

This dissertation has been 63-3457
microfilmed exactly as received

CHAPPELL, Ben Arlen, 1930-
AN ANALYSIS OF THE ARGUMENTS USED IN THE
UNITED STATES SENATE AGAINST AMERICA'S
ENTRY INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

The University of Oklahoma, Ph.D., 1963
Speech-Theater

University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
GRADUATE COLLEGE

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ARGUMENTS USED IN THE
UNITED STATES SENATE AGAINST AMERICA'S
ENTRY INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
BEN ARLEN CHAPPELL
Norman, Oklahoma

1962

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ARGUMENTS USED IN THE
UNITED STATES SENATE AGAINST AMERICA'S
ENTRY INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

APPROVED BY

Wayne E. Brockriede

William R. Carmack

Grace L. Foster

Samuel M. Davis

Re Baubaz

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This dissertation was submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the doctor's degree at the University of Oklahoma. The candidate wishes to acknowledge the assistance of his Dissertation Committee: Dr. Wayne E. Brockriede, Chairman; Dr. Ansel H. Resler; Dr. William R. Carmack; Dr. Rudolph C. Bambas; and Dr. Donnell M. Owings.

In addition, the library staff of the University of Southern Mississippi, especially Miss Anna Roberts, Mrs. Mary Cagle, Mrs. Maude Smith and Mrs. Annette Wilder, is also acknowledged for making requisite primary source material available.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. HISTORY OF THE CONTROVERSY	11
III. PHASE ONE: THE VOTE ON THE COVENANT IS DELAYED	27
IV. PHASE TWO: AN ATTEMPT TO AMEND THE COVENANT	103
V. PHASE THREE: THE COVENANT IS REJECTED	143
VI. CONCLUSIONS	198
BIBLIOGRAPHY	231

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ARGUMENTS USED IN THE
UNITED STATES SENATE AGAINST AMERICA'S
ENTRY INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In 1914, the League to Enforce Peace was founded to establish an international organization for peace. By 1917, the League had spread throughout America, steadily gaining support. During the war years Americans concluded generally that some sort of organized peace was necessary to prevent another such devastation.

The United States Chamber of Commerce reported that 96 per cent of more than 700 business groups polled favored creation of some sort of a society of nations. A survey of 99 leading newspapers showed that 91 favored world organization, while only 8 opposed it. . . . The League to Enforce Peace developed into a strong nation-wide organization, and soon had branches in all states except Minnesota, Nebraska, and Nevada. . . . Meetings were held, pamphlets were distributed, letters were sent to civic, church, educational, business, labor, fraternal, and other leaders.

Men of the stature of Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, William Howard Taft and Henry Cabot Lodge voiced their

¹Alan Cranston, The Killing of the Peace (New York: The Viking Press, 1945), pp. 7-8.

approval of the proposal to establish a league of nations.

President Wilson left for Paris soon after the armistice to assist in formulating the peace terms. Opposition to his departure also initiated the first significant opposition to a league of nations. For seventeen months the Senate debated the merits of the league covenant; the Senate chamber became the forum for opposition to the league. During that time the Treaty of Versailles, which fathered the new league, was rejected by the Senate four times. Although the covenant inspired some genuine opposition, these rejections did not reflect general Senatorial attitudes; seventy-nine Senators voted for the league in one form or another. These rejections also did not reflect the attitude of a majority of the electorate. Although the people apparently were willing to accept something other than the original proposal by the fall of 1919, a vast majority favored some league to no organization at all.

Various writers have blamed the Senate, Wilson or the isolationists for the defeat. Historians cite party politics, Congressional jealousy of the President, and the personality conflicts between Wilson and Lodge as contributing factors. While these explanations suggest why the Senate voted as it did, they do not answer the question of interest to the rhetorician: "What role did persuasive speaking play in the debate in the Senate and in changing the attitudes of the American people?" This study through an

analysis of the arguments used in the Senate against America's entry into the League of Nations will investigate the relationship of the arguments to the Senate vote and to American attitudes.

That the rhetorician should be interested in the league debate is evident. On December 18, 1918, the Boston Transcript predicted.

One of the great debates in the history of popular government is about to begin in the Senate of the United States. It will attract the interest of the leaders of the Old World no less than of the people of the new, for it will afford our Allies a barometer of sentiment in the place and among the men, who under the Constitution, have the power from the people to veto even the work and wishes of the President.²

One of the participants, Senator Lodge, described one of the values of the debate.

The value of the great and, I think I may say, historic debate in the Senate was that every day the American people learned more clearly what the covenant of the League of Nations which Mr. Wilson presented to them really meant, what dangers it threatened and what perilous purposes it might conceal. It was a very remarkable debate. It rendered an immense service in the instruction of the people.³

The Washington Post similarly described how Senate arguments would be employed to alter public opinion.

During the two or three months of President Wilson's absence in Europe the best orators of both sides will tour the country and discuss before the people the issue that has now become paramount in American politics.

²Cited in Denna F. Fleming, The United States and the League of Nations (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1932), p. 70.

³Henry Cabot Lodge, The Senate and the League of Nations (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), pp. 211-212.

The speeches made by friends and opponents of the league in the Senate in the last two weeks, and President Wilson's Boston and New York addresses, as well as the speeches of Mr. Taft, will be circulated broadcast in the mails, and will serve as textbooks for each side of the controversy.⁴

Wilson's decision to take his case to the people was probably also predicated on his belief that his earlier estimate that the league enjoyed unqualified endorsement was no longer valid.

The leaders of the Senate opposition to the league admitted the necessity for debate; Lodge confessed to Borah that an early vote on the peace treaty would result in its ratification. Senator Moses also said that a quick decision by the Senate would have meant immediate ratification.⁵

Thus, the Senate debated the proposition to answer their own questions about the covenant and to inform the American people of their answers.

Method Used in the Study

The debate on the League of Nations occurred in three phases. The first phase, from November of 1918, to May of 1919, was characterized by efforts to delay a decision on the peace treaty. The second phase, from May until November, 1919, was a period of attempts to alter the proposed covenant. The final phase, from November of 1919 to March of

⁴March 3, 1919, p. 1.

⁵W. Stull Holt, Treaties Defeated by the Senate (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1933), p. 282.

1920, was represented by unsuccessful attempts to pass the treaty with and without modifying reservations. League opponents were divided into three segments: those who wanted to settle the peace terms before discussing a league; those who wanted to alter the proposed terms; and those who opposed any league. As the major contentions and supporting arguments were developed, these groups operated independently and in combination to implement the various opposition strategies. For example, all three sets of critics combined to implement the strategy of delay to obtain more anti-league support within the Senate and from the American people. The postponement critics joined the revisionists in implementing the strategy of amendment to protect America's interests in the proposed world organization. The rejectionists received their support from the pro-league Senators rather than from other league critics in the strategy of defeat.

The Congressional Record was analyzed from November, 1918, to March, 1920. Although all of the speeches relevant to the league controversy were consulted, only those of league opponents are analyzed and evaluated. Refutation by league supporters is considered only when it has a direct bearing on the development of anti-league arguments. The speeches of sixty-one Senators are considered in the process. The various arguments used by league critics are identified and catalogued under three major contentions.

The anti-league arguments are analyzed on the basis of their influence on two audiences. The Senate was the immediate audience. The American people constituted an indirect audience as many of the speeches were directed as much to the electorate as to the Senators. In addition to the speeches in the Senate, select newspapers, periodicals, and contemporary accounts are combined with secondary source material in describing the general attitude of the audiences.

The arguments of league critics are then analyzed on the basis of logical standards and on their probable acceptability to the two audiences. In general, this study reports what "was said" rather than speculates about "what could or should have been said."

Plan of the Study

Chapter II presents background data for the controversy. Data concerning the evolution of an internationally organized peace movement in America is followed by more specific information on the League of Nations. The chapter builds a setting for the debate, including the development of Congressional opposition to the League's formation. The background chapter concludes with the adjournment of the sixty-fifth Congress, March 4, 1919.

Chapter III is an analysis of the first phase of the controversy. During the period from November, 1918, to May, 1919, the primary function of the arguments of all three kinds of league critics is to delay Senate action on the

covenant for a league of nations. The three major contentions used by opponents of the league, along with their developing arguments, are discussed.

Chapter IV is an analysis of the second phase of the controversy. When the sixty-sixth Congress convened in special session, a majority of the Senators and American people still favored the general outline of the league of nations. On the other hand, that a modified covenant would be more acceptable was evident. Opposition strategy shifted from one of delay to one of amendment during the period under analysis from May to November, 1919.

Chapter V is an analysis of the final phase of the controversy. In late October, 1919, league critics were convinced that attempts to alter the covenant proper were not possible. The bulk of the critics then passed fourteen reservations; they solicited support from the rejectionists to achieve their purpose. The chapter discusses the reservation and the rejection of the covenant from November of 1919 to March, 1920.

Chapter VI represents the conclusions of the study. Other factors which contributed to the treaty rejection are analyzed for their influence in the debate. The probable effect of the arguments on the Senators is discussed while the effect of the Senate arguments on the American people is summarized to consider why the people did not violently object to the Senate rejection of a popular proposition. The

conclusions of this study do not evaluate whether the Senate was right in rejecting the League of Nations membership for America. Various value judgments are made, however, on the arguments which league critics used to justify their positions.

Previous Research on the League Controversy

The most comprehensive historical account of the league controversy is Fleming's. While his purpose was historical, Professor Fleming especially recognized the role of public speaking as a factor in the treaty outcome.

Rhetorical works on the league controversy include figure studies on Borah and Wilson although no studies were discovered on two of the leading figures in the controversy, Henry Cabot Lodge and William Howard Taft.⁶

The only other rhetorical work is the one by Ralph A. Micken. Micken's purpose was "to provide in careful summary and exact text a selective edition of the League of Nations debate as it occurred on the floor of the Senate and to provide a rhetorical analysis of that debate."⁷ Through the

⁶Waldo W. Braden, A Rhetorical Criticism of Intervention of William E. Borah's Senate Speeches on the League of Nations, 1918-1920 (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1942); Anna J. Pendleton, Woodrow Wilson's Speeches on the Western Tour in 1919 (Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Illinois, 1931); Ruth Rucker, Woodrow Wilson's concept of American Principles As Revealed in the Speeches of His Western Tour, September 4-25 (Unpublished Master's thesis, Northwestern University, 1936).

⁷Ralph A. Micken, A Rhetorical Study of the Senate Debate on the League of Nations (Unpublished Ph.D.

speeches of eight Senators, Lodge, Borah, Reed, Knox, Hitchcock, Williams, Walsh and McCumber, Micken sought to discover the principal arguments and to arrange them according to logical development. This study varies from Micken's in two respects. First, this study investigates the speeches of all the league critics. Micken's list includes only five opponents--three rejectionists, one strict reservationist, and one mild reservationist. The views of the irreconcilables Borah, Reed and Knox do not reflect those of the majority of the league critics in the Senate or in the nation. As Chapter VI demonstrates, Lodge's purpose was to defeat the treaty as much as if he had been an irreconcilable. The remaining critic, Senator McCumber, was atypical of the reservationists as he voted for the proposed covenant as well as the reserved treaty in November. The relationship of opposing arguments to the two audiences can be more clearly represented by considering the arguments of all the critics. Second, this study differs from Micken's in analyzing only the arguments of the critics, whereas Micken considers the controversy as a debate and, consequently, analyzes also the arguments of three league supporters. The league opponents' adaptation to their audiences is of more concern in this study than the emphasis on presentation and refutation of arguments which characterize the Micken study.

Micken concludes that those who consider the

dissertation, Northwestern University, 1948).

controversy a "great debate" and those who feel it was an "incoherent gabfest" can both find support for their extreme views. The present study concludes that most of the speaking was not part of a debate as such; in essence there was relatively little clash. League opponents based their presentation on appeals to partisanship, Senatorial prerogatives and the protection of national interests while league supporters generally argued on the basis of what would be best for world peace. On the other hand, the arguments of league critics more closely approximated the motives and beliefs shared by the American people. As the controversy unfolded, people agreed more and more with the position taken by league critics that the proposed covenant would not most effectively protect America's interests. Thus, from a rhetorical standpoint, league critics were successful in influencing the attitudes of some in the Senate and many in the nation.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF THE CONTROVERSY

The idea for a league of nations was not merely the result of the horrors of World War I. As Denna F. Fleming noted: "Dreams of a parliament of man and federation of the world began centuries ago and plans for a league to keep the peace were proposed long before the twentieth century."¹ The Quadruple Alliance of 1815, the International Peace Congress in 1848, the International League for Peace and Freedom in 1867, the International Women's Peace Society in Europe in 1896, the Nobel Peace Foundation in 1910 were some of the major organizations aiming at the establishment of peace.²

Formulation of the League Idea in America

Although the American Peace Society was founded in 1828, not until the aftermath of the Russo-Japanese War did

¹Fleming, p. 3.

²For more details see John I. Knudson, A History of the League of Nations (Atlanta: Turner E. Smith & Co., 1938), pp. 19-23; Gerard J. Mangone, A Short History of International Organization (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1959), pp. 12-127.

Americans demonstrate any appreciable interest in world organizations for peace.³ In 1905 a proposal for such an organization was initiated by Richard Bartholdt, Representative from Missouri, and Andrew Carnegie fostered an international meeting in New York City in 1907.⁴

Among early American proponents of world peace organizations were two ex-Presidents. Theodore Roosevelt's experiences as mediator in the Russo-Japanese war intensified his interest in an organized peace. In an address before the Nobel Prize Committee in 1910 Roosevelt said: "It would be a master stroke if those great powers honestly bent on peace would form a League of Peace."⁵ In 1915 he re-emphasized this belief.

The one permanent move for obtaining peace which has yet been suggested with any reasonable chance of obtaining its object is by an agreement among the great powers, in which each would pledge itself, not only to abide by the decisions of a common tribunal, but to back with force the decisions of that common tribunal. The great civilized nations of the World which do possess force, actual or immediately potential, should combine by solemn agreement in a great world league for the peace of righteousness.⁶

³Merle E. Curti, The American Peace Crusade, 1815-1860 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1929); for later treatments see A.C.F. Beales, The History of Peace (London: G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., 1931), pp. 119-276, and Benjamin F. Trueblood, The Development of the Peace Idea (Boston: Plimpton Press, 1932), pp. 1-182.

⁴Fleming, pp. 3-4.

⁵Independent, LXVIII (May 12, 1910), 1027.

⁶Theodore Roosevelt, America and the World War (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1925), pp. 80-81. His letters during this period indicate his desire for a world-wide

Another ex-President, William Howard Taft, spoke before the Century Club in New York, 1914.

The time has come when the peace-loving nations of the world should organize themselves into some sort of society in which they should agree to settle their own disputes by amicable methods, and say to any nation that started to go to war: "You have got to keep the peace or have all the rest of us against you."⁷

On July 17, 1915, the League to Enforce Peace held its initial meeting. This league, the most influential movement for peace and international co-operation, advocated that the United States join a concert of nations which bound its members to four principles:

1. To submit all justiciable questions to an international court of justice both upon the merits and upon any issue as to its jurisdiction;
2. To submit all other questions to a council of conciliation for hearing, consideration, and recommendation;
3. To jointly use forthwith both their economic and military forces against any member committing acts of hostility against another before submitting to arbitration or conciliation;
4. To hold periodic conferences to formulate and codify international law.⁸

organization; Eltine E. Morison, (ed.), The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt, 8 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), Vols. V and VI.

⁷Cited in A.B. Hart, "His Place in American History," Current History, XXXII (May, 1930), 293.

⁸Fleming, pp. 8-9. For further details see Robert Goldsmith, A League to Enforce Peace (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1917); Ruhl F. Bartlett, The League to Enforce Peace (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944); the documents and correspondence of Theodore Marburg, chairman of the League's foreign organization, are also informative, John H. Latane (ed.), Development of the League of Nations Idea, 2 vols. (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1932), I; see also Marburg's own book, League of Nations: A Chapter in the

By 1916 League organizations had branched into almost every section of the country.

At one of the League's regional meetings in New York City, May 27, 1916, Henry Cabot Lodge joined its ranks of influential citizens. Lodge believed that America had exhausted the possibilities of voluntary arbitration: "I think the next step is that which this league proposes, and that is to put force behind international peace, an international league or agreement, or tribunal, for peace." The Senator, an astute historian, knew how Americans were likely to react to such a proposal.

I know the difficulties that arise when we speak of anything which seems to involve an alliance. But I do not believe that when Washington warned us against "entangling alliances" he meant for one moment that we should not join with the other civilized nations of the world if a method could be found to diminish war and encourage peace.⁹

He left his audience with this thought: "We may not solve it that way, but, if we cannot, it can be solved in no other."

On that same platform, Woodrow Wilson also spoke for an organized peace movement. He had told his brother-in-law, Dr. Stockton Anson, in the fall of 1914: "After the war all nations must be absorbed into some great association of nations whereby all shall guarantee the integrity of each so that any one nation violating the agreement between all of

History of the Movement, 2 vols. (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1917), I.

⁹Lodge, pp. 131-132.

them shall bring punishment on itself automatically."¹⁰ Now he told his audience that the United States should join with other nations to preserve the freedom of the seas and to prevent any war begun without warning or without full submission of the causes of the conflict to the peoples of the world.¹¹ This speech initiated a series of Wilson's appeals for a league of free peoples which he developed in his "War Message," April 2, 1917, followed with his plea to the Russian people, May 26, 1917, and climaxed in his famous "Fourteen Points," January 8, 1918.¹²

Wilson differed from previous proponents. He was anxious to assist personally in the preparation of a peace document. Colonel House, an intimate advisor, encouraged Wilson in his desire. House gave his reasons for wanting Wilson to be a part of the peace formulation: ". . . he, of all the statesmen now living, is the only one in a position of power necessary to accomplish the task."¹³

America Prepares for a League of Nations

The first step toward peace was to win the war.

¹⁰Cited in Fleming, p. 7.

¹¹Ray Stannard Baker and William E. Dodd, The Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson, 6 vols. (New York: Harper & Bros., 1925-1927), III, 184-188; hereafter cited as Public Papers.

¹²Ibid., "War Address" text, V, 17-21; appeal to Russian people, V, 49-51; "Fourteen Points," V, 155-162.

¹³Charles Seymour (ed.), The Intimate Papers of Colonel House, 4 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1926), I, 295.

America's investment in men and millions paid off. Victory became apparent in the fall of 1918. As Wilson made plans to head America's delegation to Versailles he became very interested in the outcome of the approaching Congressional elections. He wanted to prevent Republicans from assuming control of Congress for two special reasons.

Primarily, a Republican victory would mean the reorganization of the Senate which would place the all-important Foreign Relations Committee under the ranking Republican member of that committee, Henry Cabot Lodge. Lodge veered from his pro-league stand of 1916. Whether or not this change was due to his dislike of Wilson, allegedly stemming from the 1916 presidential campaign, is a matter for historical interpretation.¹⁴ At any rate, when Lodge addressed Congress on February 1, 1917, his remarks were decidedly anti-league.¹⁵ To face Lodge as Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee was, no doubt, distasteful to Wilson. As later evidence will prove, Lodge's chairmanship would prove to be influential in the defeat of the treaty.

A second reason for desiring a strong Democratic

¹⁴In the waning days of the 1916 election there was a rumor to the effect that Wilson was making underhanded deals with the German government. Lodge used this rumor as the basis for a last minute attack on Wilson. Wilson's statement to the press: "This charge is simply not true," could not be refuted with facts. Lodge was put in the embarrassing position of dropping the charge and publically apologizing.

¹⁵Lodge, pp. 270-296; although he lists the date as February 28, the actual date was February 1, 1917.

victory was that he recognized that a militant minority could block ratification. He was not unaware of the difficulties his predecessors had encountered in treaty confirmation. He had said to the country on March 4, 1917:

The Senate of the United States is the only legislative body in the world which cannot act when its majority is ready for actions. A little group of willful men, representing no opinion but their own, have rendered the great Government of the United States helpless and contemptible.¹⁶

Determined not to be personally "helpless and contemptible" in the eyes of the world, Wilson issued a call to the electorate asking for the return of a Democratic Congress.

If you have approved of my leadership and wish me to continue to be your unembarrassed spokesman in affairs at home and abroad, I earnestly beg that you will express yourselves unmistakably to that effect by returning a Democratic majority to both the Senate and the House of Representatives.¹⁷

Angry that he had violated his own war-time truce on politics, Republican leaders intensified their campaigns and won control of both houses.¹⁸

Obviously an election is not won or lost due to one issue and Wilson did not interpret the results as a mandate against his plans to head America's peace delegation. Nor, apparently, did he consider the results in selecting his

¹⁶John R. Bolling, et. al., (eds.), Chronology of Woodrow Wilson (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1927), p. 213.

¹⁷Public Papers, V, 286-288.

