

IF THE TREATY IS REJECTED-- WHAT THEN?

By GILBERT M. HITCHCOCK. Senator from Nebraska; Administration Floor Leader in Urging Adoption of ...
New York Times (1857-1922); Oct 19, 1919; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times
pg. SM1



(Copyright, 1919, by The New York Times Company)



Senator Borah, Spokesman of the
Extreme Opponents of the
Peace Treaty.



Senator Hitchcock, Administration Leader
in Urging Approval of the Treaty
Without Changes.

IF THE TREATY IS REJECTED— WHAT THEN?

The Question Answered by Hitchcock and Borah.

What will happen if the Peace Treaty is rejected by the United States?

Two answers by Senate leaders on the opposing sides are presented below. The two spokesmen are the Administration floor leader who is fighting to have the treaty ratified without any reservations that will change the meaning, and the leader of the extreme opponents.

By GILBERT M. HITCHCOCK,

Senator from Nebraska; Administration Floor Leader in Urging Adoption of the Treaty.

IF the Senate should fail to ratify the treaty, or should amend it so as to kill it, or should adopt such reservations as to change its meaning, the situation would arise which your question contemplates, and the United States would not become a party to the peace settlement.

The treaty would, however, go into effect so far as the other nations are concerned. The United States would be isolated and would lose all concessions which the victorious nations have wrung at the cannon's mouth. We would lose Germany's acknowledgment of responsibility for the war and her promise to pay damages to our Government and our citizens.

We would lose her promise not to impose higher or other customs duties on

our goods than on those charged to the most favored nation.

We would lose her promise to treat our shipping in her ports as favorably as German shipping is treated.

We would lose her agreement that we shall have the privilege of reviving such of the treaties that existed before the war between Germany and the United States as we desire to revive.

We would lose Germany's agreement validating the acts by the United States and by the Alien Property Custodian, under which we seized and proceeded to liquidate \$800,000,000 worth of property in the United States belonging to German citizens.

We would lose Germany's agreement that we could use the money derived from the sale of these properties to reimburse our citizens who had lost property in Germany. We would lose the right to use these funds to pay debts which Germany or German citizens now owe to American citizens.

We would lose the right to use these funds derived from the sale of this great amount of German property in the United States to pay pre-war claims against Germany, including the claims for the destruction of life and property involved in the sinking of the Lusitania and other vessels.

We would lose the agreement which Germany made that we shall not be held responsible for property, American pat-

ents, and other things of value belonging to German citizens and companies which the United States seized and used during the war. Many of these patents were very valuable, and claims against the United States for patents on dyes, explosives, and medicines would run into millions of dollars.

We would lose the right to retain over 500,000 tons of German shipping which had been left in the United States when we were a neutral country, but which Germany has agreed in the treaty to surrender. The nations associated with us in the war would set up claims to a part or all of this shipping, which they cannot do if we are a party to the treaty.

We would lose our membership on the Reparation Commission, which will be the most powerful international body ever created, and will have enormous power over the trade, finance and commerce of Germany, and, in fact, of the world, for years to come. This commission will have the power to control the German economic resources and dictate where and how and to what extent Germany may export its goods and its gold to buy imports from other countries.

These are some of the material things we would lose by failure to become a party to this treaty, which was secured from Germany at the cannon's mouth. They all represent concessions which Germany would not willingly grant.

We would then be reduced to the alternative of drifting into an unconditional peace with Germany with all the

war issues unsettled, or, on the other hand, of approaching Germany with a proposition to negotiate a peace. This would give Germany the opportunity to make conditions, and it would deprive us of the power to dictate the terms ourselves. We have withdrawn our armies from Europe except a few thousand men, and have practically completed demobilization. We are through fighting, and Germany knows it. If we fail to hold her to the bargain made at Versailles when the armies were in the field and when Germany was helpless, we will be compelled to negotiate as equals and lose a large part of all that was granted in the settlement. If we fail to negotiate a settlement Germany can insist on a settlement at a future date. What we did with regard to the \$800,000,000 of property belonging to German citizens in this country was done on the theory that we were going to be victorious in the war and could dictate terms of peace to Germany, but if we lose our opportunity to dictate terms of peace the question of disposition of this vast sum of money would be one that would remain open until the two countries can agree upon a settlement.

