

Monroe Inaugurated 100 Years Ago Today

President Wilson, Who Takes Oath of Office Today, Would Make Doctrine of His Predecessor of Century Ago Doctrine of World

THIS day, March 4, 1917, the day of the second inauguration of Woodrow Wilson as President of the United States, is the hundredth anniversary of the inauguration of President James Monroe. An even century marks the interval between the day of the man who gave the country its great foreign policy, which has lived through that century, and that of the man upon whom, more than upon any predecessor, a thousand times more, rests the responsibility of shaping that foreign policy to meet new conditions; the man who has declared that the Monroe Doctrine should be the doctrine of all the nations of the world.

Many things have happened in the forty-one days since President Wilson made his great address to the Senate. We have severed diplomatic relations with Germany since then. Within the week we have had the "overt act." Within another week we may be in the war ourselves. But if we look far enough into the future to get the ending of the world war and the beginning of the world peace within range, nothing has happened to nullify the desire of the man inaugurated today to extend the doctrine of the man inaugurated a hundred years ago today, the desire and determination expressed in the following peroration of that speech to the Senate on Jan. 22:

I am proposing, as it were, that the nations should with one accord adopt the doctrine of President Monroe as the doctrine of the world: That no nation should seek to extend its policy over any other nation or people, but that every people should be left free to determine its own policy, its own way of development, unhindered, unthreatened, un-

afraid, the little along with the great and powerful.

I am proposing that all nations henceforth avoid entangling alliances which would draw them into competition of power, catch them in a net of intrigue and selfish rivalry, and disturb their own affairs with influences intruded from without. There is no entangling alliance in a concert of power. When all unite to act in the same sense and with the same purpose, all act in the common interest and are free to live their own lives under a common protection.

I am proposing government by the consent of the governed; that freedom of the seas which in international conference after conference representatives of the United States have urged with the eloquence of those who are the convinced disciples of liberty; and that moderation of armaments which makes of armies and navies a power for order merely, not an instrument of aggression or of selfish violence.

These are American principles, American policies. We can stand for no others. And they are also the principles and policies of forward-looking men and women everywhere, of every modern nation, of every enlightened community. They are the principles of mankind and must prevail.

Although designed primarily and simply to warn all European nations against invasion of any part of the Western Hemisphere the Monroe Doctrine has been interpreted so many times and in so many different ways that many other things have been read into it, including the policy of the country based on Washington's advice concerning foreign entanglements. But President Wilson has recently said that there can never be another great war in which the United States will be neutral, and, to quote again from the Senate speech of January, which is recognized the world over as one of the greatest state papers ever coming from Washington, the President declared that the United States

must have a part in the making of world peace, in giving the Monroe Doctrine to the entire world. He said then:

It is inconceivable that the people of the United States should play no part in that great enterprise. To take part in such a service will be the opportunity for which they have sought to prepare themselves by the very principles and purposes of their polity and the approved practices of their Government, ever since the days when they set up a new nation in the high and honorable hope that it might in all that it was and did show mankind the way to liberty. They cannot, in honor, withhold the service to which they are now about to be challenged. They do not wish to withhold it. But they owe it to themselves and to the other nations of the world to state the conditions under which they will feel free to render it.

That service is nothing less than this—to add their authority and their power to the authority and force of other nations to guarantee peace and justice throughout the world. Such a settlement cannot now be long postponed. It is right that before it comes this Government should frankly formulate the conditions upon which it would feel justified in asking our people to approve its formal and solemn adherence to a league for peace. I am here to attempt to state those conditions.

The present war must first be ended, but we owe it to candor and to a just regard for the opinion of mankind to say that, so far as our participation in guarantees of future peace is concerned, it makes a great deal of difference in what way and upon what terms it is ended. The treaties and agreements which bring it to an end must embody terms which will create a peace that is worth guaranteeing and preserving, a peace that will win the approval of mankind, not merely a peace that will serve the several interests and immediate aims of the nations engaged.

We shall have no voice in determining what those terms shall be, but we shall, I feel sure, have a voice in determining whether they shall be made lasting or not by the guarantees of a universal covenant, and our judgment upon what is fundamental and essential as a condition precedent to per-

manency should be spoken now, not afterward, when it may be too late.

No covenant of co-operative peace that does not include the peoples of the New World can suffice to keep the future safe against war, and yet there is only one sort of peace that the peoples of America could join in guaranteeing.

The elements of that peace must be elements that engage the confidence and satisfy the principles of the American Governments, elements consistent with their political faith and the practical conviction which the peoples of America have once for all embraced and undertaken to defend.

The Monroe Doctrine, as first stated by the President whose name it bears, in his message to Congress on Dec. 2, 1823, (his second term,) was contained in these two paragraphs of that message:

In the discussion to which this interest has given rise, and in the arrangements by which they may terminate, the occasion has been deemed proper for asserting, as a principle in which rights and interests of the United States are involved, that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European Powers. * * *

We owe it, therefore, to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and shall not interfere. But with the Governments who have declared their independence and maintain it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them or controlling in any other manner their destiny by any European power in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States.