

December- 28, 1933

[Gaddis - Woodrow Wilson Foundation]

FDR Speech File

Reading Copy

President's address at  
Woodrow Wilson Foundation  
Washington, D. C.

Dec. 28, 1933

"Comprehension must be the soil in which shall grow all the fruits of friendship." Those words, used by President Wilson in the Mobile speech in 1913, can well serve as a statement of policy by the Government of the United States. That policy applies equally to a comprehension of our internal problems and our international relations.

Woodrow Wilson was a teacher, and when he used the word "comprehension" he meant it not in terms of the statesmen and political leaders and business executives and financial kings; he meant it rather in its application to the peoples of the world who are constantly going to school to learn simple truths in order that they and their neighbors can live their lives more safely, more happily, more fully.

In every continent and in every country Woodrow Wilson accelerated comprehension on the part of the people themselves. It is, I believe, true that the events of the past ten months have caused a greater

interest in government, the problems of government, and the purposes of government than in any similar period in our history; and yet this recent interest and comprehension would have been impossible for the American people had they not had from Woodrow Wilson the original stimulus and the original understanding of which he spoke twenty years ago.

In that speech in Mobile, President Wilson first enunciated the definite statement "that the United States will never again seek one additional foot of territory by conquest." The United States accepted that declaration of policy. President Wilson went further, pointing out with special reference to our Latin American neighbors that material interests must never be made superior to human liberty.

Nevertheless and largely as a result of the convulsion of the World War and its after effects, the complete fruition of that policy of unselfishness has not in every case been obtained. And in this we

all of us have to share the responsibility.

I do not hesitate to say that if I had been engaged in a political campaign as a citizen of some other American republic I might have been strongly tempted to play upon the fears of my compatriots of that republic by charging the United States of North America with some form of imperialistic desire for selfish aggrandizement. As a citizen of some other republic I might have found it difficult to believe fully in the altruism of the richest American republic. In particular, as a citizen of some other republic, I might have found it hard to approve of the occupation of the territory of other republics, even as a temporary measure.

It has therefore seemed clear to me as President that the time has come to supplement and to implement the declaration of President Wilson by the further declaration that the definite policy of the United States from now on is one opposed to armed intervention.

The maintenance of constitutional government in other nations is not a sacred obligation devolving upon the United States alone. The maintenance of law and the orderly processes of government in this hemisphere is the concern of each individual nation within its own borders first of all. It is only if and when the failure of orderly processes affects the other nations of the continent that it becomes their concern; and the point to stress is that in such an event it becomes the joint concern of a whole continent in which we are all neighbors.

It is the comprehension of that doctrine -- a comprehension not by the leaders alone but by the peoples of all the American republics, that has made the conference now concluding its labors in Montevideo such a fine success. A better state of feeling among the neighbor nations of North and Central and South America exists today than at any time within a generation. For participation in the bringing about of that result we can feel proud that so much credit belongs to the Secretary of State of the United States, Cordell Hull.

In the wider world field a chain of events has led, of late, away from rather than towards the ultimate objectives of Woodrow Wilson.

The superficial observer charges this failure to the growth of the spirit of nationalism. But, in so doing he suggests a nationalism in its narrower, restrictive sense, and a nationalism of that kind supported by the overwhelming masses of the people themselves in each nation.

I challenge that description of the world population today.

The blame for the danger to world peace lies not in the world population but in the political leaders of that population.

The imagination of the masses of world population was stirred, as never before, by President Wilson's gallant appeal to them -- to those masses -- to banish future war. His appeal meant little to the imagination or the hearts of a large number of the so-called statesmen who gathered in Paris to assemble a treaty of so-called peace in 1919. I saw that with my own eyes and heard that with my own ears. Political profit, personal prestige, national aggrandizement

attended the birth of the League of Nations, and handicapped it from its infancy by seeking their own profit and their own safety first.

Nevertheless, through the League directly, or through its guiding motives indirectly, the states of the world have groped forward to find something better than the old way of composing their differences.

The League has provided a common meeting place; it has provided machinery which serves for international discussion; and in very many practical instances it has helped labor and health and commerce and education, and last but not least, the actual settlement of many disputes great and small among nations great and small.

Today the United States is cooperating openly in the fuller utilization of the League of Nations machinery than ever before.

I believe that I express the views of my countrymen when I state that the old policies, alliances, combinations and balances of power have proved themselves inadequate for the preservation of world peace. The League of Nations, encouraging as it does the extension of non-aggression pacts, of reduction of armament agreements, is a prop in the world



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from now on war by governments shall be changed to  
peace by peoples.

*Franklin D. Roosevelt*  
(orig. reading copy)

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ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT  
AT THE DINNER OF THE WOODROW WILSON FOUNDATION  
December 28, 1933, about 10 P.M.