It is evident, moreover, that the Reparation Commission, on which each nation that signs the treaty will be represented, will so control the industrial, commercial and mining resources of Germany as to facilitate the payment of damages to those countries, but that they will also use that control to benefit their own commerce, and if the United States is not represented on that

commission it is almost inevitable that we will be greatly discriminated against and find it difficult to sell our products to Germany in competition with those nations that control the Reparation Commission and that are parties to the treaty.

Another result of our refusal to participate in this treaty would be a feeling of resentment against us by those nations with which we have been associated in the war. They would undoubtedly feel that we had deserted the cause and abandoned the association before a settlement had been made. They would be drawn closer together in their relations with each other and feel a common interest against us.

Our failure to participate in the treaty also would enormously cripple the League of Nations. It would endanger the smaller nations of Europe, which for some time must be under the protection of the League of Nations until they can get organized.

Our failure to participate by weakening the League of Nations would also weaken Governments everywhere. There would be danger that the League of Nations would become an alliance of certain nations rather than a world organization to promote and perpetuate peace. The restoration of Europe would be greatly delayed because American financiers would not feel justified in backing enterprises which need American capital and American brains. The ten thousand million dollars which our Government has loaned to other Governments would be endangered. The value of this great national asset depends on the stability of Governments in Europe.

The opportunity would be given to the anarchistic and Bolshevistic elements of all countries to proceed with their destructive influences and the prospect would be very good for revolutionary movements in many countries. Only the presence of the United States in the League of Nations can give that stability and high character to the organization which will convince the public opinion of the world that it is organized not only to establish permanent peace everywhere but disinterested justice in dealings between nations. All this would be lost to the world if we fail to ratify the treaty or to participate in the League of Nations.

Nations would be compelled to look forward to an uncertain future. Each would contemplate the possibility of another war and would resume war preparations. This would include the United States. The hatred and vengeance of Germany would not have the restraint and control of any peace settlement. The nations that have been associated with us would be greatly embarrassed by our refusal to take part in a permanent peace settlement. Poland, Bohemia, and the Jugoslavs would feel that we had deserted them, and their future, instead of being made secure by a world organization for peace, would be endangered by the failure of the most powerful nation in the world to participate.

By WILLIAM E. BORAH.

Senator from Idaho; leader of the extreme opponents who seek to defeat the Treaty.

If the treaty is rejected, the United States will be relieved at once of all obligations, legal or moral, to take part in European affairs, and we will as a people be enabled to take up at once and devote our entire time and attention to the solution of impending domestic problems. Whatever we should see fit or think proper to do in the way of friendly assistance, advice, or support for other peoples anywhere, we should be able to do of our own volition and in our own way, relieved entirely of the embarrassment of carrying forward the plans and schemes of other nations.

For illustration, we are in Russia now not by reason of any interest or desire of our own, but because certain other powers have ulterior motives with reference to Siberia, and we have become entangled by understandings, express or implied, and hesitate to draw out. Our men are being sacrificed for no interest of our own, but because of an intertwining of ourself in European affairs. To draw out of Russia is to create discord in other directions. Therefore we stay and our soldiers are being sacrificed. If the treaty were rejected, all such things could be cleaned up, our men could come home, and our people could be at ease upon these questions:

If the treaty were rejected we would be relieved of the responsibility in such

moral breakdowns as the Shantung affair. We would not and could not be charged with the shameless betrayal of an old friend and associate in the war. We would not incur the ill-will, possibly the settled enmity, of 400,000,000 people. We would not forfeit our moral prestige and our national honor in the court of civilization. Whether we could through friendly counsel or even insistence upon the Hay policy effectuate justice for a friendly people, we would at least not be a party to the crime—and moral prestige is, after all, still the greatest asset of a nation. How clean and relieved and exhilarant the whole national mind would feel upon tomorrow morning if it were known that this shameless crime against China had been forever removed as a charge against our country!

If the treaty were rejected we would not be a party to the betrayal of Egypt—a people who fought side by side with the Allies but who at the close of their voluntary service were trapped and robbed of their birthright. We would have no part in the continued denial to those people of their claim for independence.