¹⁸For an analysis of this election see Charles P. Howland, Survey of American Foreign Relations, 1928 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1928), pp. 239-246.

fellow delegates, which included no Congressman and only Henry White, professional diplomat, represented the victorious Republicans. Wilson received criticism for ignoring both the Senate and the Republicans. Critics said he should have taken Taft and Lodge. To have selected Taft, a supporter of the League of Nations, may have been wise; to have chosen Lodge is another matter. The determination that the Senate should assume its "rightful place" in treaty-making led Lodge to give White a memorandum which he was to show to the other negotiators. The note was to inform them of "the real feeling of the people of the United States and certainly the Senate." According to Lodge, the feeling was not for a league of nations at that time. Lodge obviously planned to limit Wilson's activities with this information; the memorandum read, in part: "This knowledge may in certain contingencies be very important to them [the Allies] in strengthening their position." White did not reveal the note.¹⁹ Lodge would obviously have been in a position to circumscribe Wilson's activities if he had been in Paris. Thus, although Wilson might have allayed some severe criticism by taking Lodge, his preparation of the League covenant might have been seriously hampered.

¹⁹ Allan Nevins, Henry White: Thirty Years of American Diplomacy (New York: Harper & Bros., 1930), pp. 353-356.

Congressional Opposition Toward
the League of Nations

Minority Leader Lodge was not the only Senatorial opponent of the league idea. Others, notably Borah, Poin-
dexter, and Reed, voiced even stronger disapproval. While
Lodge was leaving an opening for some future league this trio
denied that for America to join "any league" was practical.
Their remarks might have become immersed in the pages of the
Congressional Record had it not been for the furor raised by
Wilson's departure. Many Senators openly criticized the
President while others sought to censure Wilson officially.
Senator Sherman, Republican from Illinois, proposed a reso-
lution in December which declared the office of the President
vacant while Wilson was in Paris. On the same day Senator
Knox introduced a resolution which had the effect of repu-
diating the President's trip. The resolution stated in part:

That any project for any general league of nations for
any sweeping change in the ancient laws of the sea . . .
should be postponed for separate consideration not alone
by the victorious belligerents, but by all the nations
if and when at some future time general conferences on
those subjects might be deemed useful.²⁰

Although neither proposal passed, the final two weeks in
December found the pages of the Washington Post filled with
stories that the Allied Powers concurred with the Knox Reso-
lution that there should be "peace now, league later."²¹

²⁰U.S., Congressional Record, 65th Cong., 3rd Sess.,
1918, LVII, Part 1, 23; hereafter cited as Cong. Rec.; un-
less otherwise indicated all citations are to the 3rd Session.

²¹December 13-30, 1918.

In an address to Congress on December 21, Senator Lodge echoed these postponement sentiments. He said that five of the fourteen points, including the one concerning the League of Nations, must be deleted if a peace treaty was to be ratified. Lodge warned the world that it was within the Constitutional rights of the Senate to amend the treaty in whole or in part.²² Commenting on the speech the Post noted: "There is a possibility for some understanding to be reached between these two leaders, but it is evident that the President cannot afford to completely ignore the warning of Senator Lodge."²³

The month of January was a frustrating one for League opponents. Most of the proceedings in Paris took place behind closed doors. The dearth of facts did not curtail critics' attack but it meant that either suppositions or rumors served as premises for their arguments. Around the middle of January the Post reported that a draft of the covenant was soon to be released. Even though a preliminary copy "it is felt in administration circles that much of the criticism leveled at the plan by Senators Lodge and Knox will disappear."²⁴

²²Cong. Rec., 1, 724-734.

²³Washington Post, December 22, 1918, p. 1.

²⁴Ibid., January 13, 1919, p. 1.

The Covenant Draft Is Published,
February 14, 1919

"I think I can say of this document that it is at one and the same time a practical document and a humane document," Wilson told the Third Plenary Session of the Peace Conference as he officially presented the document. "It is practical, and yet it is intended to purify, to rectify, to elevate."²⁵ The Stars and Stripes, printing an eye-witness account, stated: "The privates who heard a draft of the Covenant of the League of Nations believe that their comrades did not die in vain."²⁶ "It is sufficient for the moment that it is born, and no birth save one is of greater importance to mankind," wrote the Republican St. Louis Globe-Democrat.²⁷

Senatorial reactions were not as favorable. Lodge and Knox declined to make any comment until they had read the document carefully. The more vitriolic irreconcilables had no such qualms. The next day they began to blast the treaty as "un-American," a chorus to the verses they had sung since November. Senator Frelinghuysen stated: "I stand for Americanism and the Monroe Doctrine; this violates both." Borah agreed that the treaty violated the Monroe doctrine while Sherman opposed "any league that takes away American

²⁵Public Papers, V, 428.

²⁶Cited in Cranston, p. 60.

²⁷Cited in New York Times, February 15, 1919, p. 1.

sovereignty."²⁸

Those who did not dwell on the glories of the Monroe doctrine echoed the Washington Post's "unconstitutional" claims.

Even though the Senate should unanimously ratify a treaty transferring the war-making power to a league of nations, still the old Constitution would stand unimpaired, and all their effort would be in vain, unless the people should modify their will as expressed in the organic law which controls all parts of the government.²⁹

Later, league critics were to develop further the claim that the covenant was unconstitutional.

Wilson Returns from Paris, February 24, 1919

The President entered the stronghold of Lodge not as a partisan measure but in answer to an invitation from the Bostonians who awaited anxiously for a first-hand account of the negotiations. Personal advisors were divided on what Wilson should say. One faction wanted him to say nothing specific until he had held his scheduled meeting with the Foreign Relations Committee; the other faction insisted he answer his critics. That evening he satisfied both. The first portion of his speech briefly described the actions in Paris, commenting more on the reasons for the delay than on any results. As he developed his favorite theme, that America was the hope of the world, he unleashed a challenge to his critics.

²⁸Washington Post, February 16, 1919, p. 10.

²⁹Ibid., p. 4.

We set up this Nation to make men free and we did not confine our conception and purpose to America, and now we will make men free. If we did not do that all the fame of America would be gone and all her power would be dissipated. She would then have to keep her power for those narrow, selfish, provincial purposes which seem so dear to some minds that have no sweep beyond the nearest horizon. I should welcome no sweeter challenge than that. I have fighting blood in me and it is sometimes a delight to let it have scope. . . .³⁰

The Boston audience cheered and prided themselves on being among the select few of the 230,000 who had sought admission.

The New York Tribune editorialized:

No sensible person now challenges . . . the sincerity of the President's allegiance to the idea of organizing the world for peace instead of for war. . . . The discussion of the momentous problem must therefore be lifted above the plane of personalities. To do other than this is to degrade a theme almost as lofty as that contained in the new testament.³¹

A leading Republican journal thus joined Taft in a bipartisan support of America's membership in the League of Nations.

Wilson met with the Foreign Relations Committees, minus Borah and Fall, on February 27, in the White House. To comment on that night's proceedings was to demonstrate party regularity. The Republicans said: "He didn't even know much about the covenant he's asking us to approve without so much as one amendment." The Democrats thought Wilson to be well-informed, handling himself quite well under the cross-examination. Perhaps one of the more significant outcomes was the President's statement which in effect said the

³⁰ Public Papers, V, 432-440.

³¹ Cited in Fleming, p. 127.

covenant could not be amended because it would be too difficult to secure the other nations' consent.³² Senator Hitchcock, nominal majority leader, voiced similar sentiments in a speech the same day. His theme was "peace with the League, war without it; any amendment will merely weaken the document."³³

The Final Days in the Senate

While Wilson prepared to return to Paris, Congress was preparing to adjourn. Knowing that Wilson would be forced to call a special session to pass needed legislation, most of the final days were spent in attacking the League or Wilson, not in passing appropriations measures. Senators Lodge, Knox, Lenroot, Frelinghuysen, Hardwick and Sherman spoke against the covenant while McCumber gave the sole pro-league speech.³⁴

Lodge gave a most dramatic conclusion to the sixty-fifth Congress just before midnight on March 4. He read a resolution, later dubbed the "Round-Robin," which stated in part:

. . . that the negotiations on the part of the United States should be immediately be directed to the utmost expedition of the urgent business of negotiating peace terms with Germany satisfactory to the United States
 . . . and that the proposal for a league of nations to insure the permanent peace of the world should be then

³²Ibid., pp. 133-136.

³³Cong. Rec., 5, 4414-4418.

³⁴Ibid., 5, 4518-4772, 4838-4908, 4967-5021.

taken up for careful consideration.³⁵

The resolution, by implication an ultimatum, was originated by Brandegee, approved by Lodge, and drafted by Knox. Thirty-seven signatures were read into the Record that night and two more were added the next day. All thirty-nine were Republicans; their votes appeared to be six more than was necessary to block ratification of the proposed treaty. Actually, Lodge had included the names of outgoing Republicans as well as Senators-elect; not all thirty-nine men could have voted on a single proposal.

Preview of the Impending Controversy

Congress adjourned on March 4.³⁶ On the same day Taft joined Wilson on a platform in New York to urge acceptance of the covenant. Taft had apparently heard the criticisms in Congress; he described them as "especially valuable in revising the form of the covenant and making reservations to which his [Wilson's] colleagues in the conference may readily consent, where Senator Lodge or the other critics have misunderstood the purpose and meaning of the words used."³⁷ Not unaware of the nature of the criticisms,

³⁵Ibid., 5, 4974.

³⁶Vice-President Marshall adjourned the Senate with the words "sine Deo" instead of "sine die." Some of the reactions to the sixty-fifth Congress might justify the inadvertent substitution; see Literary Digest, LX (March 15, 1919), 16-17.

³⁷Carl G. Brandt and Edward M. Shafter, Jr., (eds.), Selected American Speeches on Basic Issues, 1850-1950 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1960), p. 353.

Wilson attacked the Republicans: "No party has a right to appropriate this issue and no party will in the long run dare oppose it." As further refutation to the attacks he told his audience:

When the treaty comes back, gentlemen on this side will find the covenant not only in it, but so many threads of the treaty tied to the covenant that you cannot dissect the covenant from the treaty without destroying the whole vital structure. The structure of peace will not be vital without the League of Nations, and no man is going to bring back a cadaver with him.³⁸

The challenge was stated. Wilson was determined; so were the Senators.

In addition to the warning of the "Round-Robin," Wilson had been served notice in three separate ways. Senator Lodge stated: "What I ask and all I ask is consideration, time and thought."³⁹ These words were to characterize league opponents as they implemented a strategy of delay. Senator Lenroot hinted at still another weapon: "In my judgment the country will approve the proposed constitution if certain material modifications are made and other provisions simplified and made clear."⁴⁰ If this strategy of amendment did not prove satisfactory, irreconcilables would always welcome assistance in implementing a strategy of rejection.

³⁸Public Papers, V, 444-451.

³⁹Brandt and Shafter, p. 367.

⁴⁰Cong. Rec., 5, 4569-4572.

CHAPTER III

PHASE ONE: THE VOTE ON THE COVENANT IS DELAYED

The war with Germany was over; the struggle for peace had just begun. President Wilson left for Paris determined to formulate an international organization which would settle the question of peace for all times. He left two sets of critics who were just as determined in their plans for America's future. The irreconcilables continued their demands for no league, while the other set of critics wanted to postpone the league discussion until the peace terms had been concluded. Before Wilson returned to the United States still a third group of men joined the ranks of league opponents. Although they were not opposed to the idea of a league, the Paris version was not the answer to world peace. This chapter will analyze and evaluate the arguments used by the speakers from these three groups during the period from December, 1918, through April, 1919. Although the spokesmen for the groups differed in their purposes, they agreed on a single conclusion: the vote should be delayed.

Analysis of the Audience

Congressional speeches are often evaluated in relation

to the different audiences to which the remarks are directed. In this controversy the immediate audience was, of course, the Senators; the indirect audience was the American people. The importance of the latter group in this Senatorial controversy is indicated by a Washington Post comment: "Both Democrats and Republicans are reported as saying, 'Get the issues to the voters and they will make their will known'."¹ League opponents would have to devise arguments acceptable to both groups in order to gain the time necessary to evaluate the covenant in a favorable light. Most league critics defined "favorable" as beneficial to America or to the Republican party.

Description of the Immediate Audience

By March of 1919 many of the Senators had made a sufficient number of public pronouncements to make group identification possible. The smallest and most vocal group was composed of Senators who readily admitted their complete opposition to any league. For example, Senator Borah vowed that any kind of internationalism was an evil force contemplating "world domination and the utter destruction of the national spirit everywhere."² Charles Thomas, Senator

¹March 3, 1919, p. 1.

²Cong. Rec., 65th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1918, LVII, Part 2, 1386-1387; unless otherwise designated, all citations are to the 3rd Session.

from Colorado, echoed these sentiments.³

Another group of Senators spoke of postponing the league's formulation. Senator Knox, Pennsylvania, introduced a proposal to make the peace with Germany and then, perhaps, discuss a league. Senator Sterling, South Dakota, agreed with Knox's position; he could see no necessity for a league of nations at that time.⁴ Senator Myers, Montana, indicated that it would take a year or longer to formulate a league and "that could wait."⁵ Senator France, Maryland, conceded the possibility for such a league but only after the millennial work of achieving the peace had been accomplished.⁶

A third group, labelled the administration men, enthusiastically favored the proposed organization or could be counted on to endorse any policy sponsored by the chief executive. Answering Knox's resolution, Senator Pittman, Nevada, read an editorial from the Philadelphia Inquirer:

We have no hesitation in pronouncing the Knox resolution to be mischievous in the extreme. The Senator is trifling with a most important matter. He is erecting barriers in the pathway of permanent peace, or at least an effort to secure permanence. To reject the league of nations idea is to uphold militarism--the continuance of secret alliances, the maintenance of vast standing armies.⁷

³Ibid., 2, 1384-1386.

⁴Ibid., 2, 1314-1318.

⁵Ibid., 2, 1319-1322.

⁶Ibid., 2, 1383.

⁷Ibid., 1, 605-608.

Senator Williams, Mississippi, read poetry to illustrate his position:

This potent league of nations will send no gun nor sword,
 Its order is the law of the ever-living Lord.
 The law of harmony, all brutal war shall cease--
 Its corner stone is justice, its translucent walls are
 peace.
 Rise citizens! Arise from the weary, blood-drenched sod,
 Proclaim the league of nations--sealed with the seal of
 God!⁸

"With the seal of God!" repeated Williams, "and Thank God, not with the seal of the Senate of the United States, unless the Senate shall hereafter indicate a sufficient degree of common sense to affix its seal, which I doubt." Senator Lewis, Illinois, portrayed the course of the future:

The people will soon distinguish those who are sincere in opposing the plan because they conscientiously fear the experiment and those others who fancy they have found a political issue on which they can summon the pride of nationalism and arouse the prejudice of race as a platform for nomination to office.⁹

Senator Hitchcock, Majority Leader, predictably upheld Wilson's program.¹⁰

Singular in its membership was another "group." The member was Senator McCumber, North Dakota. The only Republican to cross party lines to support the covenant, he apparently analyzed the peace proposal as a Senator first and a Republican second. McCumber addressed the Senate on January 7, 1919: ". . . the world looks with hopeful

⁸Ibid., 2, 1388.

⁹Washington Post, December 10, 1918, p. 1.

¹⁰Cong. Rec., 3, 2656-2658.

expectant eyes to the Peace Commission for some international arrangement that will make impossible another such war." He pleaded: "Must history repeat itself over and over again? Must our children's children suffer and die as their fathers have suffered and die to propitiate the God of War?"¹¹

The remainder of the Senate were sufficiently vague or sufficiently silent to prevent immediate classification. They appeared to keep their feelings hidden or perhaps they had not decided on their respective positions. Whatever the reason, they were potential converts to a "peace now, league later" philosophy.

That these separate active groups existed is important. In his analysis of Congress, Roland Young noted:

The process used by Congress in resolving domestic conflict is not necessarily appropriate for developing foreign policy. Domestic policy is developed through negotiation and compromise, with an attempt made after a sharp debate conducted in part for partisan advantage. In foreign policy, however, all the interests to a dispute are not so clearly represented.¹²

Thus, efforts to compromise on the league would be hampered by the attitudes and diversification of goals of the predominant groups within the Senate. Irreconcilables felt that rejection of the covenant was best for America; postponement critics felt that delaying the vote was best; revisionists considered an amended covenant best for America.

¹¹ Ibid., 2, 1084.

¹² The American Congress (New York: Harper & Bros., 1958), pp. 106-107.

League supporters also wanted what was best for America-- Wilson's proposal. Democrats felt that America was protected by the covenant; Republicans said that America was in danger. Negotiation and compromise would be difficult to find a single proposal on which sixty-four men could agree.

In addition to these specific characteristics of the 1919 Senate which are relevant to the controversy, general Senatorial characteristics persistently affect any policy decision discussed by Congress. Young identified some of these general concepts.

What special conditions are imposed by the fact that there is a continual turnover in membership, that the deliberation and the voting take place in public, that members speak with the aim not only of informing but of convincing, that membership depends on the acceptability to others of speeches and votes, and that decisions affect people, processes and stipulations about which the legislators themselves have no personal knowledge or even any direct personal interest? What type of mental activity is required of all members before there can be any form of corporate action?¹³

The rhetorician asks in addition: "What type of argument could be formulated by the speakers in this controversy which could appeal to the diverse groups and obtain some form of corporate action?"

The following description of the Senate can perhaps assist in an understanding of the type of men who would listen to the various arguments.¹⁴ The Senate is a

¹³Ibid., p. 103.

¹⁴The conclusions are derived from Robert A. Dahl, Congress and Foreign Policy (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1950).

conservative institution and is usually not receptive to a proposal which directly affects that institution. For example, the strength of the Seniority Rule, demonstrated by the highly organized, albeit unsuccessful, attempt to reorganize Congress in 1946, supports this conclusion. As conservatives, Congressmen rely on and react to the arguments of conservatives in general. Moreover, according to Dahl, the training, education and personality of the Senate is not particularly conducive to the managerial, executive type of maneuvering. Thus, when Wilson appeared to be placing the role of the executive above that of the Senate in the realm of treaty-making, Senators could be counted on to object.

Commenting specifically on foreign policy, Dahl noted that the typical Congressman has had limited experience with foreign affairs. This inexperience is more significant because the typical Senator is more often than not a lawyer.

In many ways, no background is better calculated to prevent realistic action in international politics. The treaty process, careful analysis of legal obligations, concepts of "rights" in the arena of international politics, emphasis on forms--this is the thrust of the lawyer.¹⁵

Dahl also mentioned the lawyer-like tendency of Senators to

¹⁵Ibid., p. 134; see also George B. Galloway, Congress at the Crossroads (New York: Crowell, 1946), p. 384 for data on the 54th and 79th Congresses; Madge M. McKinney, "The Personnel of the Seventy-seventh Congress," American Political Science Review, XXXVI (February, 1942), 67; Donald R. Matthews, United States Senators and Their World (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1960), is a comprehensive analysis of the 80th-84th Congresses.

conduct a word-analysis.

To the lawyer, words are decisive; if only the contract is properly drawn up, one may safely rely upon the court to enforce its terms. As a result, debate in Congress over foreign policy is often an inquiry into semantics rather than a debate about whether the proposed action symbolized by the words is or is not an appropriate policy for achieving certain values in a particular context of international relations.¹⁶

Although many of the opponents cited linguistic confusion as a reason for their objections to the peace commission's draft, Senator Lodge's approach exemplifies the appropriateness of Dahl's observation. Lodge said:

The language of these articles does not appear to me to have the precision and unmistakeable character which a constitution, a treaty, or a law ought to represent. The language only too frequently is not the language of laws or statutes. The article concerning mandates, for example, contains an argument and a statement of existing conditions. Arguments and historical facts have no place in a statute or a treaty. Statutory and legal language must assert and command, not argue and describe.¹⁷

The point is this: debate in Congress often evolves into a debate over semantics. Senators appear more concerned over the words in a document than the proposal itself. For example, the word "disputes" meant to league critics "any trouble" between nations; the terms of the covenant clearly indicated that disputes meant "incidents likely to provoke war." Often critics appeared to add a word in their interpretation of the "meaning" of an article. In the controversy over article 10, league critics referred to the "guarantee"

¹⁶Dahl, p. 135.

¹⁷Cong. Rec., 5, 4520.

of existing territorial boundaries; article 10 merely stated, "the Council shall advise."

Description of the Indirect Audience

Modern techniques of direct polling, accompanied by tests of attitudes, were not prevalent in the early 1900's. The Literary Digest conducted a comparatively comprehensive poll of newspapers during this period but the results were published after Congress had adjourned. During this first phase of the controversy some indices of public opinion were available to the Senators which could indicate how the American people might react to possible arguments.

Up to the start of the war there was virtually no dissent in the "thinking parts of the United States from the idea of an organized peace to replace the old drifting policy which always had and forever must lead to war."¹⁸ An analysis of newspaper editorial comment during the six weeks prior to September 8, 1917, revealed 152 comments on league principles with 149 in favor.¹⁹ Two years later the Literary Digest reported that "the majority of our papers regard the experiment as tremendously worth trying."²⁰ The Review of Reviews editorialized: "Never . . . has any President been as strongly supported. . . . He may go to Europe feeling that the country is behind him with hearty and sympathetic

¹⁸Fleming, p. 13.

¹⁹Bartlett, p. 89.

