be, he promptly accepted it. If it was not, he quite realistically opposed its implementation into the Peace Treaty. It was this fundamental disagreement over principle and purpose that would cause the clash between Wilson's "idealism" and Clemenceau's "realism."\textsuperscript{20} It was these differences as seen even before the actual peace proceedings got under way that laid the foundation for the future clash at Versailles—a clash which would cause many to lament the peace as a failure.


CHAPTER III

IDEALISM VERSUS REALISM

The first two months of the Peace Conference served merely to reveal the wide gulf that existed between the new concept of World order and the old. It was a struggle between American ideals as expressed by President Wilson and French goals advocated by Clemenceau. At many essential points Lloyd George supported the latter.

These early struggles in the first months of the Peace Conference had clearly shown that the President was approaching the settlements with a deadly sincerity. America had proposed a new program for the world, and Wilson was prepared to fight for it with his life. In focusing attention upon the League of Nations, and obtaining the acceptance of the Fourteen Points and the Covenant as the basis of peace, Wilson had quite naturally alarmed the French. To them these ideas weakened their whole program for security in the form of reparations, annexations, and expansion. Lloyd George and Clemenceau in a joint memorandum on Italian settlements reiterated the predominant European viewpoint when they announced, "Surely the victors, if they want it are
entitled to some more solid reward than theoretical map-makers, working in the void, may on abstract principles feel disposed to give them."1 Theirs was the traditional militaristic attitude, "to the victor belongs the spoils."

During the early days of the negotiations, America and Great Britain conceded that large bodies of Allied troops should be left in Europe to protect France until the Peace was formally signed and the League of Nations established. But Clemenceau objected that this was not enough. To him France had to be protected by a military alliance; the Rhine had to be made a strategic frontier; Germany had to be crippled economically. These were difficult objectives.

President Wilson desired a permanent world peace backed by mutual guarantees and based upon sound, ancient moral principles. Quite naturally France thought only of her security. To her this could be achieved through German reparations and the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine. To France safety meant military preponderance to be used against Germany if she again threatened Europe.

In drawing conclusions about the contrasting personalities, Wilson and Clemenceau, and in comparing the French and American objectives, a few points stand out. President Wilson opposed the entire system of European diplomacy--the old order. He was hostile to former methods having as their objective the maintenance of

---
peace by force, in this case a French-led Allied hegemony. His new order, based upon moral principles, upon mutual trust, upon common guarantees, was to be protected by the League of Nations. His famous Fourteen Points had been accepted by the belligerents as a basis for peacemaking. However, European diplomats were not striving for a new moral order such as Wilson envisioned. Wilson's hope that France would be able to overcome her ancient fear of Germany and show her the justice due every sovereign state was impossible in view of France's past.

Clemenceau represented this Old Order—he was a living embodiment of France's political heritage. He did not support the policies of an ambiguous political realism, but advocated national self-interest. For him, national security preceded any vague utopia of international peace and security. To him, later events, especially America's refusal to abandon her policy of isolation and participate in the League of Nations, justified his aims. Wilsonian idealism, first heard by the people of Europe immediately after the German capitulation, had immense popular appeal. Yet they never believed or supposed that these principles would require abandonment of their desire for German monetary reparations. Having suffered from Germany's actions, they were now enjoying the victor's advantage. They were eager to taste the spoils of victory.

In the introduction to Andre Tardieu's *The Truth About the Treaty*, Georges Clemenceau wrote, "Is not the
return to the past the first impulse of countries whose power is founded upon the force of traditions?" This is a statement of the fundamental problem that permeated all the Paris negotiations. The battle between the Old Order and the New Order based upon Wilson's ideals would be fought in the diplomatic arena of Paris, a city charged with excitement.

During the first days of January, 1919, Paris was in a very turbulent state. Every great hotel in the city flew the flag of some foreign nation or its representatives. The less expensive ones were packed with the humbler delegates of every nation, tribe, enclave, and minority on the Eurasian continent. There were Greeks, Macedonians, Serbs, Montenegrins, Croats, Slovenes, Czechs and Slovaks, Transylvanians, Ukrainians, Galicians, Poles, Lithuanians, Estonians, and Latvians. Present also were Arabs from Hedjaz, escorted by the young Colonel Lawrence, Palestinian Arabs and Arabs of the Mesopot, Persians, Kurds, Syrians, Christian and Moslem Lebanese, as well as representatives of Armenia and Caucasian Georgia. There were Jewish Zionists, and contesting factions of Poles. Luxemburg and Lichtenstein both had their missions. Even the Swedes came demanding the Aaland Islands, while a Danish mission desired Schleswig-Holstein. Each national

---


group wanted something at the expense of its neighbors, a fact that President Wilson seemed to ignore in his belief in the "self-determination" of nations.

Amidst this motley array of representatives, both official and unofficial, hovered all sorts of adventurers. Some peddled oil concessions or manganese mines; others were pretenders to various thrones; still others were cranks with plans in their satchels for earthly Utopias. Secret agents, art dealers, rug salesmen, and entertainers of all kinds stalked the boulevards of Paris or packed the nightclubs to the last tables. All these factors influenced the peacemakers. Some reacted against the conglomeration of ideas and people by retreating to the privacy of their rooms, but for others, Paris offered excitement and new life. The city was certainly a chaotic place in which to frame a "lasting" peace.

