



THE INDEPENDENCE OF
THE
CZECHO-
SLOVAK
NATION

Quotations from
WILSON
VIVIANI
BALFOUR
PALACKÝ
MASARYK
SETON-WATSON
& others

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THE INDEPENDENCE OF
THE
CZECHO-SLOVAK
NATION

Bohemia
•
Silesia

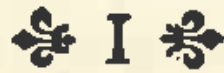


Moravia
•
Slovakia

1918
THE CZECHO-SLOVAK ARTS CLUB
New York

THE
GENTLEMAN'S
MAGAZINE





These (the Allies') war aims . . . imply the reorganization of Europe, guaranteed by a stable régime and based at once on respect for nationalities and on the right to full security and liberty of economic development possessed by all peoples, small and great . . . the liberation of the Italians, as also of the Slavs, Roumanians and Czechoslovaks from foreign domination.

ALLIES' REPLY

To President Wilson, Jan. 10, 1917

No nation should seek to extend its policy over any other nation or

people, but every people should be left free to determine its own policy, its own way of development unhindered, unthreatened, unafraid, the little along with the great and powerful.

PRESIDENT WILSON

To Congress, January 22, 1917

We shall fight . . . for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free.

PRESIDENT WILSON

To Congress, April 2, 1917

She (America), is fighting for no advantage or selfish object of her own, but for the liberation of people everywhere, from the aggression of autocratic force . . .

We are fighting for the liberty, the self-government and the undictated development of all peoples, and every feature of the settlement that concludes this war must be conceived and executed for that purpose.

PRESIDENT WILSON

To Russia, June 10, 1917

Peace should rest upon the rights of peoples, not the rights of governments, the rights of peoples great or small, weak or powerful, their equal right to freedom and security and self-government, and to a partici-

pation upon fair terms in the economical opportunities of the world.

PRESIDENT WILSON

To the Pope, August 27, 1917

'Self-determination' is not a mere phrase. It is an imperative principle of action, which statesmen will henceforth ignore at their peril.

PRESIDENT WILSON

To Congress, February 11, 1918

Every superior and powerful nation owes a debt to other nations, and after establishing its own independence must aid others to maintain their independence, or to conquer it.

M. RENÉ VIVIANI, *In the House of Representatives, May 3, 1917*

That self-governing communities are not to be treated as negligible simply because they are small, that the ruthless domination of one unscrupulous power imperils the future of civilization and the liberties of mankind, are truths of political ethics which the bitter experiences of war are burning into the soul of all freedom-loving peoples.

ARTHUR J. BALFOUR

British Foreign Minister

April 22, 1917

To those objects (to be achieved by the war), have now been added that of liberating populations oppressed by alien tyranny.

BRITAIN

To Russia, June 11, 1917

❖ II ❖

No lapse of time, no defeat of hopes, seems sufficient to reconcile the Czechs of Bohemia to incorporation with Austria.

WOODROW WILSON

“The State” New York 1894

When this unique . . . monarchy (Austria-Hungary) instead of giving equal justice to all, will allow one nation to dominate the others, when the Slavs will be made a subject race . . . then also nature will claim her own and her reaction will turn civil peace into discord, hopes into despair, and will finally cause hatred

and strife, the direction, magnitude and the end of which it is impossible to foresee . . . We Slavs are looking toward these events with a sincere regret, but without fear. We were before Austria was, and when Austria no longer is, we still shall be.

F. PALACKÝ

Czech Statesman and Historian, 1865

The national ideals of Bohemia and her reformation are unrealizable in Austria-Hungary, where the organization of brute force secures to the minority the means of exploiting the majority. Bohemia can never accept the ideal of Prussia and Germany, which would enslave the world by military drill and Machiavellian misuse of science and culture . . .

Bohemia has not been conquered by Austria . . she joined Austria and Hungary as *par inter pares*; she is legally just as independent a state as Hungary, and by the same right. The right has been violated by the dynasty . . but law and justice cannot be affected by material force or so-called historical necessities The Habsburgs have forfeited their rights in regard to Bohemia by their repeated and almost continuous treachery. Not the Czechs alone, but no nation can trust or accept Austro-Hungarian policy, for it is a policy of a single family, and only the advocates of mediaeval theocracy and absolutism can prefer the rights of one family to the rights of ten nations . . If Europe is to be regener-

ated this immoral and obsolete tradition must be finally overcome.