²⁰LX (March 8, 1919), 11-13.

support."²¹ Senator Watson, Indiana, told Lodge:

I don't see how we are going to defeat this proposition. It appears to me that 80 per cent of the people are for it. Fully that percentage of the preachers are right now advocating it. Churches are very largely favoring it, all the people who have been burdened and oppressed by this awful tragedy of war and who imagine that this opens a way to world peace are for it.²²

The Wichita Eagle recorded midwestern sentiments as of December, 1918: "There has been no opposition until lately" to the peace program.²³ A national women's conference, attended by 760 delegates, adopted a resolution in favor of the league as "the only way to prohibit future wars."²⁴

One of the major projects of the League to Enforce Peace was to hold regional congresses during the month of February, 1919. Nine cities were selected: New York, Boston, Chicago, Minneapolis, Portland, San Francisco, Salt Lake City, St. Louis and Atlanta. Well-known speakers such as Taft, Lawrence Lowell and Henry Morgenthau travelled some 8,000 miles and delivered 175 addresses to approximately 300,000 people. Every congress passed a resolution favoring the league idea. A sample resolution drawn up by the Atlantic congress in New York stated: "We are convinced that the public opinion of the United States is in favor of a league of nations to maintain the peace of the world."²⁵

²¹Cited in Cranston, p. 39.

²²Ibid., pp. 48-49.

²³Cited in Fleming, p. 67n.

²⁴Washington Post, February 12, 1919, p. 3.

²⁵Bartlett, pp. 114-115.

One study sums up the general pro-league attitude of the people.

There is every evidence that the overwhelming majority of the American people were prepared, in the early spring of 1919, to approve the Treaty of Versailles and American membership in the League of Nations. Newspaper polls, resolutions adopted by thirty-two state legislatures, the declarations of labor unions, farm groups, women's organizations, and professional associations, all substantiate this interpretation of public opinion.²⁶

Apparently the league supporters in Congress shared this view; Wilson did as he left for Paris.

On the other hand, Senatorial league critics were not without support. The first murmurings of discontent could be noticed in the election results of 1918, although no election is decided on a single issue. One fact did emerge from that contest; domestic issues were not completely overshadowed by the war. After the armistice the concern over domestic affairs became even more paramount.

The year 1919 was marked by skyrocketing inflation, violent and disturbing industrial disputes, the outbreak of bloody race riots in half a dozen cities, and a pervasive fear of the Bolshevik activity which was believed to underlie much of the social unrest of the period. These issues began to steal newspaper headlines and force foreign affairs further and further into the background.²⁷

Another writer substantiates this conclusion.

At the same time that men were drawing back from foreign contracts, they were enlarging their personal ambitions. Wartime prosperity had created a new and swollen middle class. Millions of people were anxious to relax their

²⁶Foster Rhea Dulles, America's Rise to World Power: 1898-1954 (New York: Harper & Bros., 1955), p. 115.

²⁷Ibid., p. 117.

tensions and to enjoy their status in old-fashioned tranquility. Isolationism was part of the acute nostalgia for the good old days--for cigar store wooden Indians, for the Police Gazette, and for Casey who waltzed with a strawberry blonde. The impression was widespread that if we could shake off the responsibilities of the world, we could turn the clock back to a normality that had known no high costs of living, no income taxes, no small and oppressed nations, no grisly Reds, no thought of article X or a League of Nations.²⁸

According to Arthur S. Link, the fear of the Russian Bolsheviks was partially justified.

The triumph and establishment of the Bolshevik dictatorship in Russia in November 1917, the ensuing spread of communism into Germany, Hungary, and other parts of Europe, and especially the formation in Moscow on March 2, 1919, of the Third International, or Comintern, as it came to be known . . . set off a wave of new hysteria in the United States. No other development of the postwar era so well reflected the insecurity of the American people as the way in which they reacted to fantastic rumors of an equally fantastic Bolshevik uprising in their midst.²⁹

Some of the rumors were based on fact: the trial of Victor Berger, Socialist Congressman from Milwaukee; the Seattle strike on February 6, 1919, publicized as the work of the Bolsheviks and the IWW; the proposed plot in April to assassinate governors, judges, Cabinet members and other officials. An instance of the hysteria occurred in Indiana where a naturalized citizen was acquitted for killing an alien who had shouted, "To Hell with the United States."³⁰

²⁸Selig Adler, The Isolationist Impulse: Its Twentieth-Century Reaction (New York: Abelard-Schuman Ltd., 1957), p. 94.

²⁹American Epoch (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), p. 241.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 241-243.

Some people opposed the league because of their concern for America. Some adopted the philosophy: "We should not trade the Alladin's lamp of nationalism for a cheap, hastily constructed, foreign-made lamp of internationalism."³¹ Another way of expressing concern over nationalism came from Missouri:

We were a nice prosperous nation when we were just ourselves. Now if some blatherskite is not working up some sort of a drive for money, old clothes or nighties for the down-trodden . . . some other thimble head is kicking and screaming for internationalism.³²

Soldiers in Europe set to music their thoughts concerning national interests:

We drove the Boche from Across the Rhine
The Kaiser from his throne.
Oh, Lafayette, we've paid our debt,
For Christ's sake, send us home.³³

In short, not all of the people shared the opinion that America should be the hope of the world as the leader of the proposed league of nations.

Specific groups were also in disagreement with league principles. The educational leaders of the country had members who voiced complaints. From Princeton, two voices lent encouragement to the rejectionists. Professor Phillip Brown considered the league too daring an experiment; he was unwilling to gamble with America's destiny. Professor Edward

³¹Cited in Adler, p. 98.

³²Ibid., p. 99.

³³Ibid.

Corbin maintained that the entire concept of league membership was contrary to the framework of American constitutional government. David Jayne Hill, former President of the University of Rochester, was one of the most outspoken educators. To Hill the league was a conspiracy of the victors to unite against the rest of mankind; such a scheme was entirely contrary to traditional American policy.³⁴ Some of the journalists also began to reject the principles of international involvement. George Harvey, consumed with an intense hatred of Wilson, was the most vitriolic of the fourth estate. Others joined his theme, if not with his intensity: Boston Transcript, New York Sun, Washington Post, Kansas City Star, Chicago Tribune and the entire Hearst chain.³⁵

One group of anti-league support was specifically damaging to the Wilson program. After 1912 Wilson became the champion of the liberal element in politics; some historians even contribute Wilson's narrow victory in 1916 to liberal support.³⁶ The liberals first showed some concern with Wilson over America's role in the war. Many more became disillusioned over his concept of "reforming" Europe.

Many liberals who had heretofore generously supported both the domestic and foreign policies of the Wilson

³⁴Ibid., p. 107.

³⁵Washington Post, December through April, 1918-1919; Cranston, pp. 170-171, for data on Hearst papers and 49-50, 109-113, for information on Harvey's Weekly; Fleming, pp. 118-120, 165-169, 190-194, for others.

³⁶Dulles, p. 115; Adler, p. 50.

administration . . . strongly resented a settlement that seemed to them to perpetuate the basic evils of the old order rather than to provide any hope for realizing the war aims of democracy. From their point of view, the League was an agency designed to freeze the status quo.³⁷

Another writer's analysis substantiates this conclusion.

Wilson's failure to placate them [the liberals], to prepare them for anything but a utopian peace, was to prove a fatal mistake. Growing liberal unrest thus formed the seventh factor in the creation of an anti-Wilson coalition. The group expected too much from the peace. If disappointed, they were ready to give up hope of reforming Europe and to return to their older task of cleaning house at home.³⁸

Not only did the liberal defection hurt the pro-league cause but their rejection of Wilson gave anti-league critics a propaganda weapon to use: "Even former supporters reject Wilson's own proposal."

The hyphenate groups constituted another segment of the public which was fundamentally anti-league. The established group of Irish-Americans, German-Americans and Italian-Americans were joined by the Czechs, Poles, Latvians, Slavs and Hungarians who were stirred to action by a mutual desire to see their former countries benefit from the spoils of the war. German- and Austrian-Americans were naturally hostile to the administration which had led America to war against their homeland. In order to obtain the support of David Lloyd George, Wilson also alienated the Irish-American

³⁷Dulles, p. 111.

³⁸Adler, p. 51; the chapter "The Liberal Defection" contains more detailed information.

contingency. To please all these splinter groups was impossible as the good will of some could only be obtained at the expense of another. The outcome of the Fiume controversy was bound to alienate either the sons of Italy or Yugoslavia; the Shantung settlement might please the Japanese-Americans but would be completely unpalatable to the Chinese- and German-Americans.³⁹

Although their individual memberships were not large, the following groups were quite active during this period.

The hundred percenters carried the nationalistic dogma to a point where they began to talk like home-grown fascists. A magazine entitled America First wanted to bring patriotism to homes and schools. Senator Borah thought the name "perfectly captivating." The True American Publishing Company dedicated itself to fighting the atheists who kept the name of God out of the Treaty of Versailles. The league of Loyal Americans promised to fight for "One Tongue, One Ideal and One Flag." The biographer, Louis A. Coolidge of Boston, headed the Sentinels of the Republic, while an American Flag movement aimed to put the national colors in each home in the land. Springing up indigenously all over the country, these organizations represented the stirrings of a revived nationalism. Whatever their immediate purpose or pet phobia, they all shared one thing in common: they looked back at an earlier America that had been shielded from the world and they demanded an end to European entanglements.⁴⁰

The doctrine of nationalism was one which would appeal to immigrants and nativists, progressives and reactionaries, insular politicians and career diplomats, Democrats and Republicans.

In short, those seeking to damn the league would not

³⁹Ibid., pp. 75-92.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 116.

always face a hostile audience. They could appeal to those who overwhelmingly denied the pragmatism of the covenant; to those who wanted their sons back home; to those who suspected anything foreign, exemplified by the popularity of "victory cabbage" as semantic validity for the consumption of sauerkraut. Above all, they could appeal to those who loved their country.

Anti-league speakers indicated that they intended to make this appeal to the indirect audience. Borah told Frank A. Munsey, editor of the New York Sun, that if the people were informed of the "real details" of Wilson's proposal, the plan would be defeated by an avalanche of public indignation.⁴¹ When Lodge suggested that they offer some sort of substitute proposal, Borah dismissed the counter-plan approach: "I told him I would never agree to anything taking us into the league of nations . . . we could arouse public opinion to the point where we could defeat the League on its merits."⁴²

The debate may have been in the Senate chambers but the audience also extended from ocean to ocean. The people who favored the league appeared to be in the majority; the pressure of their endorsement was felt in capital city. If that endorsement could be changed to acquiescence or even to condemnation, league critics might succeed in their endeavors,

⁴¹Adler, pp. 102-103.

⁴²Lodge, p. 148.

whether the particular purpose was to postpone the vote, to amend the covenant, or to reject the treaty.

Argument Analysis

Three separate divisions of league critics sought three distinct goals: postponement, amendment and rejection. The arguments used during this initial phase of the controversy were not as distinct. In appealing for amendment, the effect was often manifested in rejecting the vote; in appealing for rejection, the effect was often an amendment for the covenant. Labelling a given argument by its goal is difficult due to the interrelationship of design and effect. Nevertheless, three major contentions of league critics are clear: the covenant should not be accepted at the present time; the covenant has certain undesirable features; and the covenant should be rejected altogether. The following sections will analyze each of these contentions and the supporting arguments used in their development.

The Covenant Should Not Be Accepted at the Present Time

Some critics claimed not to be anti-league in principle but simply preferred to settle the war before becoming enmeshed in planning the peace. The question which these critics had to answer was: "How can we postpone this measure without creating an unfavorable image in the eyes of the voters?" Two answers were available. The first was to put the question of America's membership in the league of nations

to a vote by the people; the second was to show the people the desirability of settling the peace terms first. Both approaches had persuasive merit; both arguments were developed.

The People Should Have an Opportunity
to Vote on the Covenant

Wilson had asked Congress not to initiate debate on the peace terms until he had time to discuss the matter with them. Senator Vardaman, Mississippi, seized this opportunity to appeal to the electorate. How could the Senate be sure, how could the people be sure that the covenant was the right approach to world peace? Vardaman was not sure: "I would not take the step the President is asking the American people to take without invoking the assistance, criticism, and the fullest investigation by all the people before taking this important step."⁴³ Of course, the peace should not be held up while this investigation was taking place.

In the first major address attacking the covenant draft, Senator Poindexter, Washington, spoke of submitting the question to the electorate.

If this constitution is ratified without being submitted to the American people in a political campaign, where it shall have been made an issue, and upon which they will have had an opportunity to render judgment in an election, then self-government in America will have disappeared. We are facing an abyss and the American people should not be led into it blindfolded.⁴⁴

⁴³Cong. Rec., 4, 3656.

⁴⁴Ibid., 4, 3746.

In other words Poindexter would not just delay the vote in the Senate but would postpone the vote until the next political election, some twenty months away. Poindexter's purpose was to defeat the covenant altogether. His appeal to "let the people decide" demonstrated the manner in which the various types of critics blended their appeals. Time would demonstrate the effectiveness of this interlocking approach.

Senator Hardwick, Georgia, endorsed Poindexter's plan of placing the issue before the people. Prior to casting their ballots, however, this Southern Senator had a list of questions which the voters would have to answer. He asked thirty-three questions, one after another. Representatives of the list include:

Are you willing to pull down the stars and stripes?
 Are you willing to strike from the calendar July Fourth?
 Are you willing to return to the chains which our
 fathers burst asunder?
 Are you willing that the American eagle shall shrink
 back into his shell?
 Are you willing for American people to lose their
 identity and become a part of a great international
 bolshevism?
 Could Patrick Henry have fired American patriotism by
 exclaiming: Give me a league of crowned heads or
 give me death?⁴⁵

There was no appeal to patriotism that could not be found in one of the questions, often repeated in another. A negative answer to these questions meant a negative vote on the league.

Hardwick's speech revealed how much personality can

⁴⁵Ibid., 5, 4704.

affect a speaker's selection of arguments. He had been defeated the previous November by an administration-endorsed candidate. His hatred of the administration in general, and Wilson in particular, was evident. He had seen "the three branches destroyed by an Executive who, with the lash of war in his hands, has usurped the powers of Congress."

Having absorbed all the powers in America, this executive proceeded to "take them all to Europe and in a ship by mockery the George Washington and proposed to hand them over to a league of nations."⁴⁶ Thus Hardwick spoke not only for postponing the vote but also appealed to those who were incensed by the legislative-executive struggle, to those who upheld the principles of "no entangling alliances," and to those who feared the foreign domination of the league. The purpose of the speech was much anti-Wilson as it was anti-league; still the effect would be the same.

The postponement critics argued that the final decision on the acceptability of the covenant should be made by the people. The Washington Post had suggested the means by which the question could be settled: amend the Constitution. History records the hesitancy which the people have had in altering that basic document. Undoubtedly league critics intended to capitalize on the reluctance to take that "last drastic step."

⁴⁶Ibid., 5, 4705.

Peace with Germany Should Be
Settled First

The other argument used to develop this major contention had its origin in the Knox Resolution on December 3, 1918. In essence Knox resolved that any plans for the league of nations should be postponed until the peace terms had been settled. On February 26, 1919, Senator Cummins, Iowa, said:

It is my opinion that we should first dispose of Germany, and that immediately thereafter the peace conference now assembled in Paris should make a determined effort for peace among all nations and for all time to come.⁴⁷

During the final days of the sixty-fifth session the argument had made a circle and was again developed by Knox:

Let the discussion of a league of nations be postponed for later consideration not alone by the victorious belligerents but by all the nations if and when at some future time a general conference of this subject may be both possible and useful.⁴⁸

Senator Poindexter's approach summarized the league critics' position:

There are two divisions of men upon this question. One of these divisions advocates the proposition that before we establish present peace we should provide, by some yet ill-defined means, for permanent peace. The other division of men who are interested in this great question believes . . . that the first duty of the world is to establish present peace, to restore order in Europe, and that instead of satisfying ourselves with expressions of interest in the future welfare of mankind the leaders of Governments should demonstrate their sincerity by relieving the present suffering which afflicts the world.⁴⁹

⁴⁷Ibid., 5, 4310.

⁴⁸Ibid., 5, 4692-4693.

⁴⁹Ibid., 3, 3746; other Senators who similarly argued include Sterling, 2, 1314-1318, and Hale, 3, 2598-2599.

Who could deny the efficacy of this development? League supporters would have to argue against the curtailment of suffering or argue for the necessity to bypass the present in considering the future. Most league supporters did not speak during these final days.

On March 4, the Senate Republicans made the most effective presentation of the argument with their signatures on the "Round-Robin." Lodge knew the resolution could not be discussed without unanimous consent; the consent was not given. Nevertheless these few words were as effective as if the resolution had been under consideration for weeks.

Resolved by the Senate of the United States in the discharge of its Constitutional duty of advice in regard to treaties, that it is the sense of the Senate that while it is their sincere desire that the nations of the world should unite to promote peace and general disarmament, the constitution of the league of nations in the form now proposed to the peace conference should not be accepted by the United States; and be it

Resolved further, that it is the sense of the Senate that the negotiations on the part of the United States should immediately be directed to the utmost expedition of the urgent business of negotiating peace terms with Germany satisfactory to the United States and the nations with whom the United States is associated in the war against the German government, and that the proposal for a league of nations to insure the permanent peace of the world should be then taken up for careful and serious consideration.⁵⁰

In the turmoil that followed few noticed the important qualification, "in the form now proposed"; fewer still analyzed the list of signatures to see that it included outgoing Senators as well as Senators-elect. Even with these

⁵⁰Ibid., 5, 497.

two limiting factors the point was clear: "If you want a league of nations you stand a better chance of success if the Senate has time to consider the matter."

The arguments used to develop the major contention calling for postponement were certainly cogent. The arguments were designed for those who loved America; for those who wanted an end to war and a beginning to the reconversion to peace; for those who believed the people had a right to make the decision. People had sacrificed during the war; they could not be expected to continue that sacrifice indefinitely. The armistice had been signed in November and by March there was still no peace settlement.

In short, the invention of the league critics was effective. Their choice of topics and development had an appeal with which a majority of their audience, both Senators and citizens, could identify. In addition, the league proponents were put in a position of saying "act now, think later." This awkward position might well account for the small number of speeches which were given on behalf of the covenant.

The Covenant Has Certain Undesirable Features

The terms of the covenant were made public on February 15, 1919. At that point league critics focused on the undesirable features of the document as reasons why they objected to the league of nations. To some, the covenant would always be objectionable; to other critics, necessary

revisions in the structure might make league membership a possibility. Two arguments were used to develop this major contention: the covenant interferes with American sovereignty; and the covenant does not adequately provide for peace.

The Covenant Interferes with
American Sovereignty

The philosophy behind this argument was that the nations of the world would have an opportunity, as league members, to interfere with American sovereign rights. To reproduce the argument-development would mean the reproduction of the Congressional Record for this period. Irreconcilables used the argument as often as they spoke.⁵¹ Yet almost every man who spoke against the proposed draft was "worried about America's future." Apparently no one wanted to face the electorate the next year as un-American. Most of the critics merely developed the general theme of sovereignty-loss; others made specific reference to the particular rights which would be lost.

Senator Sterling initiated one of the earlier phases of the general theme. He noted the various colonies had to give up their sovereignty to form the United States and "this is the one mighty obstacle in the way of a league."⁵²

⁵¹According to Holt, p. 303, anti-league speeches outnumbered pro-league efforts three to one with irreconcilables delivering two out of every three anti-league addresses.

⁵²Cong. Rec., 2, 1314-1318.

Senator Hale's comment exemplifies the early development of the argument: "When all is said and done, Mr. President, the American people are for America first, and they have no desire nor intention to wander very far from the faith and teachings of their fathers."⁵³ Senators used some form of this argument until the draft was published in mid-February; they then became more specific in their attacks.

Most of the speakers used the argument to advocate rejection of the league principles. Poindexter made his position clear:

We have had but few wars, and have avoided war by avoiding the cause of war. We are now asked to avoid war by multiplying immeasurably the cause of war, and by surrendering to a heterogeneous league of diverse races our sovereign rights and privileges.⁵⁴

Another advocate of rejection was Senator Borah. On February 21, he delivered his speech entitled "Americanism." Borah's thesis was that England would not only dominate the league but would surrender nothing in the process. On the other hand America would surrender her entire tradition of foreign policy; she would surrender nationalism to an ever-menacing internationalism. The national state must be cast aside: "That is disclosed in every line and paragraph of this instrument. It begins with the preamble and ends with the last article."⁵⁵ As an indication of the distortion

⁵³Ibid., 3, 2598-2599; other Senators who similarly argued include Myers, 2, 1318, and Watson, 2, 1318-1319.

⁵⁴Ibid., 4, 3746.

⁵⁵Ibid., 4, 3915.

which many rejectionists used, the actual words of the preamble read:

In order to promote international cooperation and to secure international peace and security by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war, by the prescription of open, just and honorable relations between nations, by the firm establishment of the undertakings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among Governments, and by the maintenance of justice and a scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations in the dealings of organized peoples with one another, the powers signatory to this covenant adopt this constitution of the league of nations.⁵⁶

Where is the abolishment of the national state? Neither the preamble nor any of the articles in the covenant would justify the conclusion of the Senator from Idaho.

The Idahoan was not one to present undocumented points, however.⁵⁷ As substantiation for the evils of internationalism he read from a book by Leon Trotzky, the Bolsheveki and World Peace: "The present war is at bottom a revolt of the forces of production against the political form of nation and state. It means the collapse of the national state as an independent economic unit."⁵⁸ Borah did not reveal the connection he saw between the author of the book and the authors of the covenant. At another point he used Theodore Roosevelt as an authority. Roosevelt's statement

⁵⁶Ibid., 4, 3408; the covenant was placed into the Record on February 16.