In this atmosphere of confusion, of rising hopes, of greedy desires, of legitimate demands, the peacemakers found themselves in the difficult position of trying to solve permanently the problems left by the war. Although this task was quite difficult, they tried, as men do after a long war, to formulate a durable peace. But in light of all the different desires, backgrounds, and political philosophies of the representatives, mistakes were inevitable. John Foster Dulles, a member of the American reparations staff, said in reference to some of the mistakes made at Paris, "There are usually blindness and inadequate perception when emotion becomes the directive
of human action."4 Thus, while Andre Tardieu was able to assert that France demanded only one thing, to prevent the left bank of the Rhine from again becoming a base for German aggression, many interpreted his appraisal of French objectives as indicative of a general French desire for territory.5

The President of the United States had recently quarreled with his Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, over the Plans for the League of Nations. "A very unsatisfactory situation," wrote Lansing, "the President apparently resents anybody offering suggestions or doing anything in the way of drafting a treaty for a League of Nations except himself. . . . He said he did not want lawyers to engage in that."6 In his diary Lansing lamented Wilson's plans. "Auchincloss (Colonel House's son-in-law, a member of the American peace corps) has shown me the President's draft. It is most inartistically drawn and I believe will be riddled in its present form."7

Although a decision was made to include the League of Nations in the Peace Conference discussions, on other matters, the gulf between the Americans and the French quickly became apparent. Georges Clemenceau refused to

---


5 Tardieu, op. cit., p. 163.


7 Ibid., p. 282.
yield whenever there was a hint that by voting a certain way French security would be damaged. The French were adamant in their demands to keep France strategically safe from the threat of a possible German invasion. Harold Nicolson, a British diplomat at Paris, admitted that, with the conference threatened by possible dissolution, Wilson was faced with a dilemma. He would not accede to Clemenceau's demands, because he felt that to accept peace on such a basis would be a repudiation of American principles agreed upon at the armistice and based on his Fourteen Points. On the other hand, Clemenceau refused to accept the President's program of security through guarantees. Wilson's whole attitude, his state of mind, was opposed to that of Clemenceau; there was no common ground for the construction of a peace as Wilson envisioned it. One side, clearly illustrated by the radical militaristic demands of Marshal Foch, believed that peace must rest upon military force. The other advocated a peace built upon moral sanctions, common guarantees, and a permanent League of Nations.

For a time President Wilson sought to convince Clemenceau that his demands were impractical and that they would never secure for France what she really wanted. Wilson thought that there were more just and realistic ways for securing France's goals than by the establishment of armed security. But even though the President

---

could occasionally touch Clemenceau's emotions, he failed to make him yield. "A kind of feminine mind" was Wilson's characterization of his difficult opponent.  

Wilson was clearly upset when public opinion reacted against his program. This was nowhere more apparent than in Paris. His patience broke down completely when a leading article, considered by him to be personally offensive, appeared in the newspaper Figaro. This brief article read:

President Wilson has lightly assumed a responsibility such as few men have ever borne. Success in his idealistic efforts will undoubtedly place him among the greatest characters of history. But let us admit frankly that if he should fail, he would plunge the world into a chaos of which Russian Bolshevism is but the feeble image; and his responsibility before the conscience of the world would be heavier than any simple mortal could support.

Although Wilson had previously been friendly to reasonable freedom of the press, he felt that this was going too far. Wilson suspected that the article, signed by "Capus," had been written by Clemenceau. The President sent a message to Ray Stannard Baker, his press secretary, instructing him to release the story that if the propaganda against the assembled governments was not restrained immediately, he would consider moving the entire conference to a neutral city. Colonel House remarked in his

---

9Baker, op. cit., II, 35. From the author's diary of March 27.

diary, "To my mind it was a stupid blunder." Although House refused to allow newspapers to print any of the President's threat, he succeeded in temporarily pacifying the French press.

The public was getting impatient. It was beginning to wonder at the apparent procrastination in the conference, for as yet there was no formal acceptance of the League of Nations. Some felt that the President should issue a public statement to give people at least some explanation for the delay, indicating therein that it was not due to the Americans or their desire for a League of Nations.

Clemenceau would not give up his demands for French security, in particular, the protection of the Rhine frontier. Persistent French desire for German payment of "war costs" and numerous other problems continued. These fostered speculation that the Peace Conference might actually collapse—and if it did, what chaos would follow?

When Wilson still insisted on the Pre-Armistice Agreement as a basis for negotiations, Clemenceau even threatened to resign. The "Tiger" was under great pressure from the Poincare-Foch group, who were demanding a complete "Carthaginian" peace, based upon the most blatant militarism. Wilson's program would be in serious trouble if Clemenceau resigned and his opponents succeeded him. President Wilson once despairingly remarked, "We spent an

---

11John Dos Passos, op. cit., p. 467.
hour reasoning with Clemenceau, getting him around to an agreement, and when we go back to the original question Clemenceau stands just where he did at the beginning."

Numerous secret treaties, awaiting action before any settlements could be reached, caused much of the delay. On April 2, 1917, just before the American declaration of war, Wilson had said:

We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them.13

This was indeed a contrast to the diplomatic tangles, resulting from Allied diplomacy in its conduct of the war. Nicolson admitted that earlier commitments, in the form of secret treaties, played a major role in the settlement of almost every important controversy.

It was difficult for American negotiators to place these treaties in proper perspective, since the United States apparently had little or at least very vague knowledge of their existence or of their terms. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, called after the formal Peace Conference in order to investigate the problems that had been encountered at Paris, questioned Secretary of State Robert Lansing on August 5, 1919. The following bit of testimony indicates the United States' lack of knowledge


13Woodrow Wilson, Speeches and Documents (Chicago: Stanton and Van Vliet Co., 1918), p. 32.
about the secret treaties.

Senator Johnson of California: Were you familiar with the treaties that had been made after the commencement of the war concerning the disposition of territory by the different belligerents?

Secretary Lansing: I was more familiar with the London agreement that affected the Italian boundaries, than any other.

Senator Johnson: Were you familiar with any other agreements between---

Secretary Lansing: No.

Senator Johnson: Did you know that any such existed?

Secretary Lansing: No.

Senator Johnson: You did not know whether there were any treaties made during the war or not?

Secretary Lansing: No; because I never paid any attention to that. 14

Thus, the United States was at a grave disadvantage when entering the initial discussions. Being uncertain of the European basis for negotiations, misunderstandings and quarrels were inevitable. An illustration of the mentality with which the Allies approached the disposition of Germany's former colonies demonstrates the importance of these "a priori" agreements. The Japanese demanded the Shantung concession in China as well as the German islands north of the Equator in the Pacific, while the British were to get all the former German islands south of the Equator. This treaty was not published, but it was known to the Council of Four at Paris. This secret agreement was concluded on March 11, 1917, more than two

months after the Allies in replying to President Wilson about the peace terms had declared themselves in favor of self-determination.

On November 26, 1918, Winston Churchill said that the League of Nations was no substitute for the supremacy of the British fleet.\textsuperscript{15} While a month later, December 29, 1918, Clemenceau's cynicism about the League of Nations received unanimous approval from the French Chamber of Deputies which was primarily concerned about French security rather than an international governing body.