(The following was said extemporaneously and is not in the printed copy released to the Press:)

Mr. Morris, Mrs. Wilson, friends of Woodrow Wilson here in Washington and throughout the land:

Today, on the birthday of President Wilson, I received a very delightful thing, a little memorandum sent to me by Woodrow Wilson's old secretary, Tom Brehaney. The memorandum is dated August, 1919, and it is from the President's secretary and it reads, "For the President: Acting Secretary of the Navy Roosevelt would like to see the President on some urgent matters." And below that there is a pencilled memorandum, "Friday, 15, at 2.30 at the House." Evidently I was told about Friday the 15th at 2.30 and this young Assistant Secretary of the Navy had an engagement in Newport on that date. (Laughter) So, below that again, in typewriting, are these words: "Mr. Roosevelt is leaving tomorrow night for Newport on an inspection trip. He hopes that the President can give him two minutes tomorrow, Thursday, August 14." Then, in pencil again, in the

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

This is a transcript made by the White House stenographer from his shorthand notes taken at the time the speech was made. Underlining indicates words extemporaneously added to the previously prepared reading copy text. Words in parentheses are words that were omitted when the speech was delivered, though they appear in the previously prepared reading copy text.

Mr. Morris, Mrs. Wilson, Friends of Woodrow Wilson here in Washington and throughout the land: Today, on the birthday of President Wilson, I received a very delightful thing, a little memorandum sent to me by Woodrow Wilson's old secretary, Tom Branahan. The memorandum is dated August 1918, and it is from the President's secretary and it reads, "For the President: Acting Secretary of the Navy Roosevelt would like to see the President on some urgent matters." And below that there is a pencilled memorandum, "Friday, 15, at 2.30 at the House." Evidently I was told about Friday the 15th at 2.30 and this young Assistant Secretary of the Navy had an engagement in Newport on that date. (Lamont) So, below that again, in typewriting, are these words: "Mr. Roosevelt is leaving tomorrow night for Newport on an inspection trip. He hopes that the President can give him two minutes tomorrow, Thursday, August 14." Then, in pencil again, in the

President's handwriting, he struck out the words, "Friday the 15th", and substituted the words, "Thursday, the 14th, at 12.30 at the White House. W. W., OK." (Applause)

(The President then went on with his printed speech, with interpolations as noted.)

"Comprehension must be the soil in which shall grow all the fruits of friendship." Those words, used by President Wilson in the Mobile speech in 1913, twenty years ago, can well serve, I think, as a statement of policy by the Government of the United States. That policy applies equally to a comprehension of our internal problems and our international relations.

Woodrow Wilson was a teacher, and when he used that word "comprehension" he meant it not in terms of the statesmen and political leaders and business executives and financial kings; he meant it rather in its application to the peoples of the world who are constantly going to school to learn simple truths in order that they and their neighbors can live their lives more safely, more happily, more fully.

In every continent and in every country Woodrow Wilson accelerated comprehension on the part of the people

themselves. It is, I believe, true that the events of the past ten months have caused a greater interest in government, the problems of government, and the purposes of government than in any similar period in our American history; and yet this recent interest and comprehension would have been impossible for the American people had they not had from Woodrow Wilson the original stimulus, the original understanding of which he spoke twenty years ago.

In that speech in Mobile, President Wilson first enunciated the definite statement "that the United States will never again seek one additional foot of territory by conquest." The United States accepted that declaration of policy. The President (Wilson) went further, pointing out with special reference to our Latin American relations, our neighbors, that material interests must never be made superior to human liberty.

Nevertheless, we know that largely as a result of the convulsion of the World War and its after effects, the complete fruition of that policy of unselfishness has not in every case been obtained. And in this we, all of us, in all of these American nations have to share the responsibility.

I do not hesitate to say that if I had, for example, been engaged in a political campaign as a citizen of some other American republic I might have been strongly tempted to play upon the fears of my compatriots of that republic by charging the United States of North America with some form of imperialistic desire for selfish aggrandizement. As a citizen of some other republic I might have found it difficult to believe fully in the altruism of the richest American republic. In particular, as a citizen of some other republic, I might have found it hard to approve of the occupation of the territory of other republics, even as a temporary measure.

It therefore has seemed clear to me as President that the time has come to supplement and to implement the declaration of President Wilson by the further declaration that the definite policy of the United States from now on is one opposed to armed intervention. (Applause)

The maintenance of constitutional government in other nations is not a sacred obligation devolving upon the United States alone. (Applause) The maintenance of law and the orderly processes of government in this hemisphere is the concern of each individual nation

within its own borders first of all. It is only if and when the failure of orderly processes affects the other nations of the continent that it becomes their concern; and the point to stress is that in such an event it becomes the joint concern of a whole continent in which we are all neighbors. (Applause)

It is the comprehension of that doctrine -- comprehension not by the leaders alone but by the peoples of all the American republics, that has made the conference now concluding its labors in Montevideo such a (fine) splendid success. A better state of feeling among the neighbor nations of North and Central and South America exists today than at any time within (a generation) the memory of this generation. For participation in the bringing about of that result we can feel proud that so much credit belongs to the Secretary of State of the United States, Cordell Hull. (Applause)

In the wider world field, however, a chain of events has led, we fear, of late, away from rather than towards the ultimate objectives of Woodrow Wilson.

The superficial observer charges this failure to the growth of what the superficial observer calls

the spirit of nationalism. But, in so doing he suggests a nationalism in the wrong sense, a nationalism in its narrower, restrictive sense; he suggests a nationalism of that kind supported by the overwhelming masses of the people themselves in each nation.