⁵⁷Waldo W. Braden, "The Bases of William E. Borah's Speech Preparation," QJS, XXXIII (1947), 28-30; "William E. Borah's Senate Speeches on the League of Nations, 1918-1920," Speech Monographs, X (1943), 59-60.

⁵⁸Cong. Rec., 4, 3915.

was:

Any man who says he is an American but something else also isn't an American at all. We have room for but one flag, the American flag. . . . We have room for but one language, and that is the English language; for we intend to see that the crucible turns our people out as Americans, of American nationality, and not as dwellers in a polyglot boarding house; and we have room for but one soul loyalty.⁵⁹

Again Borah failed to demonstrate how the proposed league was going to replace the American flag or the English language. Borah would be the first to point out England's domination of the league yet he did not explain why this domination would not occur through the use of the English language. As a matter of fact, the league covenant was printed in English as well as French which for centuries had been the traditional diplomatic language for international discourse.

As part of his attack on February 26, Senator Cummins argued against the loss of American sovereignty. The covenant, and especially article 10, was "the most destructive, unjust, and reactionary proposal which was ever submitted to the American people." Americans loved peace and "will devote all our intelligence, all our efforts, to attain it; but, sir, we will not surrender our right to live under our own institutions, to worship at the shrine of our own patriots."⁶⁰

Senator Knox proposed four areas in which the

⁵⁹Ibid., 3916.

⁶⁰Ibid., 5, 4316.

covenant must be tested to prove its acceptability. The third test was: "Are the principles of the proposed covenant destructive of our sovereignty?" They were.

. . . we are to give up the power to say when we shall have war, when peace, what shall our army number, how many vessels of war shall we have, how, when, where, and under what conditions shall our Army and Navy be used, when shall our treaties be binding, what shall our treatment of commerce be, how great shall our gift of funds to other powers be, and, therefore, how great the tribute shall we pay. Consider all these, and you cannot but say that our sovereignty has in matters of national life and death been destroyed.⁶¹

Utilizing the principle of restatement he applied his fourth test: "Will this plan, if put into operation, threaten our national independence and life?" To his previous answer he added historical examples and testimony from Jefferson, Monroe and Richard Olney, Secretary of State during the Venezuelan boundary dispute. He also employed anticipatory refutation, cautioning against anyone's use of the covenant to oppose his conclusions as the covenant was filled with "vague and general prescriptions and poorly worded declarations." He might well have saved his time as only a handful of league supporters took the floor during this first phase; fewer still utilized the articles of the covenant as a basis for their defense.

To continue a list of the Senators who similarly argued would not add to the analysis. The refrain was the same; the purpose was rejection.

⁶¹Ibid., 5, 4692.

Some of the speakers used the loss of sovereignty argument to reason why the covenant should be amended. Senator Owen, Oklahoma, was normally a loyal administration Democrat. Still, the permanency of membership imposed by article 1 of the covenant would have to be altered to make league membership more desirable.⁶² Senator Lenroot, Wisconsin, did not want to reject the league but he certainly wanted it made safe for America. He urged his auditors: "A league of nations, yes; but the American people will not be for such a league as may prevent America from realizing her own ideals, achieving her own destiny."⁶³ To most league critics, however, the covenant was too much a threat to American sovereignty to warrant amendment; the more frequent reaction was rejection.

League supporters tried to refute the charges of lost sovereignty in two ways: the other nations would lose their sovereignty as well; and America sacrifices some part of her national sovereignty any time she signs an international treaty. The weight of persuasion was probably on the side of the critics. As for the Senate, that body was always jealous of anyone infringing on their rights. Many of them were still upset over the way Wilson had apparently "taken over" treaty-making. They could easily visualize a league of nations in which America had but one voice. They could easily picture

⁶²Ibid., 4, 4323.

⁶³Ibid., 4, 4572.

the role of the Senate steadily decreasing in importance. If there were any seeds of doubt in their minds, the general theme of this argument would certainly fertilize the growth of those doubts. As for the American public, the average citizen knew little about international relations. He did know about the greatness of his mother country. To his ears the words of the critics made sense. Naturally America should not sacrifice herself to the growing unrest of internationalism; of course, if there is a choice to be made between America and the rest of the world, the selection is clear. He was not concerned with the sovereignty of other nations, but of America's sovereignty. America might be the "hope of the world" but she must remain "his" hope as well.

Thus, the league critics had an advantage. The purpose behind most of the development of the argument was rejection. Amendment would have to be extensive enough to move the focus from international cooperation to an international society based upon the principles of Americanism.

In addition to the general application of the loss of American sovereignty argument, league critics highlighted three specific ramifications of this loss.

1. The covenant would nullify the principle of the Monroe doctrine.
2. The covenant would interfere with administration of domestic policies.
3. The covenant provides no way for America to withdraw membership.

These specific minor arguments are important because of the effect which they had in amending the original covenant draft.

The Covenant Would Nullify the Principle of the Monroe Doctrine.

Even before the covenant terms were known, league critics decried any principle which would permit the nullification of the Monroe doctrine. Poindexter attacked the proposed league on that basis.

If the plan is adopted, the power of determination has gone from the United States. It is in the hands of an alien power; it is in the hands of rival powers; it is in the hands of Europe. The United States will have surrendered its birthrights; it will have given up the spirit as well as the fact of sovereignty. Your Monroe doctrine will be absorbed in your league of nations. It will become obsolete.⁶⁴

Criticism in these early hours was not limited to the "bitter-enders." Senator Lodge asked in December of 1918:

Are we ready to abandon the Monroe doctrine and to leave it to other nations to say how American questions should be settled and what steps we shall be permitted to take in order to guard our own safety or to protect the Panama Canal?⁶⁵

In mid-February the covenant terms produced an outburst of violent objections that the league would abrogate the doctrine. Senators Borah, New, King, Frelinghuysen and John Smith immediately objected. Frelinghuysen, New Jersey Senator, said: "I stand for Americanism and the Monroe doctrine; this violates both." Senator John Smith, Maryland, wanted "America to mind her own business, defend the Monroe doctrine and the existing balance of power." These and

⁶⁴Cong. Rec., 65th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1918, LVI, Part 11, 11564.

⁶⁵Ibid., 3rd Sess., 1919, LVII, Part 1, 724.

similar remarks reported by the Washington Post seemed to indicate that any doubts harbored by league opponents concerning the doctrine were now justified.⁶⁶

During the remaining three weeks of the sixty-fifth Congress the argument was used again and again. Outside the Chamber the New York Sun, Washington Post, Kansas City Star, Spokane Review, Harvey's Weekly and the Hearst and McCormick chains carried stories and editorials which echoed the Senate's claims that the doctrine would become obsolete.⁶⁷

By March 15, the effects of the argument could be partially measured. A Washington correspondent of the New York World told readers that his information indicated that the major criticisms of the league were three in number; the protection of the principle of the Monroe doctrine was one of the three.⁶⁸ Senator Hitchcock, Nebraska, gave Wilson four prospective amendments to the covenant draft which the Majority Leader said typified the responses from many sections of the country; one of these reflected a concern for preserving the Monroe doctrine.⁶⁹ On March 18, Taft sent Wilson a telegram which pleaded for action to specifically exclude the doctrine from league jurisdiction.⁷⁰ Ten days

⁶⁶February 16, 1919, p. 10.

⁶⁷supra, p. 40, 35n.

⁶⁸Cited in Literary Digest, LX (March 15, 1919, 13-16.

⁶⁹Cited in Cranston, p. 90.

⁷⁰Cited in Fleming, p. 183.

later, Taft, Lowell and Tumulty jointly authored a more anxious telegram.

Friends of the covenant are seriously alarmed over report that no amendment will be made more specifically safeguarding Monroe Doctrine. At full meeting of executive committee of League to Enforce Peace, with thirty members from eighteen states present, unanimous opinion that without such amendment Republican Senators will certainly defeat ratification of treaty, because public opinion will sustain them.⁷¹

History records the series of compromises that Wilson was forced to make with the other powers to obtain the amendment. On April 11, 1919, the newly worded article 21 made clear that the guarantees provided by the Monroe doctrine would not be pre-empted by the League of Nations. Article 21 read:

Nothing in this covenant shall be deemed to affect the validity of international engagements, such as treaties of arbitration or regional understandings like the Monroe Doctrine, for securing the maintenance of peace.⁷²

This clarification should have ended the discussion but league critics were not to be silenced. Despite the specific wording of "regional" they read the word "international" and began their attacks anew.⁷³

Thus the effectiveness of the argument cannot be denied. That Wilson had to secure the amendment at all was

⁷¹Cited in Cranston, p. 91.

⁷²Pitman B. Potter, The Covenant of the League of Nations: Text, Index, Interpretations (New York: Carnegie Endowment, 1927), p. 26; hereafter cited as League Text.

⁷³Lodge's comment was typical: "It's not international; it's all ours."

due entirely to league critics as he had long believed that the covenant was an extension of the Monroe doctrine, not a nullification.

The Covenant Interferes with Administration of Domestic Policies

To some league critics the most undesirable feature of the covenant was the league's interference with America's administration of purely domestic policies. Some of the policies most frequently referred to were immigration, maintenance of the armed forces and the proposed mandate system.

Interference with immigration procedures.--Some critics argued that the league threatened United States immigration policies. As early as 1917, Lodge had asked Congress:

Is it possible that anyone who wishes to preserve our standards of life and labor can be drawn into a scheme veiled by glittering and glancing generalities which would take from us our sovereign right to decide for ourselves the vital question of the exclusion of Mongolian and Asiatic labor?⁷⁴

Two years later, on February 26, the basis of the argument had not changed. Senator Cummins wondered what would happen if Japan protested America's restriction of Oriental laborers and took the matter to the league for arbitration.

Suppose it should be decided against the United States; suppose it should be decided that the United States ought to admit the subjects of Japan not only to our borders, but to our citizenship upon the same terms on

⁷⁴Cong. Rec., 1st Sess., 1917, LV, Part 3, 2364-2365.

which we admit the citizens or subjects of Great Britain, France, or Italy? Then the council would recommend that subjects of the Japanese Empire should be admitted to the United States upon the same terms with the same privileges accorded to the subjects of other nations.⁷⁵

If America honored this decision, as articles 12 and 15 would force her to do, Orientals would overrun the country. If she did not honor the decision and tried to uphold her conviction she would have "committed an act of war against all the other nations of the league, which would lead to the severance automatically of all trade of financial relations between our country and the world."⁷⁶ Cummins summarized his objection: "It would seem that the framers of this remarkable document considered it more important that our territory should remain intact than our right to say what men and women should live within our borders."⁷⁷ Cummins was either unaware of the error in his logic or he deliberately distorted the covenant. To anyone familiar with the wording of the document, and its terms had received wide publicity, the idea of the league forcing the United States to give immigrants citizenship was absurd.

Outside the Senate, the immigration-interference argument was also used and equally distorted. President Wilson's meeting with the Foreign Relations Committees at

⁷⁵Cong. Rec., 3rd Sess., 1919, LVII, Part 5, 4310.

⁷⁶Ibid., 5, 4311.

⁷⁷Ibid., 5, 4316.

the White House was described by the New York Sun: "The President stated with finality that the United States must surrender vital points of sovereignty; Chinese and Japanese exclusion goes out of American control into the hands of league control."⁷⁸ The Sun's documentation were statements attributed to Senators Knox, Lodge, Brandegee, McCumber and Hitchcock. Within two weeks both Democratic Senator Hitchcock and Republican Senator McCumber completely refuted these claims while Senators Knox, Lodge and Brandegee remained silent.

Despite the bipartisan refutation, friends of the league were fighting a losing battle. Critics were interested in raising the specter of a "Japanese invasion" which they were obviously directing toward the west coast. This area had played an important part in the 1916 election, almost electing as president Charles Evans Hughes. If the people were not solidly behind Wilson, then appealing to them on the basis of an ethnic violation of their rights might be effective persuasion, even if untrue.

Control of the armed forces.--Critics charged that the treaty interfered with domestic policy in a second area by regulating the size of America's army and navy. On February 17, Senator Reed stated that he was opposed to "surrendering America's right to manage her own affairs."⁷⁹

⁷⁸Cited in Fleming, pp. 134-135.

⁷⁹Washington Post, February 17, 1919, p. 1.

Senator Poindexter cited five instances in which the league had usurped the rights of the Senate, one of which concerned the control of armed forces. League membership involved a surrender of the "power and discretion of determining the rules, methods, and disarmament, and the relative and absolute size of the Army and Navy."⁸⁰ Hardwick added to Poindexter's complaint.

First, the provision in the constitution of the league of nations embraced in article 8 of the instrument, authorizing this league to limit the armaments of the powers that are signatory to this agreement, is in utter and irreconcilable conflict with Article 1, section 8, clauses 12 and 13 of the Constitution of the United States, which authorize the Congress, and the Congress alone, to organize and maintain armies and to provide and equip navies for the country. The Congress of the United States has no right, in law or in morals, to delegate that power to any agency on this earth, or to surrender it to any foreign country.⁸¹

Apparently the limitation of article 8, "reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety" had no meaning to these critics. Surely the Senate had used "national safety" as a criterion for the size of America's armed forces in previous years. If the other powers of the league agreed to the stipulation, "consistent with national safety," why would the Senate need powers above and beyond that limit?

None of the league critics had an answer to that question nor was any speech discovered which asked it. The

⁸⁰Cong. Rec., 4, 3748.

⁸¹Ibid., 5, 4702.

point of the attack was to play upon the jealousies which surrounded the Senate and its powers. More than likely their answer would have been: "Even if the size of the armed forces would not be any larger, we would have made the decision, not the league."

The question of mandates.---Perhaps the most untenable argument which treaty opponents used was their objection to the mandate system. Wilson wanted a system of controlling conquered territories similar to the relationship the United States had with Cuba and the Philippines; the colonial powers predictably objected.⁸² As word crossed the Atlantic of this opposition, Senator Lodge commented on January 31:

We are apparently being involved in some sort of guaranty, either with force or without force, to take care of German possessions in Africa and in the Pacific Ocean. We seem to have involved ourselves already in serious differences with the Australians and Boers of South Africa--populations with which we have always been most friendly and sympathetic. Our good relations with Australia are of enormous importance. I do not know exactly what we are doing, but we seem to be annoying them very much; and in some method we are apparently going to guarantee and sustain and watch over republics or States made up of Bantus and Hottentots, and we are to be meddling with it all the time in an indefinite future.⁸³

Lodge's language, "annoying, meddling, Bantus and Hottentots, indefinite future," illustrates again the tendency of league

⁸²Ray Stannard Baker, Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement, 3 vols. (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1923), I, 236-274, 329-333.

⁸³Cong. Rec., 3, 2421.

critics to try to persuade through the use of loaded language.

The compromise between Wilson and the Colonial powers was article 19, which provided that the German and Austrian possessions "should be intrusted to advanced nations, who, by reason of their resources, their experience, or their geographical position, can best undertake this responsibility."⁸⁴ The entire article seemed harmless until it was dissected by Cummins on February 26.

This article is not only bad in and of itself, but it is the grossest violation of our powers under the Constitution that has ever fallen under my observation. I can best examine it by taking a concrete instance of what may happen under it, and I selected this instance because it is what members of the league expect shall happen under it.⁸⁵

This "concrete instance" was Turkey.

Although the covenant made no specific allocation of territories, the vision of an "atheistic, sword-swinging, dark-skinned" people would be well-suited to a speaker who wanted emotional phrasing and distortion as his persuasive weapons.

Unquestionably we have the right to acquire territory by conquest, and it is just as clear that we have the right to acquire it by purchase, but we have no conquered the Turkish Empire nor have we bought one foot of its soil. Moreover, when we acquire territory, whether by conquest or purchase, it becomes the territory of the United States, controlled by the laws of the United States, and destined either for admission as a State, or to be governed directly as a

⁸⁴Ibid., 4, 3409.

⁸⁵Ibid., 4, 4313.

Territory, or to be disposed of as the will of Congress may direct.⁸⁶

In case his pathos was not sufficient, the Senator used ethos to solidify his position. As a Congressman "who quickly achieved a position of responsibility and prominence," he was considered for the presidential nomination in 1908 and was nominated in the Republican conventions of 1912 and 1916.⁸⁷ He dangled these qualifications in front of his auditors.

What I have said I am quite willing to admit is a question for lawyers, and if I shall ever hear of one who affirms the validity of such a transaction I shall be tempted to tear up my certificate of admission to the bars of the courts of this country into little pieces and consign the fragments to the flames, and thereafter I shall do my best to forget that I ever belonged to the honorable profession of the law.⁸⁸

No less qualified a lawyer than William Howard Taft disagreed with Cummins; he even criticized the mandate system as "not going far enough."⁸⁹

Still there is no record of any Congressional refutation to the Senator's distortions despite the abundance of logical appeals which could be made. The speech contained many errors of fact and erroneous suppositions. His assumption that the "supervision of a mandate" meant the

⁸⁶Ibid., 5, 4314.

⁸⁷Elbert W. Harrington, "Albert Baird Cummins: An Analysis of a Logical Speaker," American Public Address, ed. by Loren Reid (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1961), pp. 107-109.

⁸⁸Cong. Rec., 5, 4314.

⁸⁹Cited in Fleming, p. 116.

"acquisition of territory by conquest or purchase" was a flagrant violation of both logic and fact.

Senator Sherman also criticized the mandate system but he either did not read the provisions or wanted to misinterpret article 19.

Article 19 unloads the guardianship of Great Britain's far-flung empire upon the United States. This article smells loudly of the professors. It sounds like a lecture on ethnology, blended with an appeal to subscribe liberally for foreign missions. Great Britain and other European powers find increasing need for concentrating their forces near home. Additional territory in a distant part of the world is an undesirable burden at this time.⁹⁰

Britain's empire was not under discussion. Article 19 clearly stated that the objects for mandates were the possessions of the German and Austrian empires.

The effectiveness of these arguments concerning the alleged threat of the league to domestic policies is evident. Senator Hitchcock's proposal to Wilson called for the protection of national immigration procedures and proclaimed the right of a nation to refuse mandatory powers. The New York World list of major covenant criticisms included prospective league interference with immigration procedures. Taft telegraphed Wilson: "Addition to Article 15 will answer objection as to Japanese immigration."⁹¹ Senator Gore, Oklahoma, quoted William Jennings Bryan as favoring an amendment which would clearly guarantee the right of a member nation

⁹⁰Cong. Rec., 5, 4867.

⁹¹Cited in Fleming, p. 183.

to refuse mandatory powers.⁹² In Paris, Secretary of State Robert Lansing opposed Wilson's policy of mandates: "The system of mandates appeared to possess no peculiar advantages over the old method of transferring and exercising sovereign control."⁹³ Thus statements by the leading treaty proponents and outstanding Americans outside the Senate as well as public opinion generally, indicated the persuasiveness of the argument that the covenant interferes with the administration of domestic policies.

Wilson, too, was convinced that the fear of league interference with domestic policies required appropriate changes in the covenant. On March 26, word came that article 15 now read:

If the dispute between the parties is claimed by one of them, and is found by the Council, to arise out of matters which by international law is solely within the domestic jurisdiction of that party, the Council shall so report, and shall make no recommendation as to its settlement.⁹⁴

Article 22, which dealt with the contents of the previous article 19, protected any nation which might disapprove of the mandate system by adding the stipulation: "and those

⁹²Cong. Rec., 5, 4845.

⁹³Robert Lansing, The Peace Negotiations (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1921), p. 155.

⁹⁴For details on the amendments proposed by Wilson see David Hunter Miller, Drafting of the Covenant, 2 vols. (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1928), vol. I, Chapter 28; Edward M. House (ed.), What Really Happened at Paris (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921), pp. 398-444.

who are willing to accept it."⁹⁵ Article 8 was revised to read: "Such plans [size of armed forces] shall be subject to reconsideration and revision at least every ten years."⁹⁶

In essence the entire argument was an exercise in pathos. League critics "read between the lines" of the articles to produce the Japanese Buddhist and the Turkish Moslem as bait to be dangled in front of the American Christian. Even those who had not sung the stanzas of "America First" could not be criticized for shuddering at the thought of the invasion of American rights to determine immigration policy. League critics could not effectively attack a document to preserve world peace by appearing to favor a large standing army. Their obvious answer was to attack the document on the basis of who should regulate size rather than size itself. Here again no logical grounds existed unless the United States was planning on a large standing army; no justification for that conclusion existed at that time. In all three areas the use of pathos proved to be effective in developing the argument. Treaty opponents were probably effective in making the league suspect in the eyes of the American people, at least sufficiently suspect to provide a foundation for later arguments which called for "Americanizing" the world organization.

⁹⁵Baker, I, 329; League Text, p. 28.

⁹⁶League Text, p. 14.

The Covenant Provides No Way to
Withdraw Membership

The final argument critics employed to show that the covenant destroyed the sovereignty of the United States was the claim that the covenant makes difficult or impossible the withdrawal of the United States once she has become a member. This supporting argument was not as widely used as arguments already considered in this study, and usually it appeared in conjunction with some other argument.

In one of the argument's presentations, Poindexter appealed to the conservative members of his audience.