It was some time before Colonel House was able to approach Clemenceau directly, and he spent most of the first week of January, 1919, in trying to get the Allies to accept the Pre-Armistice Agreement as the sole basis for reparation demands against Germany. He reported on January 6 that there must be a "show-down" soon, since he was facing heavy Allied demands for indemnity against Germany. "I am sure the devil will have to pay," said House, illustrating his feeling that these monetary claims were excessive.\textsuperscript{16}

Up to this time Colonel House had been President Wilson's personal agent in Europe. He was the official and personal guardian of Wilson's views, their interpreter to the Allies. He had already established relations with Clemenceau, which would become even closer when Wilson

\textsuperscript{15}Baker, \textit{op. cit.}, II, 81.

returned to the United States in mid-February. The problem with being entrusted with so much responsibility was that House might sacrifice some of Wilson's cherished principles in order to facilitate successful negotiation. But Colonel House was able to obtain Clemenceau's support for the President's program of the League of Nations. On January 7, 1919, House wrote:

Clemenceau and the President both sent word that they would call me at five. The President came first to my reception room and met the other Commissioners. We had hardly begun our conversation before the Prime Minister arrived. I asked the President to excuse me and took Clemenceau into another room, where we had one of our heart-to-heart talks. I convinced him, I think, for the first time that a League of Nations was for the best interests of France. . . .

House then gathered enough courage to ask Clemenceau to use his influence to check certain French demands, many by radicals, advocating such proposals as American cancellation of war debts and French control over the left bank of the Rhine. House felt that such claims were injuring France in the eyes of Americans. He asked Clemenceau's pardon for bringing "up the internal affairs of France." Clemenceau pardoned him, saying, "I think of you as a brother and I want you to tell me everything that is in your mind, and we will work together just as if we were parts of the same Government." 18

Yet it was quite apparent that the French program was certain to challenge Wilson's ideas on almost every

17 Ibid., IV, 270.
18 Ibid., IV, 271.
fundamental point; an imposed peace as against a negotiated one on the basis of agreed terms; a permanent military grand alliance as against the voluntary cooperation of all powers, victors as well as vanquished, in a permanent League of Nations; dismemberment of Germany in contrast to the principle of "self-determination"; the imposition of large indemnities in comparison to a system of just reparations. On one occasion Clemenceau claimed territory that had been French one hundred years before. President Wilson objected: "That was a hundred years ago--a hundred years is a very long time." To which Clemenceau rejoined, "Yes, a very long time in the history of the United States." 19

But Wilson had the satisfaction and the advantage that his program had been accepted as the basis for the peace settlement. Both he and Lloyd George had been opposed to General Foch's plan to incorporate the left bank of the Rhine into France. Even Clemenceau opposed these radical demands. But the old "Tiger" refused to make any settlements which would endanger France or prevent her from sharing in the "spoils" of victory.

Clemenceau had organized his peace delegation as a general staff with himself as chief of staff. He disposed his delegation so that he could be informed of the status of the entire negotiations. Ray Stannard Baker said of the French that "no other nation approached them

19 Ibid., IV, 293.
in diplomatic preparedness or singleness of purpose."\textsuperscript{20}

Wilson himself gave Clemenceau the opportunity to take full advantage of his superior diplomatic plan and organization. The League of Nations was the center of the entire Wilsonian program. The French, as well as the other Allies, had approved it in principle when they had accepted the Fourteen Points. On January 25, 1919, the Allies had agreed to incorporate a Covenant of the League into the peace treaties. For Wilson this was a tremendously happy occasion. On February 14, 1919, Edith Wilson, the President's wife, was admitted to the reading of the principles by Clemenceau; there were supposed to be no women present. In her memoirs she said,

\begin{quote}
It was a great moment in history and as he stood there, slender, calm and powerful in his argument, I seemed to see the people of all depressed countries, men and women, crowding around and waiting upon his words.\textsuperscript{21}
\end{quote}

The problem was that there was no ready-made, clearly defined covenant to be adopted. The precise structure of the President's document had to be a matter of long negotiation, as was the case with any other section of the Treaty. Lansing and Wilson had already quarreled on this issue. One of the first acts of the Peace Conference was to organize a Commission on the League of Nations to debate its structure and functions. At its very first session on February 3, 1919, the French members,

\textsuperscript{20}Baker, op. cit., I, 253.

Bourgeois and Larnaude, appeared with a complete French constitution for the League. Thus, it was obvious that there was going to be much long and heated discussion before anything even resembling a Wilsonian peace evolved. In this instance, it is easy to visualize the possibility that some of the President's principles would be modified or even completely violated as settlements were reached.

Not one of Wilson's principles had been more precisely defined than that determining what Germany must pay the Allies; not one was more clearly violated by the Paris settlements. Wilson had said that there were to be no "punitive damages" against Germany, but that she must pay for the damage done to property and civilians in the area she had occupied. The Allies, President Wilson, and Germany had accepted this point. Thus, the traditional right of extracting an "indemnity" from the defeated foe was seemingly retracted.

Unfortunately, the Allies desired their "pound of flesh." They felt that the Germans should be made to pay the cost of the entire war. John Foster Dulles, in the middle of the reparation fight at Paris, concluded:

It is my opinion that both the British and French reparation delegates were actuated by an honest desire to collect from Germany, although the French Government may have felt that an overestimate of the economic and financial possibilities would not involve serious consequences for France, since there would then be compensating political advantages.22

---

22Burnett, op. cit., I, vi.
More specifically, the French delegation advocated what they called "integral reparation," or full war costs. The French Finance Minister, Klotz, had inserted an apparently harmless phrase into the Armistice terms of November 2, 1918, to contradict the Pre-Armistice Agreement on Reparations and to set the basis for the later French claim of full war costs. Clemenceau demanded that the Armistice mention "Reparation for Damages," and Klotz motioned that the phrase be added to Article 19 of the Armistice Convention, dealing with interim financial demands upon Germany. This read: "With the reservation that any subsequent concessions and claims by the Allies and the United States remain unaffected, the following financial conditions are imposed."\(^23\) Colonel House, feeling that the Pre-Armistice agreement and not the terms of the Armistice Convention would dictate the final peace terms, did not object to Klotz' proposal.