I challenge that description of the world population today.

The blame for the danger to world peace lies not in the world population but in the political leaders of that population. (Applause)

In this place about fifteen years ago, the imagination of the masses of world population was stirred, as never before, by President Wilson's gallant appeal to them - to those masses - to banish future war. His appeal meant much to them, but it meant little to the imagination or the hearts of a large number of the so-called statesmen who gathered in Paris to assemble a treaty of so-called peace in 1919. I saw that with my own eyes. I heard that with my own ears. Political profit, personal prestige, national aggrandizement attended the birth of the League of Nations, and handicapped it from its infancy by seeking their own profit and their own safety first.



Nevertheless, through the League directly, or through its guiding motives indirectly, the states of the world, in the years that have gone by, have groped forward to find something better than the old way of composing their differences.

The League has provided a common meeting place; it has provided machinery which serves for international discussion; and in very many practical instances of which you and I know it has helped labor and health and commerce and education, and last but not least, the actual settlement of many disputes great and small between (among) nations great and small.

Today the United States is cooperating openly in the fuller utilization of the League of Nations machinery than ever before. (Applause)

I believe that I express the views of my countrymen when I state that the old policies, the old alliances, the old combinations and balances of power have proved themselves inadequate for the preservation of world peace. The League of Nations, encouraging as it does the extension of non-aggression pacts, of reduction of armament agreements, is a prop in the world peace structure, and it must remain. (Applause)

We are not members and we do not contemplate membership. We are giving cooperation to the League in every matter which is not primarily political and in every matter which obviously represents the views and the good of the peoples of the world as distinguished from the views and the good of political leaders, of privileged classes (or) and of imperialistic aims.

If you figure the world's population at approximately one billion and a half people, you will find it safe to guess that at least 90% of all of (them) that billion and a half of people are today content with the territorial limits of their respective nations and are willing further to reduce their armed forces tomorrow if every other nation in the world will agree to do the same thing. Back of the threat to world peace lies the fear and perhaps even the possibility that the other 10% of the people of the world may go along with a leadership which seeks territorial expansion at the expense of neighbors and which under various pleas in avoidance are unwilling to reduce armament or stop rearmament even if everybody else agrees to non-aggression and to arms reduction.

If that 10% of the world population can be persuaded by the other 90% to do their own thinking and not be so finely led, we will have practical peace, permanent peace, real peace throughout the world. (Applause) As you know, our own country has reduced the immediate steps to this greatest of objectives -- reduced those steps to practical and reasonable terms.

I have said to every nation in the world something to this effect:

1. Let every nation agree to eliminate over a short period of years, and by progressive steps, every weapon of offense that it has in its possession and to create no additional new weapons of offense. That, of course, does not guarantee a nation against invasion unless at the same time (you) we allow the nations to implement (it) that fact with the right to fortify its own border with permanent and non-mobile defenses; and also with the right to assure itself through international continuing inspection that its neighbors are not creating nor maintaining of-fensive weapons of war.

2. A simple declaration that no nation will permit any of its armed forces to cross its own borders into the territory of another nation. (Applause) Such an act would be regarded by humanity as an act of aggression and, as an act, therefore, that would call for condemnation by (humanity) the world as a whole.
3. It is clear, of course, that no such general agreement for the elimination of aggression (and) or the elimination of the weapons of offensive warfare would be of any value (to the) in this world unless every nation, without exception, (entered) would enter into (the) such an agreement by solemn obligation. If then such an agreement were signed by a great majority of the nations, an overwhelming majority in my opinion, on the definite condition that it would go into effect only when signed by all the nations, then, my friends, it would be a comparatively easy matter to separate the sheep from the goats, a comparatively simple matter to determine which nations in this enlightened time are willing to go on record by refusing

to sign that pact, willing to go on record as belonging to the small minority of mankind which still believes in the use of the sword for invasion of and attack upon their neighbors.

I did not make this suggestion until I felt assured, after a hard-headed practical survey, that the temper of the overwhelming majority of all men and women in my own country as well as those who make up the world's population, the large majority subscribes to the fundamental objective I have set forth and to the practical road to that objective. The political leaders of many of these peoples interpose and will continue to interpose argument, excuse, befogging amendment - yes, and even ridicule. But I tell them that the men and women they serve are so far in advance of that type of leadership that we could get a world accord on world peace immediately if the people of the world (spoke) could speak for themselves. (Applause)

Through all of the centuries of recorded history and down to the world conflict of 1914 to 1918, wars were made by governments. Woodrow Wilson challenged that necessity. That challenge made the people who create and the

people who change governments think. They wondered with Woodrow Wilson whether the people themselves could not some day prevent governments from making war.

It is but an extension of the challenge of Woodrow Wilson for us to propose in this newer generation that from now on war by governments shall be changed to peace by peoples. (Prolonged applause)

December 28, 1933.

Address of the President before  
The Woodrow Wilson Foundation

10:00 P.M., Eastern  
Standard Time, December 28.