The question at once arises whether, when we have once committed ourselves to its power, we can ever withdraw. It no doubt will be contended by its advocates that we can renounce our allegiance and abrogate our agreement at any time. It was so contended by many of the States who joined the Federal Union.⁹⁷

Senator Thomas asked his audience:

Shall the league be an indissoluble one? Should a dissatisfied nation determine to secede, are the batteries of the league to be turned upon it? If so, must it not by the union surrender an important element of its sovereignty? If not, may it not be dissolved at the pleasure of one or more of the constituents?⁹⁸

Senator Knox also used the argument.

That point is worthy of consideration: if we get into the league we can not get out. No matter how badly it works for us, no matter how much we may come to dislike it, we are bound, in honor, to remain in it. If, in desperation, we broke the treaty and released ourselves, would we not thereby invite war upon us by the other members of the league? Even if they generously

⁹⁷Cong. Rec., 3, 3747-3748.

⁹⁸Ibid., 1, 998.

refrained from attacking us, could they be expected to ever trust us again?⁹⁹

These speakers characterized the use of the argument. They employed no extensive development, just subtle inferences designed to plant a seed of doubt.

Many of the witnesses to the controversy became doubtful. Senator King proposed thirty articles for a new covenant which he considered taking to Paris for the peace commission to consider. One of these provided that America could withdraw from the league if she desired.¹⁰⁰ America's right to withdraw was included both on the New York World list of three major criticisms and on Hitchcock's list of four proposed amendments.

In the revised draft, article 1 was amended to read:

Any member of the league may, after two year's notice of its intentions so to do, withdraw from the league, provided that all its international obligations and all its obligations under the Covenant shall have been fulfilled at the time of its withdrawal.¹⁰¹

The argument would be revived as the subject of one of the reservations in November. For the time being, however, most league critics probably realized that to argue "we should never join" or "we should not join this league" was more effective than to make a case for "well, if we do join, there is no way to get out."

⁹⁹Ibid., 2, 2114.

¹⁰⁰Washington Post, March 22, 1919, p. 3.

¹⁰¹League Text, p. 7.

The Covenant Does Not Adequately
Provide for Peace

The second basic argument that the covenant had "certain undesirable features" claimed that the proposed league plans did not meet the primary objective of a world-wide peace organization: the covenant did not adequately provide for peace. The argument presented league supporters with a dilemma: the covenant was too weak since it relied only on moral suasion as a means of resolving conflicts; the covenant was too strong since the resolving of conflicts would lead to war.

The Covenant Is Too Weak

Early in the controversy Senator Reed explained the critics' position, which objected to "moral suasion" as a means to enforce league decisions. What kind of moral code could be set up that would be a standard?

The nations have different religions, different forms of government, different civilizations, and the roots of these differences in many instances go back more than 2,000 years. Are we to undertake to create a league of nations and set up a moral code for the other nations of the world? If so by what principles are we to govern ourselves? China would be invited into this league of nations. . . . Japan must come in; and yet we say that Japan is pagan, and we say that China is pagan. Shall the "unspeakable Turk" come in and if so, shall he bring his religion and his serapho? How are we to agree on a code that will accord with the tenets of the Greek Catholic, the Jewish, the Mohammedan, and the Confucian religion, or the Shintoism and Buddhism of Japan? By what code of moral are we to regulate and set up our standards?¹⁰²

¹⁰²Cong. Rec., 2nd Sess., 1918, LVI, Part 11, 11564.

Senator Sherman said: "I am skeptical of moral suasion as a coercive agency on some governments."¹⁰³ Senator Shaforth, Colorado, said he favored peace efforts but this covenant was not "strong or drastic enough."¹⁰⁴ Even one of the league's staunchest supporters, Taft, stated that if the league relied on moral suasion alone, it became a mockery.

The Covenant Is Too Strong

At the same time, another segment of critics proclaimed that to use force in place of moral suasion would mean an invitation to war. For example, Reed now expounded the principle that "Europe has had about 100 wars in the last century, and we got into just one of them. When you get through with your little league of nations, if Europe should have a hundred wars we would be a party to all of them."¹⁰⁵

Senator Cummins declared that the covenant was not a constitution for permanent peace: "It is a league for the invitation to war."¹⁰⁶ Knox was equally emphatic in his denouncement. He asked: "Do its provisions abolish war and make it thereafter impossible?"

There is not an important article in the document which does not specifically answer that question "No." And further, the scheme provided therein holds out a greater promise, nay, assurance--of a future worldwide war,

¹⁰³Ibid., 3rd Sess., 1919, LVII, Part 5, 4864.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., 5, 4310.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., 4, 3750.

¹⁰⁶Washington Post, February 16, 1919, p. 10.

greater than any which has gone on before, than any other document in this history of recorded time.¹⁰⁷

Sherman, while dubious of the pragmatism of moral suasion, also attacked its antithesis, force. Calling the covenant a "Pandora's box of evil to empty upon the American people the aggregated calamities of the world" he demonstrated in article after article why the covenant was a war document. He concluded:

Like his neutrality device that was a prelude itself to unprepared war, his peace league engages us not in one war but, in an overwhelming sweep of authority, in all wars that scourge the earth. It is simple but deadly. Apparently an open covenant of peace, it is a masked charter of unceasing war; the voice of Mars, but the hand of Woodrow.¹⁰⁸

In other words, the league critics claimed the use of moral suasion was inefficient while the use of force would only breed wars.

Those who favored the league tried gallantly to show that peace would not be won or could not be won without effort. Such an attempt would refute only the rejectionists and would only whet the appetites of the revisionists for "changes to remove these evils." In this particular argument even those who favored amendment, however, were at a disadvantage as the covenant was, to use the vernacular, "damned if it did, damned if it didn't" provide adequately for the enforcement of league decisions.

¹⁰⁷Cong. Rec., 5, 4690-4691.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., 5, 4868.

Thus the second major contention, "the covenant has certain undesirable features," involved a two pronged attack: loss of American sovereignty; and no adequate provisions for peace. The relationship of the contention to the three strategies is clear. Although probably not designed as such, the development of the contention did help in the delaying tactics; all league critics had to do was stall from February 15 to March 4. The effectiveness of the contention in securing amendments has been demonstrated. The basic appeal to consider America before considering the world was the foundation of the irreconcilable approach. Judged from customary standards, the invention of anti-league speakers was often poor, but their selection of the issues to emphasize was appropriate. Their development of supporting arguments, while questionable ethically, was effective when judged by the standard of predictable and actual audience response.

The Covenant Should Be Rejected Altogether

No doubt exists concerning the purpose of the speakers who used this major contention. No amount of postponement would change the situation; no amount of alteration would remove their objections. These treaty opponents sought but one answer from their audience: rejection of the proposal. The speakers used several supporting arguments in developing the contention: the league would be dominated by foreign powers; the league violates Washington's doctrine of "no entangling

alliances"; the covenant is unconstitutional; and no covenant can adequately provide for peace.

The League Would Be Dominated by
Foreign Powers

The assumption behind this argument was that America would be a minority power in the league. This assumption allowed the rejectionists to combine their appeals with those who objected to the league's violation of American rights. Thus, not only did the irreconcilables proclaim the superiority of America but they also threatened their audience with a fear that the United States would be dominated by "those strange foreigners."

Most of the charges claiming that the league would be dominated referred to Great Britain although others conjured up images of "bearded monarchs," revolutionary Bolsheviks, and even a resurrected Germany. Later in the controversy, Catholic and Negroes were presented as two more scapegoats.

One of the principal users of the argument that Great Britain would assume league control was the great nationalist, William E. Borah. America had escaped once from the chains of England and he for one was not going to tear up the Declaration of Independence to sign the covenant. To prove that "the greatest triumph for English diplomacy in three centuries" laid the foundation for eventual English conquest, Borah noted the similarity between the covenant draft and the

version submitted by Jan Smuts. He pointed out the similarities and called upon the London Times for support: "This project, if not the same as that outlined by General Smuts, is like it as its brother." But, why was this English influence objectionable? Borah continued:

When they finally settle down to business England will have one vote, Canada one vote, New Zealand one vote, Australia one vote, and South Africa one vote, whilst the American nation, brought into being by our fathers at so much cost of blood and treasure . . . will have one vote.¹⁰⁹

Senator Vardaman, quoting Dr. Hannis Taylor, also argued that English authorship of the draft meant that England planned to dominate the league.

Mr. Simonds has disclosed the fact that the "framework" which has been constructed is the brain child of British statesmen like Lord Robert Cecil, like Gen. Smuts, like Mr. Asquith, who contemplate an international organization possessing more authority over various nations of the world than the British Parliament possesses over her self-governing dominions. Before the Senate permits this Trojan horse to be brought within our walls, it should certainly consider the pedigree.¹¹⁰

Others similarly argued to the same end. This argument was to become the foundation of the "inequality of votes" reservation in a later phase of the controversy.

On February 19, Poindexter replaced England as the potential dominator with another awesome possibility.

It is impossible to tell who the entire representation of the executive council will be. Five of its members of nine shall be the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan, and they shall select four

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 4, 3913-3914.

¹¹⁰Ibid., 4, 3658-3659.

others. If they should select Germany for instance-- Germany, one of the great populations of the world, with something like 77,000,000 or 80,000,000 people, capable of a high degree of organization, very likely would be selected as a member of the executive council-- then, if, with that capacity which Germany has for propaganda and for organization and for manipulation, she would be able to secure the cooperation of the other three of these four additional members, then with one other out of the five, she could control the executive council of the league.¹¹¹

Germany, of course, was not even a proposed member at this time; yet even more absurd was the probability of Germany convincing Great Britain, Italy, France or Japan, as well as all three of the yet unnamed nations, to "gang up" on the helpless United States of America. Still, picture the American people's reaction to Poindexter's portrayal of Germany, "the butcher and murderer of our fathers and sons," dominating the United States if she became a league member.

Senator Sherman also feared league domination by alien powers but he foresaw control by the smaller nations of the world. Discussing the procedure of business of the body of delegates, he noted a majority of the states make the decisions. Thus "Holland and Montenegro would outvote the United States. Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, Roumania and Montenegro would outvote Great Britain, France, Italy and the United States."¹¹² John Q. Citizen did not even know where Montenegro was and "they are going to outvote the United States?" Of course, he would want no part of such a league.

¹¹¹Ibid., 4, 3748.

¹¹²Ibid., 5, 4866.

All of the developments of this argument appear to be minute, however, in comparison to the attack by Senator Reed on February 22. His speech was based on five major headings.

1. The control of the league from the first will inevitably be in European and Asiatic nations, having many interests in common and who may have common antagonisms against us.
2. The British Empire, will, in all probability, constitute the controlling influence of the league.
3. If at any time England shall lose control, the German powers will be likely to succeed to her position of dominance.
4. There is in the background the menace of world Bolshevism.
5. Whoever controls the league will control the world.¹¹³

Reed was no different from most irreconcilables in that pathos was his primary weapon. To substantiate the first point he said: "Great Britain, Japan, and Italy are monarchies; France and the United States are republics." To Reed, these five nations were the only league members. For his second point he used the traditional counting of England and her dominions to obtain a five to one result; at least nine nations now belonged to the league although the four "new" ones would make the monarchies in the minority. As for the prospect of German control he reasoned that Germany and Austria would eventually become league members: "Indeed the four kingdoms of the German Empire and the five kingdoms of the Austro-Hungarian Empire could all undoubtedly qualify." He did not bother to disclose the reasoning process

¹¹³Ibid., 4, 4027.

by which he arrived at the fourth point that the league would be replete with Bolshevik control. He also did not discuss the fifth heading, nor did he describe what effect America's abstention from membership would have over this "control of the world."

Thus, league critics portrayed the course of events to come. The fear of an alien body dominating the league was tailor-made for the American people. They had just fought a war to prevent the conquest by a militant tyrant; any league which meant this domination might become a reality surely could not expect a "true American's support."

Membership Violates Washington's
"No Entangling Alliances"

As the ghost of Monroe was resurrected, so was Washington's. To hear league critics argue, Washington had given the country an irrevocable foreign policy statement in his "Farewell Address." His principle of "no entangling alliances" was invoked either separately or in conjunction with other arguments. The argument was used to secure a rejection of the league; no amendment could offset the fact that once in the league America would be hopelessly enmeshed in the foreign affairs of other nations.

Poindexter described how critics felt about abandoning the principles of Washington.

Those who take that view of the matter believe that in order to arrive at a satisfactory basis of peace not only must we ignore and neglect the duty of bringing the present war to an end but that we should cast aside,

as the refuse of government, the great policies of the past, and adopt new policies, and make, as they express it, a new order in the world.¹¹⁴

Using the historical example he listed the actions and attitudes of not only Washington, but also those of Monroe, Cleveland and Theodore Roosevelt. He made an interesting remark in conjunction with the latter:

Was Roosevelt promoting war . . . when he resisted the efforts of the German Empire to invade the traditional policy of America? He was awarded by an impartial tribunal . . . the prize to be bestowed upon those who contributed most to the peace of the world.¹¹⁵

Poindexter must have been referring to the Nobel Peace Prize which was presented to Roosevelt for his moderation in the Russo-Japanese war. In his eagerness to sway his auditors Poindexter somewhat obscured the facts.

Senator Knox had applied four tests which the covenant must pass to be acceptable for America; one of the four was its threat to national independence. To show how America was threatened he called upon the principles embodied in the entangling alliances theme. He asked league supporters to show him how the doctrines of both Washington and Monroe were not cast aside.

For more than a hundred and thirty years the America Nations has progressed along the plain safe course these men marked out. It has kept us from disastrous foreign entanglements and ruinous foreign complications. It has saved us hundreds of thousands of lives and hundreds of billions of dollars. Why leave it now to wander through a pathless wilderness of alien interests, racial hatreds,

¹¹⁴Ibid., 4, 3746.

¹¹⁵Ibid., 4, 3746-3747.

historic animosities?¹¹⁶

At least Knox developed the argument in a fresh way by quoting Thomas Jefferson: "Our first and fundamental maxim should be never to entangle ourselves in the broils of Europe; our second, never to suffer Europe to inter-meddle with cis-Atlantic affairs."¹¹⁷ Authorship of those principles was accredited traditionally to George Washington and James Monroe.

Reed blended this argument with his favorite theme: foreign domination. He waded through an almost inexhaustible list of past wars in Europe; he called upon almost every patriot of America history to testify to the greatness of America; he investigated the articles of the covenant individually to prove that they were part of a "war-breeding" document. He closed his speech with the theme from an article in the Saturday Evening Post, "Washington Was Right." He pleaded with his audience to look back into time:

I see them at Valley Forge as they walk amidst the snows and frosts, staggering and hungry, falling dead, but not surrendering. I behold Washington with his troops crossing the Delaware to attack the Hessian horde. I see the flag of Cornwallis above the battlements of Yorktown lowered and the Starry banner go up amidst the tears and cheers of Washington and his soldiers. Since then no despot has dared to try and drag it down again. Shall it be now supinely surrendered into the hands of foreigners? Shall it be turned back to the Monarchs we defined? Shall we yield the sovereignty thus gloriously obtained?¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 5, 4692.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 5, 4693.

Proponents of the treaty would have difficulty in countering this attack with "the covenant won't really be as bad as you say."

Almost every attack Senator Borah made found its justification in the words of Washington. Washington had warned "that we never could become a nation with a national mind, a national purpose, and national ideals until we divorce ourselves from the European system."¹¹⁹ If America failed to heed Washington, she also abandoned Monroe.

He had warned us against the entering of Europe--the Monroe doctrine declared that Europe should not enter America. Permit me to say that one of these can not stand, in my judgment, without the support of the other. It is the inevitable result of Washington's teaching that the Monroe doctrine should exist. Indeed, such men as Mr. Coubert, the great lawyer, say that Washington's policy incorporated and included the Monroe doctrine; that Monroe's statement was simply an exemplification and the application of this principle.¹²⁰

To illustrate the point the Senator told a story about a man named Europe who ran a farm. One of his tenants, called America, became dissatisfied and left to set up his own system of farming. He was so successful that, fearing the jealousies of old man Europe, he built a fence which said: I will neither go to your farm nor shall you come to mine." After a hundred years of success, a man, called William Howard, said: "Let's tear down that fence and go into partnership with Europe." America protested that he did not like their system of farming. William Howard answered:

¹¹⁹Ibid., 4, 3911.

¹²⁰Ibid.

One system is just as two systems. I know something about this; I ran this farm for four years myself. . . . I had such universal success while I was running this farm and received such universal commendation upon my work after it was over, having received the approval of 2 tenants out of 48, that I am sure I can run both farms.¹²¹

The speaking of Reed and Borah shows how two speakers using the same theme, both seeking the same goal, may employ very different methods. While Reed relied upon pure emotion, Borah utilized narrative, testimony and example for his proofs.

Treaty supporters were certainly at a disadvantage in using emotion to counteract opponents' outbursts. Ethos was all that remained; Taft, Lowell and others did their best while the most influential figure, Wilson, was still overseas and would not return until mid-July. By that time public opinion would have been somewhat altered. Whether this particular argument effected that change is conjectural; no doubt it helped.

The League Covenant Is Unconstitutional

The argument was first developed after publication of the covenant in mid-February. Although Norris, Reed, Sherman and Frelinghuysen argued the constitutionality of the covenant, Senators Vardaman, Poindexter and Knox delivered three of its most typical presentations.

In his speech on February 18, Senator Vardaman read

¹²¹Ibid., 4, 3913-3914.

a letter from Dr. Hannis Taylor which expressed the Senator's views. Taylor in turn had reproduced an editorial from the Washington Post. The paragraph which summarizes the Post-Taylor-Vardaman position reads:

No treaty can be made by which the United States Government can agree to substitute the decision of a league of nations for Congress in declaring a state of war. Nor can any treaty pass the Supreme Court which attempts to create an obligation upon Congress to declare war when called upon to do so by an international organization. Nor can any treaty pass muster which obliges Congress to accept the mandate of another authority regarding the size and composition of the United States Army, the Navy, the fortifications of the armaments of the United States or its possessions on land or sea. Nor can any treaty be made which deprives the United States of the right to preserve its neutrality in case of war between two or more foreign nations, for denial of this right would be the denial of the right to declare war. Nor can any treaty be made which, upon the outbreak of foreign war, the United States could be compelled to suspend its commerce with any State against the will of Congress.¹²²

The argument developed the general theme: "The power exercised by the government of the United States was delegated to it by the States and the people; this power is not transferable."

In his address of February 19, Senator Poindexter based the covenant's unacceptability on five points; the fifth was its unconstitutionality. There was no limit placed upon the power of the league to supervise the commerce or the armament of the United States: "This power under the Constitution of the United States is vested in Congress."¹²³

¹²²Ibid., 4, 3656.

¹²³Ibid., 4, 3657.

Poindexter continued to enumerate the many other areas in which he considered the rights of Congress would be usurped by the league.

On March 1, Senator Knox delivered a thorough attack on the covenant. Apparently Knox had absorbed, digested and outlined the document as no previous critic, with the possible exception of Lodge, had done. He performed a penetrating analysis of the covenant, article by article. He demonstrated its confusing language; he pointed out its deficiencies. He applied four tests which it must pass. The second of these dealt with its constitutionality: "Do the provisions of the proposed covenant strike down the precepts of the Constitution?" They obviously did.

Under the Constitution the Congress of the United States has the exclusive power to declare war. The proposed covenant puts the power of declaring war in the hands of the executive council. . . . Under the Constitution of the United States the Congress has the exclusive power to raise and support armies and to provide and maintain a Navy. The covenant provides that the executive council shall formulate plans limiting the size of our Army and Navy. . . . Under the Constitution, a treaty becomes effective upon its ratification, following the advice and consent thereto of the Senate. Under the covenant no treaty becomes binding until it has been registered under the secretary-general of the league. . . .¹²⁴

Using anticipatory refutation, definition, comparison, historical example and hypothetical illustration, Knox dismissed the covenant as an unconstitutional document.

A columnist for the Washington Post, Albert W. Fox

¹²⁴Ibid., 5, 4687-4694.

had reported the opposition to the league would focus on four points; the basis for all four was the assertion that the document was unconstitutional.¹²⁵ The overall effect of the argument, however, was probably not very successful on the American people. John Q. Citizen might appreciate the symbolism of the Constitution but not the legalistic intricacies within that symbol. The history of his voting record, his lack of interest in politics, and his lack of knowledge of the machinations of a political body, make it doubtful that the argument had much appeal. He could become much more aroused over the league's dictates concerning Japanese laborers than the Senate's right to declare war. Besides, there was to be no more war. He was much more interested in the policy of Washington than he was in preserving the treaty-making capacity of the Senate. As for the Senators, the argument was no doubt effective. That body was already jealous of anyone taking away its rights. League critics merely had to amplify that jealousy and relate it to the controversy. What Senator was willing to see that revered body turn into nothing but a debating society when all its powers were stripped or transferred to an international organization?

No Covenant Can Adequately Provide
for Peace

Whereas revisionists had doubted the efficacy of Wilson's covenant to secure world peace as an argument for

¹²⁵Washington Post, February 17, 1919, p. 1.

alteration, other speakers employed the same argument to justify rejecting any plan for world peace. Senator Thomas did not believe that America, or the world for that matter, could rely on a document to insure the peace.