On February 11, Vance McCormick reported to the American Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, about the difficulties the American delegates were encountering with the commission on reparations. Requesting instructions, he said he favored a strong fight on the basis of the President's principles as "the first real test in the application of the accepted armistice terms."\(^24\)


\(^24\) Birdsay, p. 241.
Lansing thought that adherence to the Fourteen Points was certainly the best course, since Germany had accepted them, but he felt that if the American views were too strongly advocated France and England might be displeased. He suggested that the American representatives merely present their own claims, giving the interpretation upon which they were based and "let the different nations fight out the division between themselves."  

During the following week, Dulles continued his firm stand on the Pre-Armistice Agreement. On February 18, the Commissioners agreed that a full report should be made to President Wilson by cable, so that they would have his instructions before his return to Paris from America on March 14, 1919. Wilson dictated:  

I feel that we are bound in honor to decline to agree to the inclusion of war costs in the reparation demanded. The time to think of this was before the conditions of peace were communicated to the enemy originally. We should dissent and dissent publicly, if necessary, not on the ground of the intrinsic injustice of it but on the ground that it is clearly inconsistent with what we deliberately led the enemy to expect and cannot now honorably alter simply because we have the power.  

Colonel House, agreeing with the President, cabled him that if the Allies still insisted on war costs, the American delegates should withdraw from any arrangement which violated the Pre-Armistice Agreement. He felt that such action would cause the Allies to "reconsider their position."  

---

25 Ibid.  
26 Seymour, op. cit., IV, 343.  
27 Ibid., IV, p. 349.
However, as the debate over the reparations or "indemnities" continued, both Lloyd George and Clemenceau moved toward acceptance of the term "reparation." The French had already shown a willingness to accept the League of Nations, feeling that it would be a permanent grand alliance against Germany. Thus, while Dulles had the satisfaction of obtaining an Allied agreement to the term "reparation," the Allies were very definitely in favor of extracting all war costs from the defeated Germans.

The American delegates wished to establish a fixed reparation sum which Germany could afford to pay. This would be written into the treaty to represent Germany's reparation debt. One subcommittee had the task of evaluating civilian damages to be paid by Germany in accordance with the Pre-Armistice Agreement. Another tried to establish a reasonable estimate of Germany's financial capacity to meet the assessed damages.

Throughout the month of March, the Americans encountered the same major difficulty. Both Lloyd George and Clemenceau were committed to public opinion in their respective countries, and in each case huge sums were demanded to pay for the entire cost of the war. French figures ran as high as $200,000,000,000, while the British thought $120,000,000,000 a more likely sum. The American estimate, quite modest when compared to the Allied demands, was compromised at $30,000,000,000.
Throughout the long deliberations of the Reparations Commission, one point was definitely made clear. Clemenceau flatly refused to grant the Commission the power of fixing Germany's capacity for payment. He demanded that the Commission add the total figures of German obligations under the various categories of claims and then collect the entire bill. He agreed that the Commission should attempt to collect these sums in thirty years, but if that were found to be impossible, the Commission would have the right to extend the time limit for payment beyond thirty years. Klotz suggested that Germany be required to pay the total, even if it took fifty years. In determining the actual time required for payment, the French felt the Reparations Commission might consider German capacity to pay, but not otherwise. Only the Allied Governments would have the right to reduce the amount of German reparations.²⁸

Colonel House remarked, quite simply, "It seems to me that Mr. Clemenceau's conclusion is very close to the American proposal."²⁹ But this was radically different from what the Americans had been proposing. Norman Davis, an American Advisor, hurriedly said:

This is a complete departure from the principles upon which we have been working for three months. We have been working on the theory that Germany must pay all that she can for thirty years or thirty-five at most. Beyond this date the interest charges are so heavy that payment of principle becomes impossible.

²⁹Seymour, op. cit., IV, p. 354.
With respect to capacity, we have made studies and those of the American delegation are between twenty-five and thirty-five billion dollars. These figures were reached without consideration of the amount due. Finally we decided that it was better not to attempt to fix any figure, but in working on this new basis we tend to abandon our principle that Germany should pay measured by her capacity. 30

Norman Davis's protest had come too late to save the American program deserted by Colonel House. Lloyd George came to the support of his French allies and the Council of Four ordered the experts committee to form a new draft of the reparations sections which would carry with it the French interpretation of the Reparations Commission. Interestingly enough, Klotz's draft of these articles was finally incorporated into the peace settlement. 31

In this way the American delegation accepted a reparations settlement that was a clear violation of the Pre-Armistice Agreement. The "adoption" of the French principles made the earlier American victory over "war costs" meaningless. The new settlement ignored any considerations of capacity to pay, thus making possible the extraction of exorbitant and unjust amounts of money from Germany. The American delegation objected, but Clemenceau threatened, "In no case will I agree to allow either the Treaty or the Commission to fix an amount below what is due us." 32 Colonel House approved the new draft in the

31 Ibid., I, Document 239, 837-838.
32 Baker, op. cit., II, 381.
session of April 7, 1919.

During this time the President was confined to his sickbed, leaving the leadership of the American delegation in the hands of Colonel House. Rumors circulated about the President's displeasure with what House had done in his absence. Perhaps this event precipitated the break between House and Wilson which came later on in the Conference. All this time Wilson was growing exceedingly impatient with Allied attempts to depart from what he considered the fundamental principles upon which peace-making had been contracted with Germany. These principles were his Fourteen Points. When Wilson noticed vacillations in British policy regarding the changing of personnel on the financial commissions, he remarked:

Well, I don't want to seem to be unreasonable, but my feeling is this: that we ought not, with the object of getting it signed make changes in the treaty, if we think it embodies what we were contending for; that the time to consider all these questions was when we were writing the treaty, and it makes me a little tired for people to come and say now that they are afraid the Germans won't sign, and their fear is based upon things that they insisted upon at the time of the writing of the treaty; that makes me very sick.\(^\text{33}\)

It appeared to Wilson that there was useless debate over principles which should have already been decided upon. Harold Nicolson, the British expert, felt that this stubborn adherence to principle was the downfall of the President. "The extinction of my worship of the President occurred," wrote Nicolson, "when Wilson informed

\(^{33}\text{Ibid.}\)
his staff that these endeavors (Lloyd George's personnel modifications) had 'left him tired.' I was appalled by this revelation."\textsuperscript{34}

Nonetheless, the Americans felt that their program had been betrayed by this decision on reparations. The intrigue involved serves as a fitting example of conflict between Wilsonian principles and the political aims and aspirations of the European Allies, particularly as seen in the policies of Georges Clemenceau.