"Comprehension must be the soil in which shall grow all the fruits of friendship." Those words, used by President Wilson in the Mobile speech in 1913, can well serve as a statement of policy by the Government of the United States. That policy applies equally to a comprehension of our internal problems and our international relations.

Woodrow Wilson was a teacher, and when he used the word "comprehension" he meant it, not in terms of the statesmen and political leaders and business executives and financial kings; he meant it rather in its application to the peoples of the world who are constantly going to school to learn simple truths in order that they and their neighbors can live their lives more safely, more happily, more fully.

In every continent and in every country Woodrow Wilson accelerated comprehension on the part of the people themselves. It is, I believe, true that the events of the past ten months have caused a greater interest in government, the problems of government, and the purposes of government than in any similar period in our history; and yet this recent interest and comprehension would have been impossible for the American people had they not had from Woodrow Wilson the original stimulus and the original understanding of which he spoke twenty years ago.

In that speech in Mobile, President Wilson first enunciated the definite statement "that the United States will never again seek one additional foot of territory by conquest." The United States accepted that declaration of policy. President Wilson went further, pointing out with special reference to our Latin American neighbors that material interests must never be made superior to human liberty.

Nevertheless and largely as a result of the convulsion of the World War and its after effects, the complete fruition of that policy of unselfishness has not in every case been obtained. And in this we, all of us, have to share the responsibility.

I do not hesitate to say that if I had been engaged in a political campaign as a citizen of some other American republic I might have been strongly tempted to play upon the fears of my compatriots of that republic by charging the United States of North America with some form of imperialistic desire for selfish aggrandizement. As a citizen of some other republic I might have found it difficult to believe fully in the altruism of the richest American republic. In particular, as a citizen of some other republic, I might have found it hard to approve of the occupation of the territory of other republics, even as a temporary measure.

It therefore has seemed clear to me as President that the time has come to supplement and to implement the declaration of President Wilson by the further declaration that the definite policy of the United States from now on is one opposed to armed intervention.

The maintenance of constitutional government in other nations is not a sacred obligation devolving upon the United States alone. The maintenance of law and the orderly processes of government in this hemisphere is the concern of each individual nation within its own borders first of all. It is only if and when the failure of orderly processes affects the other nations of the continent that it becomes their concern; and the point to stress is that in such an event it becomes the joint concern of a whole continent in which we are all neighbors.

It is the comprehension of that doctrine -- a comprehension not by the leaders alone but by the peoples of all the American republics, that has made the conference now concluding its labors in Montevideo such a fine success. A better state of feeling among the neighbor nations of North and Central and South America exists today than at any time within a generation. For participation in the bringing about of that result we can feel proud that so much credit belongs to the Secretary of State of the United States, Cordell Hull.

In the wider world field a chain of events has led, of late, away from rather than towards the ultimate objectives of Woodrow Wilson.

The superficial observer charges this failure to the growth of the spirit of nationalism. But, in so doing he suggests a nationalism in its narrower, restrictive sense, and a nationalism of that kind supported by the overwhelming masses of the people themselves in each nation.

I challenge that description of the world population today.

The blame for the danger to world peace lies not in the world population but in the political leaders of that population.

The imagination of the masses of world population was stirred, as never before, by President Wilson's gallant appeal to them - to those masses - to banish future war. His appeal meant little to the imagination or the hearts of a large number of the so-called statesmen who gathered in Paris to assemble a treaty of so-called peace in 1919. I saw that with my own eyes and heard that with my own ears. Political profit, personal prestige, national aggrandizement attended the birth of the League of Nations, and handicapped it from its infancy by seeking their own profit and their own safety first.

Nevertheless, through the League directly, or through its guiding motives indirectly, the states of the world have groped forward to find something better than the old way of composing their differences.

The League has provided a common meeting place; it has provided machinery which serves for international discussion; and in very many practical instances it has helped labor and health and commerce and education, and last but not least, the actual settlement of many disputes great and small among nations great and small.

Today the United States is cooperating openly in the fuller utilization of the League of Nations machinery than ever before.

I believe that I express the views of my countrymen when I state that the old policies, alliances, combinations and balances of power have proved themselves inadequate for the preservation of world peace. The League of Nations, encouraging as it does the extension of non-aggression pacts, of reduction of armament agreements, is a prop in the world peace structure.



We are not members and we do not contemplate membership. We are giving cooperation to the League in every matter which is not primarily political and in every matter which obviously represents the views and the good of the peoples of the world as distinguished from the views and the good of political leaders, of privileged classes or of imperialistic aims.

If you figure the world's population at approximately one billion and a half people, you will find it safe to guess that at least 90% of all of them are today content with the territorial limits of their respective nations and are willing further to reduce their armed forces tomorrow if every other nation in the world will agree to do the same thing. Back of the threat to world peace lies the fear and perhaps even the possibility that the other 10% of the people of the world may go along with a leadership which seeks territorial expansion at the expense of neighbors and which under various pleas in avoidance are unwilling to reduce armament or stop rearmament even if everybody else agrees to non-aggression and to arms reduction.