I fervently hope that this great war may mark the close of strife among men. But I apprehend that until human nature shall have profoundly altered, until selfishness and greed, until the passions, the ambitions and the emotions of men shall have been tempered by the altruism of a brotherhood we have never yet attained, the world will be troubled by war. A French antiquarian recently announced that he had unearthed more than 3,000 treaties of peace since organized society began, all of them expressively designed to establish permanent peace on earth. The Congress of Vienna wrought to that end and rashly proclaimed its consummation, yet its every signatory was at war within a half of century afterwards. . . . "The fate of nations," said Gov. Black, "is still decided by their wars. You may talk of orderly tribunals, and learned referees; you may sing in your schools the gentle phrases of the quiet life; you may strike from your books the last note of every martial anthem, and yet out in the smoke and thunder will always be the tramp of horses and the silent, rigid, upturned face."¹²⁶

Note the Senator's use of the example, analogy and testimony as amplification. As an irreconcilable, this attempt to clarify and persuade with tools other than loaded language was atypical of "bitter-enders."

Not all amplifying materials were developed so logically. For example, Senator Moses used the historical example as a vehicle for the innuendo, the emotion-laden phrase so characteristic of irreconcilables.

For example, we find Alexander described by his closest companion, Czartoryski, who, as near as I can make out was the Col. House of that era, as one of the group who

¹²⁶Cong. Rec., 1, 998.

had brought over into the nineteenth century the illusions of the eighteenth . . . a few sacramental phrases were all that were necessary to solve any problem growing out of the relations of people. We find that very closely paralleled here. We find the description of Alexander paralleled further when Czartoryski said, as I recall, that the Czar was willing that everyone should be free, provided that everyone should do as he wished.¹²⁷

Notice his phrasing, "Col. House of that era, illusions, sacramental phrases, everyone should do as he wished." His choice of Alexander, the head of Russia, was probably an appeal to the fear of Bolshevism which existed in America.

Thus the major contention of league critics that the covenant should be rejected altogether was a separate entity. Undoubtedly its use played some part in the delaying tactics used by other strategists, but the design and function of the arguments was to secure rejection. The continuance of the controversy would be marked by a repeated use of the contention. While the postponement and amendment critics would unite in an attempt to "Americanize" the covenant, rejectionists would remain constant in their demands.

An Analysis of a Speech Delivered
by Senator Lodge

Heretofore the development of the arguments of the three major contentions has been exemplified with excerpts from various speakers. At this point a single speech, given by Senator Lodge on February 28, 1919, will be analyzed to show the development of all three major contentions and most

¹²⁷Ibid., 3, 2599.

of the supporting arguments. As the most influential person behind the anti-league attack, his selection is considered representative of the period of time under survey.

The purpose statement of the address is not clear. His goal was probably not just postponement despite his repeated plea: "What I ask, and all I ask, is consideration, time, and thought."¹²⁸ Congress would adjourn in four days and he was surely aware of the proposed filibuster. His goal was probably not just rejection as he had admitted that a straight vote at that time would be unsuccessful. His goal was probably not just amendment at this point since the Senate would get no credit for amendments secured by Wilson. His primary goal was probably to convince the undecided Senators and the American people that the proposed league of nations was not to be automatically endorsed. This purpose would cover the diverse points in the speech and would explain his inclusion of the appeals to postpone, amend and reject.

The speech had three main heads: the covenant has undesirable features; the covenant is unable to provide for peace; and the peace terms be settled before considering a league of nations.

The Covenant Has Undesirable Features

Lodge used several arguments to develop this heading.

1. The language of the document is confusing.
2. The covenant is contrary to Washington's "no

¹²⁸Ibid., 5, 4522; Lodge made fifteen such appeals in the speech.

- entangling alliances."
3. The covenant nullifies the Monroe doctrine.
 4. The covenant is a war-breeding document.
 5. The covenant is in direct opposition to the Constitution.
 6. The covenant usurps America's rights in immigration.

He also briefly mentioned three arguments: league domination by certain foreign nations; mandates; and America's right to withdraw.

Previous mention was made of Lodge's complaints concerning inappropriate and ambiguous language of the document.¹²⁹ Furthermore, the peace commission had created no interpretative body which could pass judgment on disputes arising from the imprecise language. Throughout the speech he made use of "I assume," or "it seems to me," as reinforcement for the point.

He had no new development for the entangling alliances point. He did make the statement: "I suppose I shall make myself the subject of ridicule and derision for quoting from the Farewell Address." His remarks seem to say: "Those that disagree with me are laughing at me and therefore laughing at George Washington." He left it to his audience to decide who was more patriotic.

He did present a new amplification of the Monroe doctrine argument.

To say that it is a question of protecting the boundaries, the political integrity, of the American States is not to state the Monroe doctrine. Boundaries have been changed among American states since the Monroe

¹²⁹Supra, pp. 34-35.

doctrine was enunciated. That is not the kernel of the doctrine. The real essence of that doctrine is that American questions shall be separated from Europe and from the interference of Europe in purely American questions.¹³⁰

The legality of Lodge's interpretation is subject to question. The wording does not clearly support Lodge's conclusion. The first section discusses two principles:

The American continents are not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by European powers; America would consider any attempt to extend a European system to the Western hemisphere as dangerous to her peace and safety.

Since the league prohibited external aggression anywhere, it prohibited such an extension in the Western hemisphere as well. The second part of the doctrine merely states: "In the wars of European powers in matters relating to themselves we have never taken part, nor does it comport with our policy so to do." This part was related to the controversy, but did not warrant the conclusion which Lodge drew from the data.¹³¹

He argued that the covenant was a war-breeding document. He focused on the phrase "the territorial integrity and the political independence," and omitted the qualifying phrase "against external aggression." To argue that America should not "guarantee," a word Lodge inserted in article 10, existing boundaries is not the same as arguing that she

¹³⁰Ibid., 5, 4521.

¹³¹Samuel E. Morison and Henry S. Commager, The Growth of the American Republic, 2 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950), I, 462; the authors use the direct words of the doctrine.

"guarantee" that no aggressor will violate those boundaries. The Senator's omission of one phrase and addition of a key word made his appeal logically invalid.

Lodge said: "I am not here to discuss the constitutional question of the sole right of Congress to declare war," but he did state his opinion.

We shall be obliged to modify the Constitution. I do not think, and I can never admit, that we can change or modify the Constitution by a treaty negotiated by the President and ratified by the Senate. I think that must be done, and can only be done, in the way prescribed by the Constitution itself, and to promise to amend our Constitution is a serious task and a doubtful undertaking.¹³²

This statement required no discussion; the auditors could draw their own conclusions.

The final argument for this section was that America would put herself in the position of submitting "every possible international dispute or difference to the league court or to the control of the executive council of the league." To Lodge, this covenant phrasing included immigration. The covenant's use of "dispute," however, referred to war-provoking situations. Articles 8 and 9 pertained to the reduction of armaments; article 10 dealt with external aggression; article 11 discussed war or the threat of war; article 12 prohibited member nations from resorting to war until they had tried arbitration; articles 13 and 14 also discussed the arbitration process as did article 15; article

¹³²Cong. Rec., 5, 4525.

16 dealt with the breaking of agreements mentioned in article 12; article 17 covered disputes with non-member states; and article 18 referred to trade in armaments. Any article that mentioned disputes was one of the above. To state that any of these articles would include immigration was a distortion of the truth. His statement could only have the basis for an emotional appeal, illustrated by the following:

If we are ready to do this [submit every possible dispute] we are prepared to part with the most precious of sovereign rights, that which guards our existence and our character as a nation. Are we ready to leave it to other nations to determine we shall admit to the United States a flood of Japanese, Chinese and Hindu labor? If we accept this plan for a league, that is precisely what we promise to do.¹³³

The Covenant Is Unable to
Provide for Peace

Under the second main head he inquired "whether the terms of this draft of a constitution for a league of nations really make for harmony among the nations or will tend to produce dissension and controversy?" To answer this question he painstakingly analyzed and evaluated every article in the covenant. Only articles 6, 20, and 22 had his support; he criticized all the others. For example, he read only the last line of article 2: "each of the high contracting parties shall have one vote but may not have more than three representatives." Without comment he continued:

Therefore the voting in the body of delegates proceeds on the well-settled principle of international law that

¹³³Ibid.

each national sovereignty is equal to every other national sovereignty, and the United States will have one vote and so will Siam."

Lodge cannot be criticized for what he said; his facts were correct. What he did not say made his motives suspect. If he were speaking in the deep South he might well have said "Nigeria;" the purpose, the appeal to prejudice, would be the same.

In fact most of this section of the speech is characterized by what he did not say. He either allowed his audience to draw an unfavorable conclusion or encouraged them to draw an erroneous one by omitting some integral piece of information. At one point, in discussing article 3, he merely said:

Ultimately it will have nine members. I assume, and I think I have the right to assume, on the best authority, that there is no intention of making Germany one of the four nations to be added to the existing five which will compose the nine members of the executive council.¹³⁴

Since Germany was not to be a member at that time, the statement was correct. The prospect of what could happen in the league was the conclusion which Lodge apparently wanted his auditors to form. A few sentences later he remarked: "It is to be decided by the executive council, where we shall have one vote in five, or when the council is enlarged, one vote in nine, and in the body of delegates, of course, only one vote." He immediately changed the subject but the

¹³⁴Ibid., 5, 4523.

impression of being "outvoted" had been created. In analyzing article 11 he remarked that he knew some of the men who drafted the covenant but "I can not say I know them all; I do not believe anybody here could get up and say who the 14 members of that commission are." An obvious conclusion was: "America is being sold a bill of goods by a group of foreigners we don't even know."

Settle the Peace Before Considering
a League of Nations

Lodge developed this main head primarily by listing specific proposals. For example, he listed the following items which needed immediate attention by the peace commission.

. . . exclude Turkey from Europe, strengthen Greece, and give freedom and independence to the Armenians and to the Jewish and Christian populations of Asia and Jugo-Slavs; to take possession of the Kiel Canal; to establish the Baltic States and free them from Russia and restore Danish Schleswig to Denmark.¹³⁵

He warned the Senate that these objections could not be attained while the peace commission was engrossed in polishing up a "world constitution hastily constructed in a few weeks." He summarized this section, and the speech proper, with an appeal to patriotism which lightly touched upon the major arguments.

One attribute of the Senator as a rhetorical artist deserves individual attention. His use of language was in

¹³⁵Ibid., 5, 4527.

many instances his most effective persuasive device.

William Lawrence, a Lodge biographer, described Lodge as a speaker: "He rose to speak as informally as in his library; his concise language and crisp voice held attention, while the clarity of his thought carried the Senators along with him."¹³⁶ A less enthusiastic account gives additional insight into his stylistic characteristics.

In Senate debates, Lodge more often than not found it hard to refrain from little taunts, fleers, and jibes--mannerisms further accented by his piping irritating voice. Although he learned to control those unpleasant aspects of his speech delivery, he never mastered them completely, nor would he have been Henry Cabot Lodge if he had done so. A sarcastic phrase drove the point home; the voice twisted it.¹³⁷

Some specific instances of this "sarcastic phrasing" will demonstrate the appropriateness of this observation. Lodge was discussing the article which provided for a three-month "cooling off" period prior to any military action.

Suppose we had a Mexican raid across the border. It has happened. Perhaps Mexican nature has changed and it will never happen again, but it may happen. We are members of the league, we will suppose, and mean to carry out, as we must, every provision in absolute good faith. Mexico does not happen, we will say, to be a member of the league, or she is a member and breaks her covenant; she has not yet "given effective guarantees of sincere intention"; she breaks across our border, and under this article we have got to wait three months before we can do anything. That, I think, would be a little hard on the people who live on the border.¹³⁸

¹³⁶Henry Cabot Lodge (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1925), pp. 128-129.

¹³⁷Brandt and Shafter, p. 354.

¹³⁸Cong. Rec., 5, 4524.

Another example demonstrating his deliberate selection of words intended to create an unfavorable reaction came in his plea for world peace: "We are invited to move away from George Washington toward the other end of the line at which stands the sinister figure of Trotzky, the champion of internationalists."¹³⁹ The Senator did not make the claim that the league was Bolshevik-inspired as a Reed would do, but the inference was there. What he did not say encouraged distorted conclusions; how he phrased his comments contributed to the distortion.

Although Lodge's speech may be justly criticized, it was the most comprehensive effort during this period. While his address might have appeared too broad in scope, his reason for this breadth was prompted by a desire to achieve a united front within the Republican party. He had to be sufficiently critical to satisfy irreconcilables while retaining the support of those who desired American membership in some league. Lodge was determined that the league would not be a Wilson triumph; in fact he was anxious that Wilson take the onus for its defeat. He wrote in his book that if the treaty were defeated, "the Democratic party, and especially Mr. Wilson's friends, should be responsible for its defeat."¹⁴⁰ A test of his ability to hold the Republicans together occurred three days after this speech; the "Round-Robin"

¹³⁹Ibid., 5, 4528.

¹⁴⁰Lodge, p. 164.

contained a majority of Republican Senators' names, from Borah to Lenroot, from irreconcilable to "mild reservationist."

In seeking to achieve his purpose Lodge often made extreme rhetorical decisions which were not warranted. Enough concrete and valid weaknesses existed in the covenant to furnish Lodge with materials for direct refutation; he did not have to resort to questionable tactics. The subtleties of syntax, the omission of information and the encouragement to draw unwarranted conclusions are some of these tactics.

Conclusion

The arguments of league opponents had been successful in preventing a favorable reaction to the covenant. No vote could be taken as the peace commission was still at work on the final draft. The Senate could have indicated their approval, however, in the form of a resolution. The only indication was the "Round-Robin." In addition to the delaying effect of the arguments heard in the Senate, the filibuster at the end of the sixty-fifth Congress had prevented the passage of needed legislation. Without these appropriation measures Wilson would have to call a special session. Reconvening meant reorganization of the Senate with vital positions being assumed by league critics. The treaty opponents had been successful in their strategy of delay.

The success had not been a clear-cut victory. The

Literary Digest published the results of their public opinion poll on April 5; these results indicated a majority still favored the idea for a league.¹⁴¹ Other reports appeared to validate these conclusions; for example, Senator Pomerene reported that three-fourths of his constituents in Ohio favored the league in late April.¹⁴² During the month of April Wilson was able to secure four vital amendments which would remove some of the major arguments against the covenant's desirability. The reception of these amendments was, in general, favorable. Senator Myers noted that his major objection, that the covenant abrogated the Monroe doctrine, had been taken care of by the peace commission.¹⁴³ Senator McNary, Oregon, told reporters: "In my opinion the Covenant has been amended to meet all the legitimate objections raised against it."¹⁴⁴ What the remaining Senators thought about the covenant was, due to the actions of Lodge, a mystery. On April 29 he sent a telegram to all Republican Senators with a request which his colleagues honored.

We suggest that Republican Senators reserve final expression of opinion respecting the amended league covenant until the latest draft has been carefully studied and until there has been an opportunity for conference.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹Infra, pp. ~~1145~~ 116.

¹⁴²Washington Post, April 14, 1919, p. 1.

¹⁴³Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁴⁴New York Times, April 16, 1919, p. 3.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., April 30, 1919, p. 1.

The conference was necessary. An important qualification to the "Round-Robin" had read: "in the form now proposed."

This phrase had obviously been necessary to obtain many of the signatures. The question which must now be answered was:

"Do the covenant critics still have enough votes to block ratification?" An informal poll by the League to Enforce Peace indicated that sixty-four Senators would vote for the treaty. If this were a true reflection of attitude, then arguments of the preceding four months had been in vain.

But America was not yet a member of the league; the treaty would not be presented to the Senate until July. Opponents had two months to achieve their goals. Postponement critics would make one final effort. Other critics would still seek rejection. For the majority of league critics, the goal was amendment.

CHAPTER IV

PHASE TWO: AN ATTEMPT TO AMEND THE COVENANT

The sixty-fifth Congress adjourned on March 4, 1919. The sixty-sixth Congress convened in special session on May 19. From that point until July 10, when Wilson presented the peace treaty to the Senate, league opponents actively debated the purported terms of the covenant. From July 10 to September 10, the treaty was in the Foreign Relations Committee. During those two months ex-President Taft revealed that he would be in favor of certain interpretative reservations.¹ President Wilson again tried to reason with the Foreign Relations Committee in a second meeting at the White House.² Wilson then took his case to the people, beginning a tour of the country in Columbus, Ohio, on September 4.³

¹Bartlett, pp. 143-148. Due to unfavorable publicity, Taft offered to resign. The League to Enforce Peace refused his resignation but remained as a group unalterably in favor of the proposed covenant.

²U.S., Congressional Record, 66th Cong., 1st Sess., 1919, LVII, Part 4, 4013-4030, and Lodge, pp. 297-379, print accounts of that meeting. Unless otherwise designated, all references to the Record will be to the first session.

³Fleming, pp. 337-358, has a summary account of Wilson's tour.

An irreconcilable "truth squad," consisting primarily of Senators Borah and Johnson, followed the President until its presence in Washington was needed.

On September 10, the Foreign Relations Committee returned the treaty to the Senate which debated the recommendations. These recommendations consisted of some forty-five amendments to certain sections of the covenant and four reservations stating America's interpretation of other sections. On October 2, league critics lost the battle for most of the amendments but the pro-league forces lost even more. Wilson suffered a stroke which incapacitated him during the crucial days of the controversy. By the end of October the other Committee amendments had been rejected. League opponents were no closer to their goals than they had been six months previously, but the peace treaty was no closer to ratification.

This chapter will analyze the arguments of league opponents as they implemented the second phase of their attack. Some critics still sought to postpone the vote while others sought to reject the covenant. The majority of the opponents, however, directed their attacks toward "Americanizing" the document. This strategy originated in a conference between Borah and Lodge:

. . . it seemed perfectly obvious to me [Lodge] that any attempt to defeat the treaty of Versailles with the League by a straight vote in the Senate, if taken immediately, would be hopeless . . . but I thought that the interests and safety of the United States might be so protected by amendments or reservations that a

large majority of the Republicans could vote for it.⁴

Borah agreed with Lodge's analysis but told the new Majority Leader that so far as he was personally concerned, after having voted for the reservations or amendments, on the final vote he would support a rejection of the treaty.

Borah probably concluded that reservations would lead to rejection. The League to Enforce Peace drew such a conclusion in early May: "The opponents of the Covenant in the Senate will probably stake everything upon amendment . . . which probably will defeat the plan just as effectively as absolute rejections."⁵

League Opponents Prepare for the Debate

Among the Senate committees reorganized with the Republicans in control, the Foreign Relations Committee was most important to the controversy. According to tradition the old members were retained, and the new chairman filled the vacant slots. As chairman, Lodge opened to criticism his selection of new members. He decided that both minority parties should have representation. The two new Democrats were Smith, Arizona, and Shields of Tennessee. The other minority party was the Progressive party, represented by Hiram Johnson, California's avowed rejectionist. Senator Moses was one of the majority party appointments; his

⁴Lodge, p. 147.

⁵Cited in Bartlett, p. 132.

selection made a total of six irreconcilables. Senators Harding and New were also representatives of the Republican party; neither had demonstrated any party irregularity in the past. After Lodge had made his appointments the Committee had seven avowed critics, six league supporters and four "neutral members," with three of these in favor of amending the covenant.

League proponents objected to this "packing." Senator Hitchcock accused the Republican leaders of "filling the committee . . . with Senators practically pledged to oppose the league of nations and practically pledged to bring an amendment out of the Foreign Relations Committee."⁶ Senator Colt had been considered but not appointed; he explained the reason.

They are committed against the treaty. The new men were carefully picked and made their promises in advance. I was asked to take a place on the committee, but the condition was that I oppose the League of Nations and the treaty. I declined to commit myself to any attitude toward a document which I had not seen because it did not exist.⁷

Ex-President Taft was not pleased by the actions of his fellow Republicans.

Senator Kellogg would naturally have been taken before Moses, a new Senator, and one whose terms expires in two years. Senator Kellogg, however, had ventured to make a speech in favor of a league of nations, even before the Covenant was agreed upon, and had refused to sign the "round-robin."⁸

⁶Cong. Rec., 1, 792.

⁷Cited in Cranston, p. 130.

⁸Ibid., pp. 128-129.

Lodge's nominations were also criticized as partisan-inspired. Taft warned the Republicans that the league was not a partisan question: "We should be for or against the covenant without regard to whether we think it will bring credit to our party or credit to any man."⁹ Senator Williams openly defied Lodge to deny the accusation of party politics, and Senator Thomas repeated the challenge. Lodge had no answer. He did defend his selection in his book: "It will be seen at once that this was a strong committee and such as the existing conditions demanded."¹⁰ The significance of the makeup of the committee would become evident in the crucial days to follow.

Outside the Senate chamber, league critics were also actively preparing for the treaty debate. The League to Enforce Peace had been carrying on a nation-wide campaign on behalf of the treaty; their organization was active in all forty-eight states and almost a third of the nation's counties.¹¹ Through newspapers and speeches, league critics had attempted to counter this organization but they felt the need of a more active campaign with posters, pamphlets, speakers and mass meetings. Henry Clay Frick and Andrew Mellon agreed

⁹New York Times, June 8, 1919, p. 1.