President Wilson was still unwilling to accept any sort of compromise when his beloved set of principles was threatened. The records of the peace negotiations show the actual compromises made by Colonel House. That they invoked the censure of Wilson, is also known. After his return to Europe and immediately prior to the resumption of his role as chief American delegate at Paris, the President met with House on March 14, 1919, to discuss those compromises of principle, occurring during this leave in America. Edith Wilson described the scene as one of personal annihilation for the President. She noticed that after House left, the President stood very still, "he seemed to have aged ten years, and his jaw was set in a way it had when he was making a superhuman effort to control himself."\textsuperscript{35} He said that House had given away all that he had won before he left Paris in

\textsuperscript{34}Nicolson, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 209-210.

\textsuperscript{35}Edith Wilson, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 274.
mid-February. "House has compromised on every side, and so I have to start all over again, and this time it will be harder." 36

Just before the President's second departure for home on June 28, Colonel House spoke to him for the last time. The Colonel's record shows that there was ample evidence of the feud between them:

My last conversation with the president yesterday was not reassuring. I urged him to meet the Senate in a conciliatory spirit; if he treated them with the same consideration he had used with his foreign colleagues here, all would be well. In reply he said, 'House, I have found one can never get anything in this life without fighting for it.' I combated this, and reminded him that Anglo-Saxon civilization was built upon compromise. . . . 37

Thus the President fought on, determined to see his dream, the League of Nations, become a permanent guarantee against war and aggression. But it was too late to struggle. The peace settlements concerning reparations were largely settled and compromise on principles was becoming accepted diplomatic procedure in order to speed the negotiatory processes. When the Allies, prior to Wilson's departure, presented the Treaty of Versailles to the German representatives on May 7, they left little room for further argument or definition on important matters. While the Germans accepted the Peace as being based on the President's Fourteen Points, there had been a radical departure from their original interpretation.

36Ibid.
37Seymour, op. cit., IV, 487.
especially concerning reparations.

Six months had elapsed since the close of the war. For four of these months the representatives of the Allied powers had been struggling desperately to get the peace treaty ready. Most of the difficulties at Paris had arisen not so much out of differences of opinion over the severity of the peace terms to be imposed upon the defeated Germany, but out of deep-seated and bitter disagreements among the Allies themselves. These arguments constituted the debate over the adherence to Wilsonian idealism or to the political realism of Georges Clemenceau.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

In the struggle to establish an effective peace settlement, an effort had to be made to arrive at a common understanding among those nations that were Allies. While the Fourteen Points were accepted almost in their entirety by the Allies and defeated Germany, their use as a definite basis of peace proved difficult. The long and heated debates over the questions of territorial claims, indemnities and reparations, and the League of Nations emphasized the disunity between the United States and her European Allies from the very beginning of the Peace Negotiations. It was in these discussions that the Fourteen Points, the Wilsonian principles, were violated by the peacemakers.

The French viewpoint, as characterized by Georges Clemenceau, was typical of the European conception of realpolitik. France was concerned primarily with establishing security for her people and with the economic emasculation of Germany. She had suffered a great deal from the war and felt justified in demanding the payment of full war costs from Germany. The conditions of peace had granted the French the right of imposing harsh terms
upon Germany, and she had done so.\footnote{1}

In the clash between the traditional interests of France and the idealism of President Wilson, there existed the germinal seeds of conflict. Here was a clash between political realism and political idealism. It was a debate between the selfish desires of a national state as opposed to a system of moral guarantees for the safeguarding of international peace. A solution would have been possible had the President compromised, rather than doggedly adhering to a set of easily misinterpreted principles.

Any peace settlement evolving from the confused atmosphere of Paris could not be expected to be perfect, but it should have been "workable."\footnote{2} Germany did not hesitate in complaining over the lack of clarity surrounding many of the Treaty's sections. Leonard von Muralt, writing his appraisal of the consequences of the Versailles settlement in 1947, spoke for the German cause. He wrote:

\footnote{1}{Jacques Bainville, Les Consequences Politiques De La Paix (Paris: Nouvelle Libraire Nationale, 1920), pp. 65-85. In the chapter entitled "Soixante Millions D'Allemands Debiteurs De Quarante Millions De Francais," Bainville wrote that France was justified in imposing harsh peace terms on Germany since it is inevitable in the history of the last generations. France could do nothing else to end this dog and cat relationship except to prevent its recurrence by establishing strict safeguards. "La France et l'Allemagne restent condamnees a l'antagonisme. Ce n'est pas une question morale."--pp. 84-85.}

\footnote{2}{As used here, "workable" refers to a Peace Settlement that should have been able to be implemented by Germany without endangering her post-war economic and political position.}
In our opinion the peace could have been more determined, sharper, harder, but above all more definite, if only it had solved the inescapable mission of every peace treaty: namely, the reintegration of the defeated into a comprehensive system of European powers.\(^3\)

Germany was forced to accept peace terms incompatible with the Fourteen Points, although they were supposedly based on them. Whether or not this was justifiable from a moral standpoint is questionable. But that Wilson's principles were sacrificed for the sake of self-interest and expediency cannot be ignored.

Perhaps this sacrifice of principle was inevitable at the Conference table, where the representatives were pressured by public opinion and the nationalist demands of their own countries. The turmoil caused by the war certainly was not subsiding while the peacemakers quarreled over aims and objectives. Germany had been left in a chaotic state, already shortages of food were causing stress and strain among the German people. It was in this state of confusion, filled with dreams and age-old aspirations, hatreds and prejudices, that Wilson's plans for a world order based on the League of Nations had already begun to crumble.

Under such conditions as existed at Paris, it was only natural and reasonable to expect that political pressures upon representatives by national traditions and public opinion would affect their decisions. In all

\(^3\)Leonard von Muralt, From Versailles to Potsdam (Hinsdale: Henry Regnery Company, 1948), p. 32.
political affairs compromise is necessary if there are to be definite settlements. What differed at Paris was the unwillingness of the representatives to sacrifice their own demands in favor of the obscure Wilsonian ideal of the general welfare.