If this 10% can be persuaded by the other 90% to do their own thinking and not be led, we will have practical peace, permanent peace, real peace throughout the world. Our own country has reduced the immediate steps to this greatest of objectives to practical and reasonable terms.

I have said to every nation in the world something to this effect:

1. Let every nation agree to eliminate over a short period of years, and by progressive steps, every weapon of offense in its possession and to create no additional weapons of offense. This does not guarantee a nation against invasion unless you implement it with the right to fortify its own border with permanent and non-mobile defenses; and also with the right to assure itself through international continuing inspection that its neighbors are not creating nor maintaining offensive weapons of war.
2. A simple declaration that no nation will permit any of its armed forces to cross its own borders into the territory of another nation. Such an act would be regarded by humanity as an act of aggression and, as an act, therefore, that would call for condemnation by humanity.
3. It is clear, of course, that no such general agreement for the elimination of aggression and of the weapons of offensive warfare would be of any value to the world unless every nation, without exception, entered into the agreement by solemn obligation. If then such an agreement were signed by a great majority of the nations on the definite conditions that it would go into effect only when signed by all the nations, it would be a comparatively easy matter to determine which nations in this enlightened time are willing to go on record as belonging to the small minority of mankind which still believes in the use of the sword for invasion of and attack upon their neighbors.

I did not make this suggestion until I felt assured, after a hard-headed practical survey that the temper of the overwhelming majority of all men and women in my own country as well as those who make up the world's population, subscribes to the fundamental objective I have set forth and to the practical road to that objective. The political leaders of many of these peoples interpose and will interpose argument, excuse, bfogging amendment - yes, and even ridicule. But I tell them that the men and women they serve are so far in advance of that type of leadership that we could get a world accord on world peace immediately if the people of the world spoke for themselves.

Through all the centuries and down to the world conflict of 1914 to 1918, wars were made by governments. Woodrow Wilson challenged that necessity. That challenge made the people who create and who change governments think. They wondered with Woodrow Wilson whether the people themselves could not some day prevent governments from making war.

It is but an extension of the challenge of Woodrow Wilson for us to propose in this newer generation that from now on war by governments shall be changed to peace by people.

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December 28, 1933.

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12:00 P.M., Eastern  
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In that speech in Mobile, President Wilson first enunciated the definite statement "that the United States will never again seek one additional foot of territory by conquest." The United States accepted that declaration of policy. President Wilson went further, pointing out with special reference to our Latin American neighbors that material interests must never be made superior to human liberty.

Nevertheless and largely as a result of the convulsion of the World War and its after effects, the complete fruition of that policy of unselfishness has not in every case been obtained. And in this we, all of us, have to share the responsibility.

I do not hesitate to say that if I had been engaged in a political campaign as a citizen of some other American republic I might have been strongly tempted to play upon the fears of my compatriots of that republic by sharing the United States of North America with some form of imperialistic desire for selfish aggrandizement. As a citizen of some other republic I might have found it difficult to believe fully in the altruism of the richest American republic. In particular, as a citizen of some other republic, I might have found it hard to approve of the occupation of the territory of other republics, even as a temporary measure.

It therefore has seemed clear to me as President that the time has come to supplement and to implement the declaration of President Wilson by the further declaration that the definite policy of the United States from now on is one opposed to armed intervention.

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The maintenance of constitutional government in other nations is not a sacred obligation devolving upon the United States alone. The maintenance of law and the orderly processes of government in this hemisphere is the concern of each individual nation within its own borders first of all. It is only if and when the failure of orderly processes affects the other nations of the continent that it becomes their concern; and the point to stress is that in such an event it becomes the joint concern of a whole continent in which we are all neighbors.

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The imagination of the masses of world population was stirred, as never before, by President Wilson's gallant appeal to them - to those masses - to banish future war. His appeal meant little to the imagination or the hearts of a large number of the so-called statesmen who gathered in Paris to assemble a treaty of so-called peace in 1919. I saw that with my own eyes and heard that with my own ears. Political profit, personal prestige, national aggrandizement attended the birth of the League of Nations, and handicapped it from its infancy by seeking their own profit and their own safety first.

Nevertheless, through the League directly, or through its guiding motives indirectly, the states of the world have groped forward to find something better than the old way of composing their differences.

The League has provided a common meeting place; it has provided machinery which serves for international discussion; and in very many practical instances it has helped labor and health and commerce and education, and last but not least, the actual settlement of many disputes great and small among nations great and small.

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If you figure the world's population at approximately one billion and a half people, you will find it safe to guess that at least 90% of all of them are today content with the territorial limits of their respective nations and are willing further to reduce their armed forces tomorrow if every other nation in the world will agree to do the same thing. Back of the threat to world peace lies the fear and perhaps even the possibility that the other 10% of the people of the world may go along with a leadership which seeks territorial expansion at the expense of neighbors and which under various pleas in avoidance are unwilling to reduce armament or stop rearmament even if everybody else agrees to non-aggression and to arms reduction.