¹⁰Lodge, p. 152; Fleming, pp. 218-220 and Cranston, pp. 218-230, have more details on the Committee membership.

¹¹Bartlett, pp. 113-141, has more details on League activities.

to make the needed funds available.¹² George Harvey described the amount: "The desired reservoir had been found and it was both deep and full. . . . Rejoicing pervaded the camp of the Irreconcilables, efforts were redoubled all along the line."¹³

Meetings were then scheduled all over the nation with renowned speakers presiding. A sample advertisement in Massachusetts read:

AMERICANS AWAKE!

Shall we bind ourselves to the war breeding covenant?
It impairs American sovereignty!
Surrenders the Monroe Doctrine!
Flouts Washington's warning!
Entangles us in European and Asiatic intrigues!
The evil thing with a holy name!¹⁴

This particular meeting featured Hiram Johnson and George Wharton Pepper. The subjects were the rejectionists' arguments for the preceding six months.

The availability of funds to combat the covenant could not but help anti-league efforts. Eight months had passed since the armistice was signed; the horrors of war were fading as people became engaged in a reconversion to peace. Any actions which created a doubt in the minds of the people about the advisability of a world organization

¹²Fleming, pp. 206-211; Cranston, pp. 109, 113; George Harvey, Henry Clay Frick the Man (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1928), pp. 293-330.

¹³Harvey, p. 329.

¹⁴Cited in Fleming, p. 211.

for peace would be beneficial to league critics in general if not to one of the various factions in particular.

Wilson Presents the Treaty to Congress

The day after Congress reconvened critics began demanding that the treaty be presented immediately to the Senate. Hiram Johnson introduced a resolution demanding that the Secretary of State produce a copy of the treaty. The resolution passed on June 6, but Lansing took no action.¹⁵ Senator Borah charged that copies of the treaty were in the United States. Wilson was contacted; he replied that the treaty had been sent to Germany but that the commission had agreed not to release its terms until signed. On June 9, Borah produced a copy given to him by the Chicago Tribune; he proceeded to read this version "to see if it really was the treaty," although his intent was to get the official terms before the Senate. After parliamentary maneuvers failed to prevent him, the Idahoan began to read again. The Senate gave in and allowed Borah to print his version as a Senate document.¹⁶

During the month of June Senator Knox introduced another of his resolutions to consider the peace treaty without the covenant. Elihu Root announced his reservations which some league critics wanted to send immediately to Paris

¹⁵Cong. Rec., 1, 63, 733.

¹⁶Ibid., 1, 799-856.

but the Foreign Relations Committee decided to wait until the treaty had been officially submitted. On June 28, the Germans signed the treaty; on July 9, Wilson arrived in New York City; on July 10, Wilson was able to present the treaty to Congress before final action was taken.

A few days later the Foreign Relations Committee met to discuss the document. Before they could proceed, Lodge decided that the exact terms should be read aloud.

One by one the Senators slipped out of the committee room, until finally Senator Lodge looked up to see that he was reading to Charles F. Redmond, clerk of the committee, and no one else. Without comment Mr. Lodge continued. A little later, his eyes again lifting from the pages, he noted that Mr. Redmond had slipped out to attend to some mail and he was reading alone.¹⁷

A New York Times' correspondent described the committee action "like a body of the Inquisition hunting through an Erasmian pamphlet for heterodox utterances, or a gimlet eyed church committee bent upon convicting the parson of heresy."¹⁸

When Lodge finished reading, on July 29, he decided to hold open hearings. During the early days of August the committee questioned many witnesses, including Bernard Baruch, an economic adviser to the Peace Commission, David Hunter Miller, a legal adviser, and Secretary of State Lansing. By August 21, the committee opened the hearings to American representatives of "any national group which should be

¹⁷New York Tribune, July 29, 1919, cited by Cranston, pp. 145-146.

¹⁸August 5, 1919, p. 7.

consulted." Italian-Americans complained about Fiume; Hungarian-Americans were concerned over the fate of the Hapsburgs; Greek-Americans were worried about the new Greek frontiers. George Creel commented: "The forces of hyphenation were boldly called into being and no effort spared to revive and exaggerate the divisive prejudices of American life."¹⁹ These open hearings gave league critics six more weeks in which to present their arguments to the people.

Analysis of the Audience

A description of the attitudes of the Senate and the American people in mid-1919 supports the conclusions by league critics that some action was necessary to prevent an acceptance of the proposed covenant. Despite the pleas during the first three months of 1919, a majority of the Senate and the electorate was still in favor of a league of nations.

Description of the Immediate Audience

Senator Lodge interviewed various anti-league Senators. Although he did not identify them, he did describe their attitudes: the greater part of the Republican majority in the Senate "were anxious to adopt the treaty if it could be done with safety to the United States."²⁰ Lodge indicated the numerical strength of these groups.

We had in all forty-nine Republican Senators. There

¹⁹Cited in Cranston, p. 162.

²⁰Lodge, p. 148.

were fifteen Republican Senators who were ready to vote for reservations but would not vote for the treaty under any circumstances, whether reservations were adopted or not. They were known as the "irreconcilables." That left thirty-four Republican Senators who were ready to vote for the treaty with reservations, but there was a difference among the thirty-four as to the character of the reservations desired. There were eight or ten Republican Senators who were known as "mild reservationists," but they differed among themselves as to the degree of mildness which they were ready to accept. . . . There were about eighteen Republican Senators, who, like myself, were determined to have effective reservations.²¹

Even if all Democratic Senators voted for the league, the measure could not obtain the necessary two-thirds majority. By the same token, no effort to amend the covenant would be successful until the amended version obtained that majority.

The distinction between amendment and reservation is important. An amendment would alter the covenant itself; many felt that the other nations would then have to act on these amendments. A reservation permitted the United States to observe a given provision according to America's interpretation of its meaning. The distinction between amendment and reservation helps to understand the various divisions of league critics. Lodge said:

There was a group of Senators who took the position that, although favoring certain reservations, they would support no amendments, not even an amendment embodying a proposition which they intended to vote for in the form of a reservation. Their objection was that amendments, if adopted, would require acceptance by all the powers which were signatories of the treaty, that the representatives of the signatory Powers at the Versailles Conference had already scattered and that much time

²¹Lodge, p. 163. Six to eight Senators remain unclassified.

would be lost if amendments were submitted to them, which would be, as they said, necessary.²²

The failure of the Committee amendments in October indicated that the reservationists probably had the more appealing solution to the alleged errors in the covenant.

Another way to describe the immediate audience is to analyze various polls taken during this period. On May 1, one source revealed that thirty-four Republicans were against the treaty; "add two Democrats, Reed and Thomas, and it is still not enough to obtain amendments even though the number is sufficient to prevent ratification."²³ At the same time, the League to Enforce Peace claimed that sixty-four Senators would vote for the proposed treaty although by May 12, seven of these sixty-four had reportedly changed their minds.²⁴

Still another informal poll listed the Senators by name. Fifty-five men were reported ready to vote then to amend the covenant.

Nelson	Spencer	Norris	Penrose
Phipps	McCormick	Moses	Knox
Brandeggee	New	Keyes	Colt
McLean	Watson	Cummins	Fall
Ball	Edge	Sterling	Lenroot
Sherman	Kenyon	Wadsworth	Dillingham
Borah	Kellogg	Calder	Page
Curtis	Hale	McCumber	Thomas
Capper	France	Gronna	Sutherland
Fernald	Lodge	Harding	Poindexter
Townsend	Newberry	McNary	Chamberlain
Smoot	Warren	Reed	Gore

²²Ibid.

²³Washington Post, May 1, 1919, p. 2.

²⁴Ibid., May 1, 1919, p. 3; May 12, 1919, p. 1.

Underwood	Bankhead	La Follette	Johnson (Calif.)
Elkins	Jones (Wash.)	Frelinghuysen	

Thirty-four were opposed to any amendments.

Beckham	Ashurst	McKellar	Smith (Md.)
Robinson	Stanley	Culberson	Smith (S. Caro.)
Kirby	Ransdell	Sheppard	Walsh (Mont.)
Fletcher	Gay	Martin	Walsh (Mass.)
Harris	Williams	Swanson	Johnson (S. Dak.)
Trammell	Harrison	Kendrick	Jones (N. Mex.)
Nugent	Dial	Hitchcock	Smith (Ariz.)
Overman	Gerry	Pomerene	Henderson
Pittman	Simmons		

Seven of the Senators were undecided.

Phelan	Myers	Shields	Smith (Ga.)
Wolcott	Owen	King ²⁵	

A correspondent of the New York Times was unable to find a "single Republican Senator who did not agree that changes in the covenant would be necessary."²⁶ Still, only a simple majority was necessary to make these changes but the Constitution required a two-thirds majority to approve the treaty. Some alteration in group-membership would be necessary to obtain that two-thirds majority.

Description of the Indirect Audience

The first comprehensive index of public reaction to the covenant was published by the Literary Digest on April 5, 1919. The purpose of the poll was to validate Wilson's statement that "an overwhelming majority of the people are in favor of the league." The Digest sent the following

²⁵Ibid., May 16, 1919, p. 1.

²⁶June 28, 1919, p. 1.

question to every newspaper in the country: "Do you favor the proposed League of Nations?" Editors were asked to as "accurately as possible" reflect public sentiment in their areas. The overall vote favored the league.

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Conditional</u>
718	181	478

A political breakdown did not alter the endorsement.

Republican	114	107	306
Democrat	379	47	18
Independent	205	8	51

In every section of the country at least a plurality of papers favored the covenant.

Pacific	64	20	49
Roc Mtn	33	8	30
South West	88	8	29
NW Central	85	29	70
NE Central	166	48	132
SE Central	45	4	7
Sou Atlantic	75	13	24
Mid Atlantic	122	37	104
North East	40	14	41

Considering circulation, a plurality still existed.

Republican	1,911,256	1,249,264	3,836,417
Democrat	4,886,449	121,912	508,384
Independent	3,648,141	2,955,706*	2,447,660
Total	9,886,459	4,326,882*	6,792,461

*Includes 2,488,976 of the Hearst Chain²⁷

Thus, only one-fourth of the total circulation was for complete rejection; over half that number, the Hearst papers, can be partially discounted as not representative.²⁸ The

²⁷Literary Digest, LX (April 5, 1919), 13-17.

²⁸Cranston, p. 171, discusses the role of Hearst who

date of the poll is significant. While the date was late enough in the controversy for a majority of the arguments to have been heard, the results were tabulated before Wilson added the four amendments to counteract the source of most of the unfavorable reaction. Actually the favorable responses might have been even higher on May 5.

A considerable number of organizations favored the league.

The American Agricultural Association, the National Grange, the National Board of Farm Organizations, the Farmers' Reconstruction Conference, the Farmers' Educational and Cooperative Union of America, the National Retail Dry Goods Association, the American Manufacturers' Export Association, the National Association of Builders' Exchange, the National Association of Merchants Tailors of America, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the General Federation of Women's Groups, the Victory Association for Women, the Federal Council of Churches, the National Society of Christian Endeavor, the Church Peace Union, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, the Northern Baptist convention, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.²⁹

The League to Enforce Peace surveyed editorials from across the nation for the week ending June 3, 1919; out of approximately 1,200 editorials, 1,100 favored adoption of the covenant.³⁰

Perhaps one of the most enlightening pieces of

"hated the League of Nations because to his mind it represented a union of the two most detestable things on earth, Woodrow Wilson and Great Britain." Herbert Houston said: "Who is the real leader of the opposition . . .? It is William Randolph Hearst, who is using all the power of his newspapers from the Atlantic to the Pacific to keep America from entering the League of Nations."

²⁹Cranston, pp. 103-104.

³⁰Bartlett, p. 130.

evidence came from Senator Lodge.

The great mass of the people, the man in the street, to use a common expression, the farmers, the shopkeepers, the men in small business, clerks and the like, in short the people generally, did not understand the treaty at all, had had no opportunity even to read the provisions of the League except in the draft which Mr. Wilson had brought back when he returned in February, and that knowing nothing about any of the details of the treaty their natural feeling was, "Now the war is over, and let us have peace as quickly as possible." . . . The vocal classes of the community, most of them clergymen, the preachers of sermons, a large element of the teaching force of the universities, a large proportion of the newspaper editorials, and finally the men and women who were in the habit of writing and speaking for publication, although by no means thoroughly informed, were friendly to the League as it stood and were advocating it.³¹

The Senator viewed these facts and pronounced any immediate action "hopeless."

On the other hand, most public sentiment did not clearly indicate a preference between the covenant as proposed and an amended covenant to protect America's interests. An "Americanization" would probably not drive away much pro-league support, while it was sure to be favored by many in the "no" and "conditional" columns. League critics would not have to run the risk of alienating public opinion by calling for a protection of American rights.

Argument Analysis

The Senate had only three weeks to discuss the first draft of the covenant before they adjourned in March. During the ten weeks between the sixty-fifth and sixty-sixth

³¹Lodge, pp. 146-147.

Congresses, four amendments were added to the covenant to make it more acceptable to league critics. Despite these alterations, despite the additional time to consider the peace terms, the major contentions in the new Senate duplicated those used in the previous Congress. Not only were the contentions the same, but, with one or two exceptions, the developing arguments were similar.

The Covenant Should Not Be Accepted
at the Present Time

On June 10, Senator Knox introduced Senate Resolution 76, to be submitted to the Foreign Relations Committee. The resolution stated that the purpose of the Peace Commission was to end the war. It read, in part:

That the Senate advises, in accordance with its constitutional right and duty, that the great paramount, if not sole, duty of the peace conference is quickly to bring all the belligerents a full and complete peace, that to this end the treaty shall be so drawn as to permit any nation to reserve without prejudice to itself for future, separate and full consideration by its people the question of a league of nations.³²

Furthermore, the resolution stated that the Senate would look "with disfavor upon all treaty provisions beyond these ends." The Foreign Relations Committee approved the resolution with the exception of Section Five, which resolved that in the event of some future conflict the United States would consult with the threatened nations "with a view to devising means for the removal of such a menace."

³²Cong. Rec., 1, 894.

When the resolution was presented to the Senate, Knox argued for its adoption: "The resolution before us does not call for a vote for or against the league of nations; it does not call for even an expression of an opinion either for or against the league." He could see no reason for opposition.

A vote against it is a vote to deny the right of the Senate to have time to consider this momentous question, is a vote to deny the right of the people calmly and fully to consider this great problem, the greatest which has been put before them since, through the terrible aritrament of the sword, with all its attendant miseries and woes, it was determined that this Union was one and inseparable.³³

According to Knox, the only purpose behind his resolution was to postpone the vote on the league.

The development of his remarks, however, was characterized by arguments for a rejection of the covenant altogether. He argued that the proposed covenant was unconstitutional; it should not be ratified until the Constitution was amended by the people. He argued that the covenant was a war-breeding document because of the obligation under article 10 to guarantee territorial boundaries. He argued that to adopt the covenant meant the nullification of the Monroe doctrine. He finally argued that membership in the league would be contrary to Washington's principle of "no entangling alliances." While he claimed that all he wanted was to end the war, he gave evidence of wanting to end the possibility

³³Ibid., 2, 1216-1217.

of America's league membership.³⁴

Knox's speech was the only major development of this contention. For the most part, league critics were actively engaged in other means of combating the covenant. By June 21, that the resolution would not be passed became evident and it was not brought to a vote.³⁵ Knox openly joined the irreconcilables. Other league critics who would have voted to postpone the vote followed suit or joined the revisionists. No evidence indicates that any of the postponement critics joined the ranks of league supporters.

The contention that the covenant vote should be postponed did not appeal to the immediate audience. Probably it did not appeal to the indirect audience either; at least no evidence favoring postponement has been discovered.

The Covenant Should Be Rejected Altogether

The rejectionists were still the most vocal group in the Senate. Scarcely a day passed when one of them was not denying the practicality of the league. The subject matter of their supporting arguments was identical to the arguments used in the initial phase of the controversy. Four arguments now received the most emphasis: the covenant nullifies the Monroe doctrine; the covenant diminishes American

³⁴Ibid., 2, 1217-1222.

³⁵Fleming, p. 227; "Several Republicans refused to vote for it; enough, with the Senate evenly balanced, to defeat it."

sovereignty; the covenant promotes war; and the covenant permits foreign powers to dominate the league.

The Covenant Nullifies the
Monroe Doctrine

Article 21 represented Wilson's effort to satisfy league critics who feared the abrogation of the Monroe doctrine. The article stated:

Nothing in this article shall be deemed to affect the validity of international engagements, such as treaties of arbitration or regional understandings like the Monroe doctrine, for securing the maintenance of peace.³⁶

This phrasing did not satisfy some critics. They argued that the use of the phrase "international engagements" was erroneous since the doctrine was not international but American. For evidence some critics quoted the British government. Knox quoted the British Peace Commission: "At first a principle of American foreign policy, it has become an international understanding. . . ."³⁷ Knox also quoted from various British publications which arrived at the same general conclusion. Although England agreed to exclude the doctrine from the sphere of league influence, rejectionists would not tolerate the phrase "international" in that agreement.

Senator Lodge did not believe the doctrine was either regional or international; it was America's.

It has never been an international engagement. No

³⁶League Text, p. 26.

³⁷Cong. Rec., 2, 1221.

nation has ever formally recognized it. It has been the subject of reservation at international conventions by American delegates. It has never been a regional understanding, or an understanding of any kind with anybody. It was the declaration of the United States . . . its life was predicated on the force which the United States would place behind it. . . . It is now proposed to kill it by a provision in a treaty for a league of nations.³⁸

This accusation was false. Article 21 specifically stated that nothing would affect the validity of the doctrine. Just because the majority leader did not think it was regional did not alter the interpretation of the Allied Powers; nor does the argument itself justify rejecting the covenant.

The only conceivable purpose behind this debate over the correct word to describe the doctrine was to keep the issue alive in the minds of the electorate. As Lodge said, "All Americans are for it;" therefore league opponents must make the people believe that the doctrine was in danger.

The Covenant Diminishes American Sovereignty

The theme behind most of the irreconcilable approach was that America would lose her sovereignty if she became a league member. A statement by Senator Moses typifies this theme.

I am in full accord with the views which the opponents of the league of nations have expressed, that to my mind the proposed covenant presents features which endanger our rights of sovereignty, which shackle our freedom of judgment and action, and which bind us to perpetual observance of stipulations, uncertain and

³⁸Ibid., 4, 3782.

unknown, to be laid upon us by a foreign concert acting under the most sinister of all the powers ever exercised by the old order of diplomacy. . . .³⁹

Moses did go one step further than most critics; he objected to the Treaty of Versailles in its entirety.

Senator Fall, New Mexico, also portrayed the dangers which faced America as a member of the league. His language represents the phrasing of these patriotic tirades.

We are listening every day to speeches and addresses referring to the "spirit" of the American people; to the desire of the American people to serve mankind; of the duty of the American people to the Buddhists of Japan and India, the Confucians of China, the Voodoo worshipers of Africa, the fire worshipers of Persia, the Mohammedans of Turkey, the Jews and Gentiles of the world--in fact, to all the people and races and tribes beyond the bounds of the United States and its insular possessions.⁴⁰

Another time he made the statement: ". . . my pride is in being an American and not a follower of Karl Marx," implying that only rejectionists were true Americans while league supporters were Bolsheviks. Rarely in America's history of public speaking were phrases as emotion-laden as in the development of the loss of sovereignty argument.

The Covenant Promotes War

Article 10 stated that the existing boundaries of member nations would be protected against external aggression. League critics argued that this provision would promote war and not preserve peace. No other article received as much

³⁹Ibid., 3, 2989.

⁴⁰Ibid., 3, 3942.

attention from the critics. Both sides in the controversy agreed that article 10 was the "very heart" of the covenant.

Senator Brandegee, Connecticut, presented a typical development of the argument. As an extension of his remarks he read a statement by William Jordan.

We are to bind ourselves to respect and preserve the territorial integrity and political independence of 40 or 50 States for all time, not only when they are invaded, but to do whatever the nine men in Geneva declare we shall do in case of even any threat or danger of aggression. We are to send our brave sons to be maimed or to lie wounded and dead. . . . Do they imagine that America is a nation made up of either fools or fanatics? This is altruism gone crazy, internationalism running amuck.⁴¹

This analysis exemplifies the reading between the lines of the covenant which was so prevalent in considering article 10.

Another instance of misinterpretation occurred in Senator Cummins' attack on the covenant. He stated with finality:

I only know that when these borders and frontiers are established, it then becomes the duty of every member of the league to employ all the force, whether men or money, to maintain and protect the boundaries that have thus been established.⁴²

Some critics not only overlooked the qualifying phrase "external aggression" but argued as if the word were "internal." Lodge declared:

I object in the strongest possible way to having the United States agree, directly or indirectly, to be controlled by a league which may at any time, and perfectly lawfully and in accordance with the terms of the covenant, to be drawn in to deal with internal conflicts in other countries, no matter what these

⁴¹Ibid., 3, 3672.

⁴²Ibid., 6, 5954.

conflicts may be.⁴³

Article 10 did not even hint that internal disputes would be subject to league jurisdiction. Article 15 specifically stated that when a controversy was deemed to be "solely within the domestic jurisdiction" of a member nation, the Council would make no recommendations.