In analyzing the copious amounts of material available on the Versailles Peace Settlement, one is shocked by the relatively few sources which are not blatantly prejudiced in one way or another. Harold Nicolson, the British diplomat and critic, attempted to give a critical analysis of the conflict of principles at Versailles, but he concluded by showing that he lost faith in President Wilson because of his unwillingness to compromise. Nicolson seemed to react against the Wilsonian vision of peace based on moral principle and to have affirmed his faith in the proponents of the status quo, the maintenance of the European balance of power.

The issue of political realism at Paris must be viewed from the vantage point of immediacy as against the long-range solution. Since political necessity demanded compromise, the American realists, led by Colonel House, were pressured into abandoning a strict adherence to the Fourteen Points. Colonel House no doubt felt that if the diplomatic air was cleared by American compromise, that at least the League of Nations would survive the diplomatic

---

bickerings. Towards the end of the Conference, there seemed to be little thought among the members of the American delegation except to make peace and then start the League of Nations. Perhaps they felt that American principles could be realized through its administrative councils when and if the United States entered the League.

Perhaps the most general criticism President Wilson encountered in the immediate post-war period was his decision to attend the Peace Conference in person. Some critics felt that the President could have been more influential by remaining in Washington rather than by personally entering the Paris political arena. Had he remained in Washington, Wilson could have been somewhat detached from the actual negotiations and still have retained his influence by exercising his executive power of ultimate decision. But there is the possibility that had he remained in Washington, there probably would have been an even greater sacrifice of his principles.

The Fourteen Points served as the diplomatic base from which the United States conducted her peace mission. The President did as much as he possibly could to prevent their violation and they were generally followed in the development of diplomatic schemes. It was during his absence from the Conference from mid-February until mid-March that Colonel House made the compromise on reparations.

---

5 Both Robert Lansing, the American Secretary of State and Colonel House had shown displeasure with the President's decision to attend the Paris Peace Conference. Lansing did so publicly and was censured by Wilson for his imprudence.
It was this concession of Wilsonian principle that led to the eventual break between Wilson and Colonel House. But even if President Wilson had remained in Paris, he would not have been able to adhere any closer to this reparation principle than House had done without the risk of causing a general breakdown in the Conference proceedings. The adamant demands of the French and the other Allies for indemnities necessitated fast action and compromise.

Colonel House later admitted that while the financial sections of the Treaty of Versailles were not the most equitable terms possible, they could be readjusted in the future under Article 19 of the peace terms. "It is well," he wrote, "that the economic and financial clauses of the Treaty are more or less temporary and not permanent, as are the clauses covering boundaries and racial determination."\(^6\)

In considering the French record, one is impressed by their singleness of purpose, their constant desire to protect France against further German threats. It was their plan to incapacitate Germany both militarily and economically and in this way to prevent any recurrence of 1914. Clemenceau was an ideal person to fight for these French objectives. He was uncompromising when the issue was one of vital concern for the future of French security or war indemnities.

---

The French had been the first nation to work out a program for a coming Peace Conference. Although this program was ignored by President Wilson and Robert Lansing, it indicated the thoroughness with which France would approach the peace deliberations. She would not sacrifice anything that would diminish her role as a victorious nation nor anything that might imply future harm for her people.

In contrasting Wilson and Clemenceau, it is not wise merely to emphasize their obvious differences or to make ambiguous allusions to their qualities of realism or idealism. It is best to view them as representatives of two great nations, each with unique fears and desires and different cultural backgrounds. Woodrow Wilson was a professor and a politician; he was imbued with respect for principles of common morality and with a hatred of war. He believed that his Fourteen Points had to be followed by the assembled nations at Versailles if there was to be a new world order, based on morality, for which America had been fighting. Georges Clemenceau was a veteran of many long and hard-fought political battles. His nickname, "The Tiger," was apropos for his appearance and his ruthless habit of destroying his political enemies. As a Doctor of Medicine, he knew that the best way to cure a

---

The presentation of the French plan for an upcoming Peace Conference was made by M. Jusserand, the French ambassador to the United States, during November, 1918. No reply was made by the American officials, except for a note from Wilson thanking Jusserand for the friendly greetings from Clemenceau. See Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson--Life*
disease was to attack its source. This surgical method would form the basis for the French attack against Germany's military and economic power.

Thus, when the "Professor" met the "Tiger," a clash of interest and personality was inevitable. And Wilson was the loser. The President undoubtedly suffered at Paris, both mentally and physically, as many of his principles were destroyed or radically modified. But to assume that his entire program was destroyed or perverted by contact with the "realistic" policies of Clemenceau is absolutely false. The League of Nations eventually became a reality, although the predominant tone of isolationism in America prevented Wilson's own country from becoming a member.

The Treaty of Versailles was presented to Germany after only five months' deliberation by the Allied and Associated Governments. Expediency and compromise had become the bywords of the peacemakers in the closing months of the deliberations, which was necessary under such trying conditions. Even though the Treaty had its shortcomings, especially with regard to its abandonment of Wilsonian doctrines, it had been executed in the most feasible way possible under the circumstances.

Retrospective criticism is always easy, especially for those who attempt to appraise the Versailles settlements without a sound knowledge of the factual situations

that existed. When confronted by the numerous personal accounts of "what really happened at Paris," it is evident that while the facts cannot be doubted, there are many possible explanations of "why" a given event occurred. This thesis has tried to demonstrate how President Wilson's principles, as embodied in the Fourteen Points, were violated when they came in contact with the political strategy of Georges Clemenceau and his cohorts. It was written neither to deify Wilson nor to condemn Clemenceau, but rather to present a picture of those awkward events both before and during the Paris Peace Conference that foredoomed Wilsonianism to failure.
APPENDIX I

President Wilson's address to Congress, stating the war aims and peace terms of the United States. (Delivered in Joint Session, January 8, 1916)

Gentlemen of the Congress:

... It will be our wish and purpose that the processes of peace, when they are begun, shall be absolutely open and that they will involve and permit henceforth no secret understandings of any kind. The day of conquest and aggrandizement is gone by; so is also the day of secret covenants entered into in the interest of particular governments and likely at some unlooked-for moment to upset the peace of the world. It is this happy fact, now clear to the view of every public man whose thoughts do not still linger in an age that is dead and gone, which makes it possible for every nation whose purposes are consistent with justice and the peace of the world to avow now or at any other time the objects it has in view.

