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THE WAR

AN ADDRESS BY

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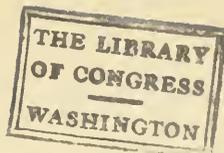
BEFORE THE CITY CLUB

ST. LOUIS, JANUARY 19, 1918

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THE WAR.

The times in which we live, and the circumstances which surround us, are epoch-making. The great war in which we are engaged is not only a military struggle, as most of the armed conflicts in history have been, but is a struggle in which all the resources of the countries involved, the military, naval, financial, mineral, agricultural, scientific, industrial and economic forces are marshaled and pitted against one another. Not only have the resources of the belligerents become involved, but the products of neutrals figure in the computation of the powers at war.

After the President had appeared before the Congress and had suggested that all the resources of this great country be pledged for the successful prosecution of the struggle which it then became apparent we could no longer remain neutral toward, the Congress with a free hand, with a convincing generosity, pledged all the resources of the most resourceful country on earth. The obligation was to furnish arms, munitions, food, clothing, money, which necessarily implies all the labor that is necessary to produce it, and all the capital necessary to finance it, in addition to the men actually under arms. It further contemplates the furnishing of aid to our co-belligerents.

The action met the hearty, almost unanimous approval and co-operation of the country, and both the action and the approval with which it met are most

significant, for men do not stake their all on causes in which they do not fully believe. The manner in which our countrymen have acted indicates the depth of our conviction and the righteousness in which they hold our cause.

One of the most remarkable phenomena in all history, if not the most remarkable, was the change in the attitude of the people of this country toward the war. In November, 1916, they were satisfied that we could rely upon the good faith of Germany and could settle by negotiation the differences which existed between us. By February, 1917, we were convinced there was no good faith in the Imperial German Government. We then realized that all the time during which we had honorably and peaceably tried to elicit from Germany a recognition of the rights of American citizens, she was dishonorably carrying on the negotiations to kill time and was secretly preparing to wage a submarine campaign of increased intensity in utter disregard of humanity, of the laws of nations in general and of the rights of Americans in particular. We had heard much of German perfidy, but it had not been brought home to us directly. We had seen poor little Belgium crushed under the Prussian heel because she opposed a wrongful invasion, her homes destroyed, her women raped, her children mutilated and her men deported for enforced labor like the galley slaves of old. We had seen the violated neutrality of little Luxembourg, that which, like Belgium's, had been guaranteed by sacred treaty by Germany.

We had seen little Serbia trampled upon and absolutely obliterated, as a country, from the map, because of the territorial greed of the Central Powers.

We had seen unprepared and unsuspecting, but

valiant France invaded by a foe which we now fully realize practiced the barbarities of the Hun of old in his victorious advance. Thank God, his progress was blocked by the battle of the Marne, and that he is being little by little forced from the ground so treacherously taken.

We had seen these things, but they had not been brought home. We had heard, but we did not fully realize then nor how we were interwoven with the destinies of the world. Nor did we really appreciate that the national dishonesty of the Prussian Autocracy, their perfidy, their brutality, their subordination of righteousness and honor to material ambition, which has been so clearly demonstrated to their enemies in Europe, was being manifested to us under the guise of diplomatic negotiation.

Less than a year ago, on the afternoon of the thirty-first of January, 1917, the Government of the United States was advised by Germany that that very night, at midnight, she would commence an unrestricted submarine warfare, in violation of all rules of international law, in defiance of all history, but that of their own brutal ancestors, in contravention of the just claims of humanity, and in flagrant failure to differentiate between the liability of armed forces and the rights of peaceable women and children. That afternoon the die was cast—and Germany cast it.

But almost immediately following it, the temper of the American people was roused to the last degree by the announcement of the Zimmerman note to Mexico, which disclosed the military intrigue of the Imperial German Government with one of our neighbors, at a time when we were all on friendly terms, even proposing to give to Mexico part of the territory of the United States.

Then the absolute dishonesty, the perfidy of the powers that be in Germany became apparent to the most incredulous. Since then, the story has been one continuous succession of acts of dishonesty, double dealing and crookedness. It is too long to relate in detail, and unnecessary to repeat the shameful tale of intrigue and machination. It is sufficient to say that the authority of the Imperial German Government as now centralized, and the powers by it exercised, were proved such as to be antagonistic to the peaceful pursuits of man, subversive of the ideals of humanity, and destructive of practices and prospects which two thousand years of Christianity have made possible.

The stakes could not be greater. We are the defenders of all posterity and the guardians of the honor of the future.

To accomplish the objects we set our minds upon, an enormous organization has been created and is still being increased. It must be all inclusive and must have, not only the man power and woman power, but the will power of the entire country. We must all not only help, but want to help.

The executive departments in Washington and the extraordinary boards and commissions which have been created to meet the exigencies of an immeasurable undertaking have done an immense amount of work. There probably have been some mistakes. The men would not be human if there have not been some. but what we want is a human organization, the best and most effective machine humanity will allow, but human, nevertheless, and, in that respect, not like the cold, hard, material, calculating selfishness which characterizes the machine under the domination of Prussia.