T. G. MASARYK

*Czech Statesman and Philosopher,
Leader of the Czecho-Slovak Revolution,
1917*

Relying in this historical moment upon the natural right of each nation to self-determination and free development, fortified further by irrevocable historical rights and state papers of undoubted validity, we shall demand at the head of our people the union of all branches of the Czecho-Slovak people into one democratic Bohemian state, which shall include the Slovak branch connected geographically with the historical Bohemian fatherland . . .

The Bohemian nation declares solemnly before all the world its determination to have liberty and independence, enjoyed by the ancient Bohemian crown. While demanding political independence, the Bohemian nation in accordance with the new democracy postulates for the entire Czecho-Slovak race the right of self-determination.

*Declaration of Czech Deputies
upon the opening of the Austrian
Parliament, May 30, 1917*

❖ III ❖

Europe, I hope, also realizes the awful moral situation of a nation which wholly sympathizes with the Allies, but whose sons, by the mere mechanical organization of militarism, are forced to fight against those whom they consider as Allies and whom they love as brethren.

T. G. MASARYK

In New Europe, January 25, 1917

The international position of Bohemia after the war will be the truest test of victory. . . When once a free Bohemia emerges in the heart of Europe we shall know that the

flood of German-Magyar aggression
is receding, never to rise again.

The New Statesman

December 9, 1916

Little is said of Bohemia, because everyone is agreed upon her rights and her hopes; because in each of the Allied countries it is considered that victory will restore independence to that vigorous nation which, under the German heel, has given such fine proofs of vitality, alike in the economic and intellectual sphere.

From an Editorial in Le Temps

Paris, January 2, 1917

Bohemia has shown by her whole past history an idealism and capacity for sacrifice and powers of endurance

and organization such as prove her a thousand times over to be worthy and able to live her own life. The nation which was the first in Europe to vindicate the principle of religious liberty has a great part to play in the task which lies before the Allies to-day—the vindication of political liberty for all the nations of Europe.

R. W. SETON-WATSON

In "German, Slav and Magyar"
London 1916

If at the end of this war the Czecho-Slovak nation attains its liberty and an open road to a new greatness and glory, no one will be able to say that this comes to them as a gift and that they had not done enough to deserve it. They are working and fight-

ing in the best spirit of a modern democracy, without narrow calculation of sacrifice and immediate reward.

L. B. NAMIER

“The Czecho-Slovaks” London 1917

We will do nothing to oppose your just desire for independence and free national expansion . . .

From a proclamation “To the Inhabitants of the Glorious Kingdom of Bohemia !” issued by the Prussian High Command, July, 1866

The transformation of Austria-Hungary into a state of nationalities, in the sense of Slav demands, is equivalent to the defeat of Germany.

Deutsche Politik, Nov. 23, 1917

❖ IV ❖

The Czecho-Slovaks, perfidiously abandoned at Tarnopol by our infantry, fought in such a way that the world ought to fall on its knees before them.

GENERAL BRUSILOFF

In Communiqué of July, 1917
about the Czecho-Slovak Bri-
gade of the Russian Army.

Monsieur le President

France has always supported with
all her power the national claims of
the Czechs and Slovaks. The number
of volunteers of these nationalities
who placed themselves under the

French flag from the declaration of war is important, and the gaps in their ranks prove incontestably the ardor with which they fought against our enemies.

Certain Allied Governments, in particular the Russian Provisional Government, did not hesitate to authorise the formation on our front of units composed of Czecho-Slovaks who escaped from the oppression of the enemy. It is just that these nationalities should be given means of defending under their flag side by side with us the cause of the right and liberty of the peoples; and it will be in accord with French traditions to assist the organization of an autonomous Czecho-Slovak army. If you share our view in this matter,

we have the honor to invite you to
sign the enclosed Decree . . .

GEORGES CLÉMENTEAU
STÉPHEN PICHON

*From a Recommendation to M.
Poincaré, of a Decree of Dec.
16, 1917, recognizing an Inde-
pendent Czecho-Slovak Army.*