We entered this war because violations of right had occurred which touched us to the quick and made the life of our own people impossible unless they were corrected and the world secure once for all against their recurrence.

What we demand in this war, therefore, is nothing peculiar to ourselves. It is that the world be made fit and safe to live in; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace-loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace-loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair dealing by the other peoples of the world as against force and selfish aggression.

All the peoples of the world are in effect partners in this interest, and for our own part we see very clearly that unless justice be done to others it will not be done to us. The program of the world's peace,

\[1\text{The Messages and Papers of Woodrow Wilson (New York: The Review of Reviews Corporation, 1924), I, 464-472.}\]
therefore, is our program; and that program, the only possible program, as we see it, is this:

1. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.

2. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.

3. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.

4. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest points consistent with domestic safety.

5. A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.

6. The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest cooperation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy and assure her of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and, more than a welcome, assistance also of every kind that she may need and may herself desire. The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy.

7. Belgium, the whole world will agree, must be evacuated and restored, without any attempt to limit the sovereignty which she enjoys in common with all other free nations. No other single act will serve as this will serve to restore confidence among the nations in the laws which they have themselves set and determined for the government of their relations with one another. Without this healing act the whole structure and validity of international law is forever impaired.
8. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted, in order that peace may once more be made secure in the interest of all.

9. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.

10. The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development.

11. Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated; occupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea; and the relations of the several Balkan states to one another determined by friendly counsel along historically established lines of allegiance and nationality; and international guarantees of the political and economic independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan states should be entered into.

12. The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees.

13. An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant.

14. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.

In regard to these essential rectifications of wrong and assertions of right we feel ourselves to be intimate partners of all the governments and peoples associated together against the imperialists. We cannot be separated in interest or divided in purpose. We stand together until the end.
We have spoken now, surely, in terms too concrete to admit of any further doubt or question. An evident principle runs through the whole program I have outlined. It is the principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities, and their right to live on equal terms of liberty and safety with one another, whether they be strong or weak.

Unless this principle be made its foundation no part of the structure of international justice can stand. The people of the United States could act upon no other principle; and to the vindication of this principle they are ready to devote their lives, their honor, and everything that they possess. The moral climax of this, the culminating and final war for human liberty, has come, and they are ready to put their own strength, their own highest purpose, their own integrity and devotion to the test.
APPENDIX II

Principles declared by President Wilson in his address of February 11, 1918.

The principles to be applied are these:

First, that each part of the final settlement must be based upon the essential justice of that particular case and upon such adjustments as are most likely to bring a peace that will be permanent;

Second, that peoples and provinces are not to be bartered about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were mere chattels and pawns in a game, even the great game, now forever discredited, of the balance of power; but that

Third, every territorial settlement involved in this war must be made in the interest and for the benefit of the populations concerned, and not as a part of any mere adjustment or compromise of claims amongst rival states; and

Fourth, that all well defined national aspirations shall be accorded the utmost satisfaction that can be accorded them without introducing new or perpetuating old elements of discord and antagonism that would be likely in time to break the peace of Europe and consequently of the world.

---

APPENDIX III

Excerpt from President Wilson's Independence Day speech of 1914. Here the President spoke of his vision of America as a world leader.

My dream is that as the years go by and the world knows more and more of America it will turn to us for those moral inspirations which lie at the basis of all freedom; that the world will never fear America unless it feels that it is engaged in some enterprise which is inconsistent with the rights of humanity; and that America will come into the full light of the day when all shall know that she puts human rights above all other rights, and that her flag is the flag not only of America, but of humanity. What other great people has devoted itself to this exalted ideal?

APPENDIX IV

Senator Henry Cabot Lodge's speech of August 23, 1918, giving his views of America's war aims and peace objectives:

We are fighting and our allies are fighting with us for security; for independence; for the right of nations, great and small, to govern themselves in their own way; for organized races and peoples to have the opportunity to govern themselves in independent states; for the sanctity and observance of treaties; for the general disarmament of nations. How are these things to be secured? The details are really far more important than the general propositions, in which we all agree. Broadly speaking, there is only one way to obtain this security of nations, this safety of democracy, this preservation of freedom and civilization, and that is by reducing Germany to a condition where by no possibility can she precipitate another war for universal conquest, with all its attendant horrors, upon an unoffending world. How is this to be done? I see only one way in which it can be done, and I will enumerate the results, the hard facts, the essential conditions to which we must attain.

... Alsace and Lorraine must be returned to France--unconditionally returned--not merely because sentiment and eternal justice demand it, but because iron and coal must be forever taken from Germany.

... There must be compensation exacted for the tribute money wrung from helpless towns and cities under the German lash.

... When we talk about a complete and righteous peace, let it be known to all the world that this is what we mean.

... Our part and our business is to put Germany in a position where she can do no more harm in the future to the rest of the world. Unless we can achieve this we have fought in vain. Congress and the President had no right to declare war unless they meant to do precisely the same thing.

1U. S., Congressional Record, 54th Cong., 2d Sess., 1918, LVI, Part 9, 9393-94.
The results which we have, and which I have ventured to outline, can never be obtained by a negotiated peace. It can not be a peace which rests on signed treaties alone, for no treaty is worth the paper it is written on when made with Germany, whom no agreement binds, to whom no signature has meaning, and whose pledges are as false as dicers' oaths. It must be a dictated peace, and we and our allies must dictate it. The victory bringing such a peace must be won inside, not outside, the German frontier.

In no other way can we justify the sacrifices we are making. We must be above all propositions of a bargained peace, all suggestions of negotiations; deaf to every voice which would divert us from the path; deaf alike to the whimper of the pacifist and to the wheedling or truculent appeal of the helpers of Germany.
APPENDIX V

Members of the Inquiry which later became the Territorial Section of the Peace Conference.