In full, we would be free of oppression and clean of injustice. We would have honor and independence, moral prestige and incalculable material power. And these are things without which the Republic cannot exist. We would and could continue to be, as we have long been, the most powerful influence for peace, for progress and for Christian nationhood in the world. But if we enter this League and become bound by this treaty we are enmeshed and entangled into all kinds of obligations—secret treaties which have been interwoven into the treaty—and we are parties to all kinds of oppression and injustice and wrongs. We become one of the four dictators which are to rule one-half of the inhabitants of the globe by force.

If it said, What about peace? The answer is that peace is here now.

Great Britain has been carrying on trade to her highest point with Germany ever since ten days after the armistice. France has been trading with Germany. The United States has been and is trading with Germany. Peace in all its practical features and appearance is an established fact and has been for weeks

and weeks. The treaty ratified by Great Britain, France and Italy fixes the status of Germany. Those countries interested in receiving the reparation will proceed to collect and enjoy it. Those interested in the work of the commissions will perform the service of the commissions. The United States, being in no wise interested in those things, would be and should be relieved of all obligations touching them. Any legislation necessary to remove supposed obstacles to trade or war legislation could be had within a fortnight. The result would be that the United States would settle down and deal with domestic problems. People would become at once contented in mind and happy in their old accustomed beliefs and traditions, and we would enjoy, in my judgment, a period of prosperity such as we have never before known.

But if we enter this League take on the obligations of administering this treaty, continue to meddle and intermeddle in European affairs and assist in the settling of all European questions, all these matters will be thrown into our home politics, will divert attention from our domestic affairs, will estrange our own people, and prevent the return of that poise and confidence so essential to our future prosperity and happiness and indispensable to the permanency of our institutions.

In view of the nature of our domestic problems and of their complex and searching import, it seems to me nothing less than a crime to throw into American affairs and American politics the torturing problem of European surveillance. It will present questions so long as we occupy that attitude which will dominate elections, divide our people, divert the public mind, engage the attention of Congress, and shape national policies to the exclusion of any proper consideration of things local or domestic. Instead of devoting our time to these problems and mobilizing our moral and intellectual forces for their solution, we will be dragged constantly and everlastingly into considering questions growing out of our commitments, of the sending of our soldiers hither and thither, and all the belligerent and antagonistic forces of the Old World. If the treaty is rejected these things will be put behind us.

What a venture, what a hazard it all is! Nations and peoples differing in beliefs, standards, customs, colors, languages, religions, and government, all joined together under a working combination to be controlled by unanimous consent. If civilization were seeking a deadly weapon for suicide would it need to go further? Japan vetoes the United States and the United States vetoes Japan. Then they get down to business to work out a unanimous consent—and another Shantung is the result. Or the whole thing blows up when touched by the Ithuriel spear of reality, as in the case of *Figure*.

Let us take an illustration, homely and practical, near home: Mr. Gary is a Covenanter, intoxicated with the desire to see Japan and the United States sitting at the same table and settling all questions of international concern by unanimous consent. There is now industrial war in the steel plant, and industrial peace is quite as essential to the preservation of civilization as any other kind of peace. Why does not Mr. Gary exemplify his faith by seeking out Mr. Foster, the leader of the union labor forces, and say to him, "You are a syndicalist, you believe in the closed shop, you believe in direct action. All these things are at war with my ideas; nevertheless, for the sake of humanity and industrial peace I take you to my bosom. You shall sit upon my Board of Directors. We will make it safe by doing nothing except by unanimous consent. You can veto me, and I can veto you. It will no doubt wreck this great business, the pride of my life, but for the sake of humanity and industrial peace it must be tried." Was there ever such quackery! As old Dr. Carlyle growled forth years ago, "Quack ridden, in that word lies all misery whatsoever."

From an English Point of View



The All-Highest.

John Bull and Uncle Sam Are Singing Lustily a New International Anthem Addressed to the Town Pump.



Strongly Against Any Semblance of Martyrdom—(In This Case Charles I., Napoleon Bonaparte, and Louis XVI. Have No Hesitation in Blackballing the Candidate Up for Election. The Emperor Nero, Richard Duke of Gloucester, and Ivan the Terrible Were, to Their Great Regret, Precluded by Slight Colds from Voting in the Same Lobby. So to Speak.

From the Bytanner.