There is no way an adequate conception can be given of the amount of work which has been done in building this organization and preparing for the struggle. We are too close to it and too much a part of it to appreciate it and see it in its proper proportions. As the years roll by and the future permits a point of view at sufficient distance to give a retrospect, the work done and the things accomplished by the United States during 1917 will stand in their real light and will amaze us.

The greatest part of it has fallen on the President and four executive departments, those of State, War, Navy and Treasury. Let me give you just a few figures to indicate something of the enormity of their work.

The War Department, less than a year ago, reported an army of about 127,600 officers and men included. The last day of 1917 there were 110,856 officers and 1,428,650 men—an army six times as great as was ours in the Spanish War. To support this army, Congress has appropriated for the fiscal year we are now in, \$7,527,338,716.00 as compared with \$403,000,000 for the year ending last June, and as compared with \$203,000,000 for the year previous. This is a sum nearly double the total operating revenues of all the railroads in the United States for the year 1917. This great sum has been either disbursed or contracted for disbursement and there has been not a single whisper or suspicion of dishonesty or graft in connection with any part of the amount. The Ordnance Division of the War Department alone occupies fourteen acres of floor space for office work and has an office force of nearly 30,000 persons. That is just a sample of what the Department is doing. The experts may disagree among themselves as to the

propriety or impropriety of certain acts, but the fact remains that we have an army of more than a million and a half, practically every man is fully uniformed and accoutred and there is a gun for every man who is in a position to use it—and then some.

The Navy Department shows a proportional increase—from 68,000 enlisted men in January, 1917, to a total naval establishment of more than 350,000 men. A year ago its monthly expenditures were \$8,000,000. Now they are about \$60,000,000. A year ago it had 300 vessels in commission. Now there are many more than a thousand. And be it said, to its infinite credit, that it has helped in the transportation of and has guarded the thousands of men we have sent abroad and has landed every one safely on the other side.

The Treasury Department, with the enormous responsibility of allocating and disbursing, not millions, but billions, and its work necessarily precedent thereto, gathering in the money before it could be disbursed, has had an enormous undertaking, unprecedented, and has successfully executed it.

The Department of State, as you can well imagine, has had its work increased hundreds of per cent, both in importance and in amount, and has had to increase its forces at home and abroad enormously.

The other departments and the extraordinary boards and commissions are just as busy. But they are all under the direction and guidance of that spokesman of humanity who sits in the White House and who has so recently set out the objects it would be necessary to obtain in order to secure peace. His is the real and final responsibility for which he will account to the people.

In a masterful way the President has defined the conditions which can lead to peace, and which we

hold as our objects for attainment. Of the fourteen which he enumerated, there is not one which applies particularly to America, or which holds any special or selfish gain for America. That alone is indicative of the magnanimous and unselfish spirit of the country. It is not territory, or advantages of any kind, for which we fight, but for principles, in defense of the rights of America and Americans, and to insure to all posterity an opportunity for peaceable growth and autonomous government, as each nation for itself may choose. America is convinced of the righteousness of her cause. Her ideals are those of honesty, liberty and justice. They are diametrically opposed to the perfidy, duplicity, barbarity and imperialism of the German Government as at present administered.

I wish I could translate some of the thoughts and sentiments of Washington, could convey to your minds something of that determination which is there felt. There is neither optimism nor pessimism, just calm, clear, scrutinizing confidence in the outcome, founded on a grim determination that the welfare of the United States of America can only continue and the peace of the world can only be resumed when power is divested from the centralized irresponsibility of the Prussian military circle.

But to make that determination more effective, to hasten the end, the mental, moral and physical cooperation of every individual is necessary. By those who are not a part of the armed forces, the practice of self-abnegation is necessary. Each can do his part to conserve such of our resources as comes within his control—the food, the fuel, the clothing; each by his mental attitude can help and encourage those who are charged with the more active administration of the

necessary affairs; each can abstain from criticism until he knows all the facts, and then can criticize in a way that will help, rather than in a way that will interfere with, the proper working of the whole organization. He who maliciously criticizes is an enemy to this country, and he who thoughtlessly does so is as harmful as an enemy.

All of our resources have been pledged, and it is necessary that steps be taken to make them all available for the main purpose. The youth and vigor of the country have been drafted to furnish the quota to carry the guns and do the actual fighting—and a finer, nobler lot of men never were assembled than today are ready to die for the honor of the Stars and Stripes; capital has been called upon to furnish the railroads; natural resources have been controlled in that coal has been denied for certain purposes for a certain time. Today no one can tell what additional deprivations may be necessary, to what extremes we shall have to go. Only one thing is certain, and that is, whatever shall be necessary to do, that we will do. Washington requested that his sword, once sheathed, be not again unsheathed except in the cause of righteousness, but when for that unsheathed, that it be not again sheathed until the object was accomplished. America's army today is as Washington's sword, and will not be disbanded until the objects which America has announced are attained, until the Star Spangled Banner from the battlements of Europe shall proclaim for all time that military autocracy and imperialism are removed from the face of Europe and that the world is safe for democracy.

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