It was composed of many eminent members:

**Director:** Dr. S. E. Mezes; College of the City of New York.

**Chief Territorial Specialist:** Dr. Isaiah Bowman; The American Geographical Society.

**Regional Specialists:**

For the northwestern frontiers: Dr. Charles H. Haskins; Harvard University.

For Poland and Russia: Dr. R. H. Lord; Harvard University.

For Austria-Hungary: Dr. Charles Seymour; Yale University.

For Italian boundaries: Dr. W. E. Lunt; Haverford College.

For the Balkans: Dr. Clive Day; Yale University.

For Western Asia: Dr. W. L. Westermann; University of Wisconsin.

For the Far East: Captain S. K. Hornbeck, U.S.A.

For Colonial Problems: Mr. George L. Beer, formerly of Columbia University.

**Economic Specialist:** Dr. A. A. Young, Cornell University.

---

Librarian and Specialist in History: Dr. James T. Shotwell; Columbia University.

Specialist in Boundary Geography: Major Douglas Johnson; Columbia University.

Chief Cartographer: Professor Mark Jefferson; State Normal College, Ypsilanti, Michigan.
APPENDIX VI

Sample letters showing the appeals made by some of the small nations to President Wilson.

A letter from hopeful Ukrainians of Russia appealing for the right to govern themselves:

They are desirous of having introduced and established in their motherland, the Ukraine, American ideals of government and the American system of education, in order to perpetuate sound democratic principles among their people.

There is a note from the Korean delegation, dated November 20, 1918, interpreting Wilson's principles according to their own desires:

The war just finished has decided once and for all the contest between democracy and autocracy, and President Wilson has said very truly that all homogeneous nations that have a separate and distinct language, civilization and culture ought to be allowed independence.

... Under Japanese control Korea as a nation is doomed to extinction. Therefore, we, the undersigned citizens of Korea, hereby appeal to the people and the Government of the civilized world to take up the cause of Korea against Japan.

Here are a few sentences from the appeal of the Albanians to President Wilson:

We come, therefore, to you, sir, as to the respected chief of the most powerful democracy, as to the man who has placed the sentiment of justice far above all interests. ... Today Albania is struggling painfully in the hands of those who wish to take possession of territories which do not belong to them and which have never belonged to them. Unfortunately for her, Albania, a poor country, has found no advocate in Europe to take her part. Only a few isolated persons, struck by the

---

1 All material was found in Ray Stannard Baker's work, Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement, I, 5-7; III, 18; and Lansing Papers (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1940), II, 139-158.
injustice committed against our country, have helped us by speech and by writing. They do not seem to have found any echo in the Chancelleries from which there will issue shortly the destinies of a Europe one would desire to see regenerated.
APPENDIX VII

Excerpt from the Hibbert Journal (Professor L. P. Jacks of Oxford University commented on the significance of President Wilson's objectives.)

The germinating idea of Mr. Wilson's policy is that America, because of her greatness, of her power, of her vast potentialities, is a servant among the nations, not a master. It is a noble conception and peculiarly fitted to inspire a young and mighty people with a vision of its destiny, and so to mark out for it in the centuries that are to come a line of development different from and, I think, higher than any which the older States of the world have so far pursued. Though the idea of greatness in service has been long familiar in other connections, where perhaps it had received more lip service than loyalty, President Wilson is the first statesman to make it operative or to endeavor to make it operative as a guiding principle of international politics, and this alone, whether he succeeds or not, assures him a distinct place in history and in the grateful remembrance of mankind. Needless to say, this idea—that the greatest nation must needs be a servant nation—stands out as the polar opposite to the notion of national greatness which prevails with the rulers and apparently with the people of Germany; and a prescient mind, on hearing it first pronounced by Mr. Wilson in the early stages of the war, might have predicted that a moment would come when the two opposites driven by a dramatic or moral necessity, would break out in open conflict with one another.

---

APPENDIX VIII

Excerpt from "The Case of France," a speech given by M. Georges Clemenceau, December 8, 1922, at the Third Conference of American Lecturers called by the International Lyceum and Chautauqua Association in Washington, D. C., December 7-9, 1922.

The peace treaty had to consider two aims: reparations and safety. President Wilson had said, "safety for democracy." You brought your American principles. They were enshrined in the fourteen points, and President Wilson went to Congress and in an address he said, "If these conditions of peace are not insured to us we will go on."

... Our case is for damages not repaired. ... Against whom should we practice militarism? ... There is not one German man living under French rule today--and we have been the victorious part--who will dare to say that if things had been reversed there would be no Frenchman under German rule.

I am here as a man who has been charged with militarism and imperialism, and to explain my position. I must say that your country helped to make it by its refusal to sign the treaty. ...

A great many friends have told me, "You know very well that Congress did not agree with the view of President Wilson, and you ought not to have depended on us. ... But what would you have thought of us if we had said to the Chief of the American Republic at a certain moment, "But do you represent American opinion?" ...

We cannot pay our debts unless Germany pays us what is our rightful due. ... My policy in peace is the same as it was in war.

---

1This selection is from the book of lectures called Public Opinion and World Peace (Washington, D. C.: The International Lyceum and Chautauqua Association, 1923), pp. 130-142. The book was edited by George H. Turner, the executive secretary of the Lyceum.
The following is the testimony of *La Figaro*, a leading French press organ which probably was written by Georges Clemenceau against Wilson's peace objectives. It read:

La situation du Président Wilson dans nos démocraties est magnifique, souveraine et extrêmement périlleuse. On ne connaît pas d'hommes, dans les temps contemporains, ayant eu plus d'autorité et de puissance; la popularité lui a donné ce que le droit divin ne conférerait pas toujours aux monarques héréditaires. En revanche et par le fait du choc en retour, sa responsabilité est supérieure à celle du prince le plus absolu. S'il réussit à organiser le monde d'après ses rêves, sa gloire dominera les plus hautes loires; mais il faut dire hardiment que s'il échouait il plongerait le monde dans un chaos dont le bolchevisme russe ne nous offre qu'une faible image; et sa responsabilité devant la conscience humaine dépasserait ce que peut supporter un simple mortel. Redoutable alternative!

February 10, 1919.

---

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES:  BOOKS:


U. S. Congressional Record. Vol. LVI.

U. S. Congressional Record. Vol. LVIII.


**SECONDARY SOURCES: BOOKS:**