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1. Let every nation agree to eliminate over a short period of years, and by progressive steps, every weapon of offense in its possession and to create no additional weapons of offense. This does not guarantee a nation against invasion unless you implement it with the right to fortify its own border with permanent and non-mobile defenses; and also with the right to assure itself through international continuing inspection that its neighbors are not creating nor maintaining offensive weapons of war.
2. A simple declaration that no nation will permit any of its armed forces to cross its own borders into the territory of another nation. Such an act would be regarded by humanity as an act of aggression and, as an act, therefore, that would call for condemnation by humanity.
3. It is clear, of course, that no such general agreement for the elimination of aggression and of the weapons of offensive warfare would be of any value to the world unless every nation, without exception, entered into the agreement by solemn obligation. If then such an agreement were signed by a great majority of the nations on the definite condition that it would go into effect only when signed by all the nations, it would be a comparatively easy matter to determine which nations in this enlightened time are willing to go on record as belonging to the small minority of mankind which still believes in the use of the sword for invasion of and attack upon their neighbors.

I did not make this suggestion until I felt assured, after a hard-headed practical survey that the temper of the overwhelming majority of all men and women in my own country as well as those who make up the world's population, subscribes to the fundamental objective I have set forth and to the practical road to that objective. The political leaders of many of these peoples interpose and will interpose argument, excuse, befogging amendment - yes, and even ridicule. But I tell them that the men and women they serve are so far in advance of that type of leadership that we could get a world accord on world peace immediately if the people of the world spoke for themselves.

Through all the centuries and down to the world conflict of 1914 to 1918, wars were made by governments. Woodrow Wilson challenged that necessity. That challenge made the people who create and who change governments think. They wondered with Woodrow Wilson whether the people themselves could not some day prevent governments from making war.

It is but an extension of the challenge of Woodrow Wilson for us to propose in this never generation that from now on war by governments shall be changed to peace by peoples.

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# STATEMENTS FILE

Shorthand By Kannee

FOR THE PRESS

December 28, 1933.

## CONFIDENTIAL UNTIL RELEASED

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STEPHEN EARLY

Assistant Secretary to the President

"Comprehension must be the soil in which shall grow all the fruits of friendship." Those words, used by President Wilson in the Mobile speech in 1913, can well serve as a statement of policy by the Government of the United States. That policy applies equally to a comprehension of our internal problems and our international relations.

Woodrow Wilson was a teacher, and when he used that word "comprehension" he meant it not in terms of the statesmen and political leaders and business executives and financial kings; he meant it rather in its application to the peoples of the world who are constantly going to school to learn simple truths in order that they and their neighbors can live their lives more safely, more happily, more fully.

In every continent and in every country Woodrow Wilson accelerated comprehension on the part of the people themselves. It is, I believe, true that the events of the past ten months have caused a greater interest in government, the problems of government, and the purposes of government than in any similar period in our history; and yet this recent interest and comprehension would have been impossible for the American people had they not had from Woodrow Wilson the original stimulus, ~~and~~ the original understanding of which he spoke twenty years ago.

In that speech in Mobile, President Wilson first enunciated the definite statement "that the United States will never again seek one additional foot of territory by conquest." The United States accepted that declaration of policy. President Wilson went further, pointing out with special reference to our Latin American neighbors, that material interests must never be made superior to human liberty.

Nevertheless, and largely as a result of the convulsion of the World War and its after effects, the complete fruition of that policy of unselfishness has not in every case been obtained. And in this we, all of us, have to share the responsibility.

I do not hesitate to say that if I had been engaged in a political campaign as a citizen of some other American republic I might have been strongly tempted to play upon the fears of my compatriots of that republic by charging the United States of North America with some form of imperialistic desire for selfish aggrandizement. As a citizen of some other republic I might have found it difficult to believe fully in the altruism of the richest American republic. In particular, as a citizen of some other republic, I might have found it hard to approve of the occupation of the territory of other republics, even as a temporary measure.

It therefore has seemed clear to me as President that the time has come to supplement and to implement the declaration of President Wilson by the further declaration that the definite policy of the United States from now on is one opposed to armed intervention.

(1) The maintenance of constitutional government in other nations is not a sacred obligation devolving upon the United States alone. (S) The maintenance of law and the orderly processes of government in this hemisphere is the concern of each individual nation within its own borders first of all. It is only if and when the failure of orderly processes affects the other nations of the continent that it becomes their concern; and the point to stress is that in such an event it becomes the joint concern of a whole continent in which we are all neighbors. (S)

It is the comprehension of that doctrine -- a comprehension not by the leaders alone but by the peoples of all the American republics, that has made the conference now concluding its labors in Montevideo such a fine success. A better state of feeling among the neighbor nations of North and Central and South America exists today than at any time within a generation. For participation in the bringing about of that result we can feel proud that so much credit belongs to the Secretary of State of the United States, Cordell Hull. (S) 1/16

1/16 In the wider world field a chain of events has led, for late, away from rather than towards the ultimate objectives of Woodrow Wilson. 2/16

5 The superficial observer charges this failure to the growth of the spirit of nationalism. But, in so doing he suggests a nationalism in its narrower, restrictive sense, and a nationalism of that kind supported by the overwhelming masses of the people themselves in each nation. 1/16

I challenge that description of the world population today.

The blame for the danger to world peace lies not in the world population but in the political leaders of that population. (S) 6/16

6/16 The imagination of the masses of world population was stirred, as never before, by President Wilson's gallant appeal to them - to those masses - to banish future war. His appeal meant little to the imagination or the hearts of a large number of the so-called statesmen who gathered in Paris to assemble a treaty of so-called peace in 1919. I saw that with my own eyes, and heard that with my own ears. Political profit, personal prestige, national aggrandizement attended the birth of the League of Nations, and handicapped it from its infancy by seeking their own profit and their own safety first. 2/16

Nevertheless, through the League directly, or through its guiding motives indirectly, the states of the world have groped forward to find something better than the old way of composing their differences. 2/16

The League has provided a common meeting place; it has provided machinery which serves for international discussion; and in very many practical instances it has helped labor and health and commerce and education, and last but not least, the actual settlement of many disputes great and small among nations great and small. 2/16

Today the United States is cooperating openly in the fuller utilization of the League of Nations machinery than ever before. (S)

I believe that I express the views of my countrymen when I state that the old policies, alliances, combinations and balances of power have proved themselves inadequate for the preservation of world peace. The League of Nations, encouraging as it does the extension of non-aggression pacts, of reduction of armament agreements, is a prop in the world peace structure. 2/16



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We are not members and we do not contemplate membership. We are giving cooperation to the League in every matter which is not primarily political and in every matter which obviously represents the views and the good of the peoples of the world as distinguished from the views and the good of political leaders, of privileged classes <sup>and</sup> of imperialistic aims.

If you figure the world's population at approximately one billion and a half people, you will find it safe to guess that at least 90% of all of them are today content with the territorial limits of their respective nations and are willing further to reduce their armed forces tomorrow if every other nation in the world will agree to do the same thing. Back of the threat to world peace lies the fear and perhaps even the possibility that the other 10% of the people of the world may go along with a leadership which seeks territorial expansion at the expense of neighbors and which under various pleas in avoidance are unwilling to reduce armament or stop rearmament even if everybody else agrees to non-aggression and to arms reduction. C.V. 11

If ~~this~~ 10% can be persuaded by the other 90% to do their own thinking and not be led, we will have practical peace, permanent peace, real peace throughout the world. Our own country has reduced the immediate steps to this greatest of objectives <sup>to</sup> ~~the~~ practical and reasonable terms. b6 b7C

110111 I have said to every nation in the world something to this effect:

1. Let every nation agree to eliminate over a short period of years, and by progressive steps, every weapon of offense ~~in its~~ possession and to create no additional weapons of offense. ~~This does not guarantee a nation against invasion unless you implement it with the right to fortify its own border with permanent and non-mobile defenses; and also with the right to assure itself through international continuing inspection that its neighbors are not creating nor maintaining offensive weapons of war.~~ b6 b7C
  2. A simple declaration that no nation will permit any of its armed forces to cross its own borders into the territory of another nation. Such an act would be regarded by humanity as an act of aggression and, as an act, therefore, that would call for condemnation by humanity. b6 b7C
  3. It is clear, of course, that no such general agreement for the elimination of aggression and of the weapons of offensive warfare would be of any value to the world unless every nation, without exception, entered into the agreement by solemn obligation. If then such an agreement were signed by a great majority of the nations, on the definite condition that it would go into effect only when signed by all the nations, it would be a comparatively easy matter to determine which nations in this enlightened time are willing to go on record as belonging to the small minority of mankind which still believes in the use of the sword for invasion of and attack upon their neighbors. b6 b7C
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Dec 28 - 1933

[Dec. 28, 1933]

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Nevertheless and largely as a result of the convulsion of the World War and its after effects, the ~~complete frustration of that~~ *not in every* ~~policy of selfishness has not in every~~ *case been followed by the dead.* And ~~those who were~~ *in this way* ~~case been obtained~~.

*all of us to share the responsibility.*  
~~leaders in almost all of the republics of the new~~  
~~world must in part at least share the blame.~~

I do not hesitate to say that if I had been engaged in a political campaign as a citizen of some other American republic I might have been strongly tempted to play upon the fears of my compatriots of that republic by charging the United States of North America with some form of imperialistic desire for selfish aggrandizement. As a citizen of some other republic I might have found it difficult to believe fully in the altruism of the richest American republic. <sup>In particular</sup> As a citizen of some other republic I might have found it hard to approve of the occupation of the territory of other republics, even as a temporary measure.

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The maintenance of constitutional government in other nations is not a sacred obligation devolving upon the United States alone. The maintenance of law and the orderly processes of government in this hemisphere is ~~first of all~~ the concern of each individual nation within its own borders. <sup>first of all</sup> It is only if and when the failure of orderly processes affects the other nations of the continent that it becomes their concern; and the point to stress is that in such an event it becomes their joint concern relating to a whole continent in which we are all neighbors.

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MEMORANDUM FOR WOODROW WILSON DINNER SPEECH  
(THIS FOLLOWS AFTER SOUTH AMERICA)

1

In the wider world field a chain of events has led, of late, away from rather than towards the ultimate objectives of Woodrow Wilson.

The superficial observer calls the cause of this Nationalism; the use of that term connotes nationalism in its narrower, restrictive sense and above all an nationalism which in that sense is based on, and supported by, the over-whelming masses of the people themselves in each nation. A

I challenge that description of the world populations today.

The blame for the danger to world peace lies not in the world population but in the political leaders of that population.

The imagination of the masses of world population was stirred, as never before, by President Wilson's gallant appeal to them--to those masses-- to banish future war. His appeal meant little to the imagination or the hearts of a large number of the so-called statesmen who gathered in Paris to assemble a treaty of so-called peace in 1919. I saw that with my own eyes and heard that with my own ears. Political profit, personal prestige, national aggrandizement ~~launched the League of Nations, an overburdened ship with a crew, the members of which sought their own safety and their own profit first.~~ *attended the birth of and handicapped it from its infancy. In 1919 they were selfish and their own safety first.*

Nevertheless, through the League, directly or through its guiding motives indirectly, the states of the world have groped forward to find something better than the old way of composing their differences.

The League has provided a common meeting place; it has pro-

vided machinery which serves for international discussion; and in very many practical instances it has helped labor and health and commerce and education and last but not least the actual settlement of many disputes great and small among nations great and small.

Today the United States is cooperating openly in the fuller utilization of the League of Nations machinery than ever before.

I believe that I express the views of my countrymen when I state that the old policies, alliances, combinations and balances of power have proved themselves inadequate for the preservation of world peace. The League of Nations, encouraging as it does the extension of non-aggression pacts, of reduction of armament agreements, is a prop in the world peace structure.

We are not members and we do not <sup>contemplate</sup> ~~intend to apply~~ for membership. ~~but~~ We are giving cooperation to the League in every matter which is not primarily political and in every matter which obviously represents the views and the good of the peoples of the world as distinguished from the views and the good of political leaders, of privileged classes or of imperialistic aims.

If you figure the world's population at approximately one billion and a half people, you will find it <sup>is</sup> ~~safe~~ guess to make that at least <sup>90% of all</sup> ~~one billion, three hundred million~~ of them are today content with the territorial limits of their respective nations and are willing further to reduce their armed forces tomorrow if every other nation in the world will agree to do the same thing. Back of the threat to world peace lies the fear and perhaps even the possibility that the other <sup>10% of the</sup> ~~two hundred million~~ people <sup>of the world</sup> may go along with a leadership which seeks territorial expansion at the expense of neighbors and which under various pleas in ~~avoidance~~ <sup>of the world</sup> unwilling

inavoidance



to reduce armament or stop rearmament even if everybody else agrees to non-aggression and to arms reduction. <sup>B</sup>

~~Our own country has reduced its means to the peace objective to practical terms. <sup>B</sup> ~~the immediate step of the security~~~~

I have said to every nation in the world something to this effect:

1. Let every nation agree to eliminate over a short period of years, and by progressive steps, every weapon of offense in its possession and to create no additional weapons of offense. This does not guarantee a nation against invasion unless you implement it ~~first~~ with the right to fortify its own border with permanent and non-mobile defenses; *and secondly also with the right* ~~to~~ to assure itself through international ~~continuing~~ inspection that its neighbors are not creating or maintaining offensive weapons of war.
2. A simple declaration that no nation will permit any of its armed forces to cross its own borders into the territory of another nation. Such an act would be regarded by humanity as an act of aggression and, as an act, therefore, <sup>that</sup> ~~it~~ would call for *condemnation* ~~punishment~~ by humanity. <sup>It</sup> ~~is~~ is clear, of course, that no such general agreement for

*aggression and of*

the elimination of the weapons of offensive warfare ~~and of non-aggression~~ would be of any value to the world unless every nation, without exception, entered into the agreement by solemn obligation. If then such an agreement were signed by a great majority of the nations on the definite condition that it would go into effect only when signed by all the nations, it would be a comparatively easy matter to determine which nations in this enlightened time are willing to go on record as belonging to the small minority of mankind which still believes in the use of the sword for invasion of and attack upon their neighbors.

*I did not make this suggestion until I felt assured,*  
~~that it was not a dream of mine; it is assured based on a~~  
*after* hard-headed practical survey of what I believe <sup>that</sup> to be the temper of the over-whelming majority of all men <sup>in my own country no more so than</sup> and women who make up the world's population--~~namely~~ <sup>that</sup> that the people of nearly all nations subscribed <sup>to</sup> to the fundamental objective I have set forth and the practical road to that objective. The political leaders <sup>of</sup> many of these peoples, ~~who~~ interpose and will interpose argument, excuse, befogging amendment--yes, and even ridicule. But I tell them that the men and women they serve are so far in advance of that type of leadership that we could get a world accord on world peace <sup>immediately</sup> ~~within a generation~~ if the people of the world spoke for themselves.

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1914 to 1918, wars were made by governments. Woodrow Wilson challenged that necessity. That challenge made the people who create and who change governments think. They wondered with Woodrow Wilson whether the people themselves could not some day prevent governments from making war.

It is but an extension of the challenge of Woodrow Wilson for us to propose in this newer generation that **from** now on war by governments shall be changed to peace by peoples.