The debate over article 10 continued almost daily. The issue had to be kept current; the league for peace must appear to be a league for war.

The Covenant Permits Foreign
Powers to Dominate the League

During the early phase of the controversy league opponents had argued variously that the league would be dominated by England, Germany, Russia, the minor nations, the Oriental nations and the monarchies of the world. During the summer of 1919, critics added two more potential dominators and consequently alleged two more reasons for rejecting the covenant.

Senator Reed introduced the first new scapegoat; a close examination of league membership would "first astonish and then arouse the indignation of every thoughtful man . . . [to learn that] this is a colored league of nations." With a detailed listing of member nations, Reed proceeded to show how the white race would be dominated.

There will be 15 men representing white nations and

⁴³Ibid., 4, 3780.

17 men representing black, brown, yellow and red races; among the nations classified as dark the average of the dark-skinned people compared with the total population is nearly 9 to 1.⁴⁴

Hitchcock tried to find out why Reed kept changing his mind about who would dominate the league. Reed countered by challenging Hitchcock to tell the people of Nebraska whether he believed that "50,000 semi-civilized negroes along the coast of Africa should cast a vote in the league of nations equal to that of the United States."⁴⁵ Neither Reed nor Hitchcock received an answer.

Reed continued with his analysis of the colored nations in the world, pausing to note miscegenation, polygamy, illegitimacy and even cannibalism. He also emphasized illiteracy, referring to the people as "dregs of ignorance, victims of superstition, steeped in barbarism." He did not reveal why he believed the civilized nations of the world, recently engaged in a technologically advanced war, could be overcome by these "ignorant" nations. He only stated that Latin America and Africa would combine with Asia to outvote Europe and the United States. Although in Reed's own words the argument was directed to "men from the South and West," in the voting which was to follow the men from the South and West voted as either Democrats or Republicans, league critics or league supporters, and not as white supremacists.

⁴⁴Ibid., 1, 236.

⁴⁵Ibid., 1, 238.

In his address on June 20, Senator Sherman suggested to the Senate another force which would dominate the league. Although he was not a church member himself, although his friends had counseled against such an approach, Sherman felt the necessity to demonstrate how the Vatican would dominate the league. He revealed that twenty-four of the forty nations were predominantly Catholic and therefore subservient to the will of the Pope. While he admired the Catholic stand against the Bolsheviks, Sherman could not in clear conscience place the "fate of the world in the hands of the Vatican."⁴⁶

Senator Ashurst, Arizona, made an impromptu speech to reject this appeal to prejudice: ". . . let patriotism speak, let logic and the power of thought speak, and not prejudice of any kind, either political or religious."⁴⁷ Even irreconcilable Thomas condemned the argument: "If the religious question in any phase is to be introduced into the discussion and the determination of this great treaty . . . it will prove most unfortunate not only to America but to the world."⁴⁸ These pleas to reject prejudice might prove effective in the Senate but the rejectionists knew the efficacy of these arguments as surely as did the political speakers in the presidential campaigns of 1884, 1928 and 1960.

⁴⁶Ibid., 2, 1435-1444.

⁴⁷Ibid., 2, 1444.

⁴⁸Ibid., 2, 1446.

The brevity of this discussion of the major contention that the covenant should be rejected altogether should not be misleading. The supporting arguments were heard again and again. Many of the major speeches argued for rejection: Borah, July 24;⁴⁹ Fall, August 1;⁵⁰ Lodge, August 12;⁵¹ McCormick, August 20;⁵² Poindexter, September 10;⁵³ Sherman, September 16;⁵⁴ Reed, September 20;⁵⁵ Frelinghuysen, September 24;⁵⁶ and New, September 25.⁵⁷ Despite the frequency of the addresses, no arguments other than those discussed in this and the preceding chapter were developed in support of the contention.

The major contention was probably not very acceptable to a majority of the people. A New York Times correspondent, reporting Wilson's tour, gave his opinion.

There have been three outstanding developments in connection with President Wilson's tour to the Western coast. . . . First, the people in the states which Mr. Wilson has passed want the Peace Treaty ratified, and are absolutely opposed to any efforts to make the treaty a "football in politics" which may result in a moment's unnecessary delay. Second, the people in these states are pretty well satisfied that the treaty of peace . . . is not an instrument of war and are about to accept Mr. Wilson's assurances that it will go far, instead, to assure world peace. Third, business and financial interests . . . are convinced that

⁴⁹Ibid., 3, 3141-3145.

⁵⁰Ibid., 4, 3493-3407.

⁵¹Ibid., 4, 3778-3784.

⁵²Ibid., 4, 4041-4047.

⁵³Ibid., 5, 5024-5031.

⁵⁴Ibid., 6, 5491-5500.

⁵⁵Ibid., 6, 5700-5716.

⁵⁶Ibid., 6, 5841-5849.

⁵⁷Ibid., 6, 5899-5902.

the treaty of peace should be ratified without delay.⁵⁸

Other evidence, perhaps not quite so optimistic, also substantiates the conclusion that the people were not in favor of rejection.⁵⁹ Thus, although the rejectionists appealed to basic motives held by the audience, e.g. patriotism, individual freedom, prejudice, the goals which irreconcilables urged were not those held in common by the people in general. The alternatives were not only league or no league; the addition of the third alternative of a modified league severely limited the persuasiveness of rejectionists.

The Covenant Has Certain Undesirable Features

The majority of league critics argued for an alteration of the covenant rather than for its rejection or a postponement of its consideration. During the period from July 14 to September 10, while the Foreign Relations Committee considered the treaty, league critics developed arguments which would effect changes in the covenant. The Committee report reflected these arguments and league critics continued to support amendment while the report was being debated. Although some minor changes were suggested, the majority of the objections concerned five major proposed alterations.

1. The Monroe Doctrine should be more specifically protected.
2. Domestic issues should be more specifically excluded.

⁵⁸September 8, 1919, p. 3. ⁵⁹Infra, pp. 145-147.

3. Restrictions on withdrawing membership should be removed.
4. Provisions giving Shantung to Japan should be changed.
5. Provisions of article 10 should be changed.

The arguments called upon both amendment and reservation as a means of removing the undesirable features.

The Monroe Doctrine Should Be
More Specifically Protected

While some of the Senators invoked the Monroe doctrine issue to secure a rejection of the covenant, other league opponents felt that an amendment to article 21 would protect America's interests. These league critics proposed that the wording be changed so that no ambiguity existed. Senator Lenroot said that if the Monroe doctrine were indeed excluded from the league's jurisdiction, then a more straightforward way of stating that exclusion would not alter the meaning.⁶⁰ Senator Nelson, Minnesota, argued that if any doubt did exist, a suitable reservation would clear up the misconception.⁶¹ Senator Kenyon, Iowa, agreed that some people were concerned about the "somewhat muddled reference to the doctrine." He did not share this concern but could certainly see the practicality of strengthening article 21.⁶² Senators Spencer,⁶³ Harding,⁶⁴ Thomas⁶⁵ and Edge⁶⁶ similarly argued

⁶⁰Cong. Rec., 3, 3094-3095.

⁶¹Ibid., 4, 3322.

⁶³Ibid., 4, 5079

⁶⁵Ibid., 6, 5674.

⁶²Ibid., 5, 5152.

⁶⁴Ibid., 5, 5225.

⁶⁶Ibid., 6, 6130.

argued for modification. The reservation appeared to be the most effective form: Senator Kellogg, Minnesota, proposed the following condition which he felt would remove the objections while not altering the meaning.

The United States does not bind itself to submit for arbitration or inquiry by the assembly or the council any question which in the judgment of the United States depends upon or involves its long-established policy commonly known as the Monroe doctrine, and it is preserved unaffected by any provision in the said treaty contained.⁶⁷

This wording, virtually identical with the version submitted later by the Foreign Relations Committee, apparently satisfied most critics. The only real difference between the Senate's interpretation and the wording of article 21 was to say who would adjudge a dispute as suitable for league jurisdiction. The necessity to specifically state the United States alone was to have full power was part of the struggle between nationalism and internationalism which would become so evident later in the controversy.

Domestic Issues Should Be More
Specifically Excluded

Another Section of the covenant which did not satisfy the Senate was the one which stipulated who would decide what questions were purely domestic and therefore not eligible for league action. Again Senators Spencer, Harding, Thomas and Edge argued for the right of the United States to decide upon domestic matters. Senator Kenyon stated that the section

⁶⁷Ibid., 3, 3690.

should be amended since "domestic questions should, of course, be protected."⁶⁸ Senator Nelson doubted any significant confusion in the Commission's phrasing; critics' claim that article 12 would compel America to submit domestic questions was "to a great extent obviated or neutralized by the second paragraph of article 13 and the eighth paragraph of article 15."⁶⁹ Senator Kellogg's proposed change apparently satisfied most critics as it did the Foreign Relations Committee who only added three words.

The United States reserves to itself the right to decide what questions are within its domestic jurisdiction and declares that all domestic and political questions relating to its internal affairs, including immigration, coastwise traffic, the tariff, commerce, and all other purely domestic questions are solely within the jurisdiction of the United States and are not by this covenant submitted in any way either to arbitration or to the consideration of the council or the assembly of the league of nations or recommendation of any other power.⁷⁰

Again, the objection of the critics was to the language of the covenant.

Restrictions on Withdrawing Membership Should Be Removed

The covenant had been amended by Wilson to enable a member nation to withdraw membership after two years notice provided that "all its obligations under this covenant shall have been fulfilled at the time of its withdrawal." League critics protested violently against these restrictions; they

⁶⁸Ibid., 5, 5152.

⁶⁹Ibid., 4, 3322.

⁷⁰Ibid., 3, 3690.

demanding to know who would decide if the nation's obligations had been fulfilled. Senator Nelson's complaint was typical: "The last provision of article 1 should be in some form eliminated or neutralized; the right of withdrawal from the league should be unconditional."⁷¹ Senator Thomas developed the argument.

I want no strings, either moral or legal, attached to our withdrawal from the league. I know that my country will be faithful to all of its obligations, and the very suggestion that a council of aliens shall determine whether we have fulfilled our obligations, not only to the league but to all other nations of the world, is offensive.⁷²

While other speakers used the argument, they all sought the same goal; the removal of any restrictions on withdrawing from the league.

All three of these arguments calling for amendments or reservations had been used in the early phase of the controversy; all three had been the subject of amendments secured by Wilson. Although Wilson's amendments removed some of the earlier objections, he failed to stipulate specifically that America was to make the final decisions. Critics maintained that no league decision was to bind America, yet they wanted the Senate's decisions to bind other league members. Another possible explanation for the continued use of these arguments is the influence of party politics. The document presented to the Senate was unquestionably a Democratic measure and the presidential campaign was a scant

⁷¹Ibid., 3, 3322.

⁷²Ibid., 5, 4454.

twelve months away.

Provisions Giving Shantung to
Japan Should Be Changed

Many Americans felt that the German control over the Shantung peninsula should be returned to its rightful owner, China, and not to Japan. Japan had lost the battle to have the covenant recognize the equality of races; she was determined to salvage something. Actually she had two strong points in her favor during the negotiations: she had taken the area from Germany during the war, thus claiming the right of conquest; and she had signed secret treaties with France and England in 1917 which gave her the territory. Wilson was not pleased with the transfer but he had to secure four amendments to pacify certain Congressional critics.⁷³ One of the compromises he had to make was the Shantung transfer. Not only did the four amendments fail to pacify the Senate, but the question of ownership of Shantung became one of the critics' most powerful weapons. They showed the public how powerful the Japanese were in drawing up the treaty. They then made clear how this power could be used against America as a league member. They also related this argument to others used in degrading the proposed covenant, and especially referred to foreign domination in the league and the league

⁷³Baker, II, 263; Joseph P. Tumulty, Woodrow Wilson As I Know Him (New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1921), p. 535.

control of American immigration procedures.

Many speakers used the Shantung controversy as a basis for rejection; yet some in the Senate felt that the covenant could be amended to make the situation more desirable. Among those who thus argued that the moral wrong done to China should be changed were: Lodge,⁷⁴ Colt,⁷⁵ Watson,⁷⁶ Townsend,⁷⁷ Kenyon,⁷⁸ Spencer,⁷⁹ Harding,⁸⁰ and Edge.⁸¹ The development of the argument by rejectionists and revisionists was the same: China, not Japan, should receive Shantung.

Provisions of Article 10 Should Be Changed

Of all the sections of the covenant which critics labelled undesirable, article 10 was the most attacked. According to league opponents, the article's obligations would involve the United States in all the future wars of the world if she agreed to the provisions to "preserve and respect the territorial boundaries and political independence of member nations." No one who listened to the speeches in the Senate, or throughout the country, could doubt that article 10 would be a barrier to Senatorial endorsement of the peace treaty.

The revisionists argued for a stipulation which removed America's absolute obligation under article 10. To

⁷⁴Cong. Rec., 3, 2604.

⁷⁵Ibid., 3, 2722-2723.

⁷⁶Ibid., 4, 3637.

⁷⁷Ibid., 5, 4454.

⁷⁸Ibid., 5, 5151-5152.

⁷⁹Ibid., 5, 5079.

⁸⁰Ibid., 5, 5225.

⁸¹Ibid., 6, 6130.

secure that protection for America they developed the argument in several ways, asking first for an amendment and then for a reservation.

To Senator Lenroot, article 10 was objectionable because America would have to fight in an unjust war:

Under this article, if any member of the league should undertake to do for an oppressed people what France did for us in the Revolutionary War, what we did for Cuba in the Spanish War, we would be compelled to fight that nation.⁸²

Kenyon said: "Is it not more provocative of war than of peace?"⁸³ Sterling said article 10 would involve America in European entanglements.⁸⁴ Nelson objected to article 10 because it was contrary to the Constitutional powers of Congress: "So far as article 10 of the covenant would tend to embroil our country in war without the consent of Congress, it is manifestly outside the pale of the treaty-making power."⁸⁵ Kellogg concurred: "There ought not to be a promise which would require us to send an army to foreign shores which would be violated if the Congress, in the exercise of a constitutional right, should refuse to act."⁸⁶

Thus, the argument was developed in various ways. The revisionists could see the possibility of Americans becoming involved in future wars but they wanted her to have

⁸²Ibid., 3, 3095.

⁸³Ibid., 5, 5152-5153.

⁸⁴Ibid., 4, 3611.

⁸⁵Ibid., 4, 3322.

⁸⁶Ibid., 4, 3687.

the right to make that decision. Rejectionists who used the same argument drew an entirely different conclusion: America should not get involved in any future wars.

This major contention calling for the removal of certain undesirable features appealed not only to Senators but the American people also appeared to favor some sort of modified league, at least in comparison with no league. Wilson's decision to appeal to the people had been generated by reports of growing unrest and demands for a "safer" league. Although Wilson was favorably received, Senators Borah and Johnson drew equally large and equally enthusiastic crowds as they followed the President. Actually the "middle-of-the-road" approach of the revisionists had persuasive potential for a majority of the witnesses to the league controversy.

Recommendations of the Foreign
Relations Committee

The results of the arguments to amend the document can be viewed in the report by the Foreign Relations Committee. Actually three reports were submitted: the Democratic minority report, McCumber's minority report, and the majority report. The Democratic report, signed by six Senators, denied the necessity for amendments or reservations.⁸⁷ McCumber's report indicated the influence of anti-league persuasion on the content of the majority report.

⁸⁷Ibid., 5, 5213-5215.

Irony and sarcasm have been substituted for argument. . . . It is regrettable that the animosity which centers almost wholly against the league of nations provisions should have been engendered against a subject so important to the world's welfare. It is regrettable that the consideration of a matter so foreign to any kind of partisanship should be influenced in the country as well as on the floor of this Senate by hostility toward or subserviency to the President.⁸⁸

McCumber also disapproved of the language of the majority recommendations, describing them as "sarcastic disdain" or "jingoistic contempt."

The majority report actually contained more oratory than recommendation. The first two or three pages were devoted to developing arguments against the covenant or in refuting arguments in favor of the proposal. The final two sections listed "certain amendments to the text of the treaty and certain reservations to be attached to the resolution of ratification and made a part of that resolution when it is offered."⁸⁹ All of the changes pertained to the sections of the treaty creating a league of nations. Forty-five amendments were listed. The first proposed to secure for the United States votes in the assembly equal to that of any other power. The argument that England and her dominions represented a five to one margin over the United States had been effective. The argument was also reflected in the second amendment which proposed that when a nation had dominions or colonies which were league members, all those associated nations would be excluded from voting in a dispute where one of

⁸⁸Ibid., 6, 5356.

⁸⁹Ibid., 5, 5113.

them was excluded.

Six of the amendments demonstrated the effect of the argument based on the "moral wrong" done to China.

Amendments 39 to 44, inclusive, transfer to China the German lease and rights, if they exist, in the Chinese Province of Shantung, which are given by the treaty to Japan. The majority of the committee were not willing to have their votes recorded at any stage in the proceedings in favor of the consummation of what they consider to be a great wrong.⁹⁰

The other amendments, called the "Fall amendments," after their author Senator Fall, had not been the subject of any major speech or the development of any supporting argument previously discussed. The report stated:

The remaining amendments, with a single exception, may be treated as one, for the purpose of all alike is to relieve the United States from having representatives on the commissions established by the league which deal with questions in which the United States has and can have no interest and in which the United States has evidently been inserted by design. The exception is amendment No. 45, which provides that the United States shall have a member on the reparation commission, but that such commissioner can not, except in the case of shipping, where the interests of the United States are directly involved, deal with or vote upon any other questions before that commission except under instructions from the Government of the United States.⁹¹

The purpose of the Fall amendments was to remove the United States from nine-tenths of the league transactions, making the United States no more than a silent partner if she did become a member.

The amendments which did not alienate England or Japan specifically would thus prove distasteful to the other

⁹⁰Ibid.

⁹¹Ibid.

signatories. These nations could not really be expected to agree to these severe limitations. If they did not concur, then the league of nations would be established without the United States. The amendments, both in content and language, reflected the irreconcilable majority on the Foreign Relations Committee.

The vote on the amendments demonstrated that the irreconcilables were not in the majority in the Senate. On October 2, the first four Fall amendments were defeated singly while the remaining thirty-three were defeated viva-voce.⁹² The six Shantung amendments were defeated by a vote of 35 to 55 on October 16.⁹³ Amendment one, giving the United States equal votes, was defeated on October 27 by a vote of 38 to 40.⁹⁴ The remaining amendment, which excluded the votes of dominions, was rejected on October 29, 32 to 49.⁹⁵

The defeat of the amendments did not mean that the treaty was out of danger. Senator after Senator agreed with Lenroot's position: "I am opposed to this amendment, but shall favor a reservation that will fully relieve the United States of the obligation."⁹⁶ Thus, during the month of October, the primary strategy of the league critics changed from one of amendment to one of reservation.

⁹²Ibid., 6, 6265-6281.

⁹³Ibid., 7, 6889-7013.

⁹⁴Ibid., 8, 7545.

⁹⁵Ibid., 8, 7679.

⁹⁶Ibid., 6, 6280.

The majority report had included four reservations. Number one reserved for the United States the unconditional right to withdraw. Number two stated that the United States declined to assume any obligation under article 10. Number three reserved for the United States the exclusive right to decide what questions were purely domestic in nature. Number four specifically excluded the Monroe doctrine from league jurisdiction. The language and contents of these four conditions reflected the persuasion of the Senators who had advocated modifications of the covenant. Before any of the reservations could be debated, however, Senator Lodge obviously interpreted the defeat of the amendments and took immediate action.

On the 6th of November, I reported from the Committee the resolution of ratification, which contained some very important clauses not usual in resolutions of ratification, and fourteen reservations which included the four that were recommended in the report of September 10th.⁹⁷

That one vote margin which had given Republicans control over the Senate committees was as effective as if it had been one hundred.⁹⁸

⁹⁷Lodge, p. 180.

⁹⁸One man who contributed to that margin, Senator Newberry, answered his last roll call on December 5, 1919. Fleming, p. 40 in, notes that in March, 1920, Newberry, whose election over Henry Ford by a vote of 220,054 to 212,487, was convicted of violating the Federal Corrupt Practices Act and sentenced to two years in prison. Acquitted in May, 1921, he resigned in November, 1922.

Conclusion

Phase two was completed when the amendments were defeated in the Senate. All three factions of the league opposition had actually been unsuccessful in achieving their direct goals. The postponement critics lost their fight in June. The rejectionists could analyze the speeches and votes of their fellow Senators and see that a majority of them did not favor the irreconcilable position. The revisionists were unsuccessful in obtaining amendments although they could see how interpretative reservations could accomplish many of the same aims. Reservations would satisfy those who wanted the covenant more Senate-inspired than Wilson-oriented; reservations would satisfy those who wanted a Republican label attached to the treaty; reservations would satisfy those who demanded the protection of the national state.

After six months of debate the fate of the covenant was still to be decided. The Senate could endorse the document as it had been proposed or they could vote for the treaty with the reservations or they could reject the entire proposal. During the final two weeks of this special session of Congress, friends of the treaty and the reservationists each claimed victory.

CHAPTER V

PHASE THREE: THE COVENANT IS REJECTED

The armistice ending the war was signed on November 11, 1918. On November 11, 1919, the peace treaty was still under consideration by the Senate. The interim period was filled with accusations denying the value of the document which would officially close the war. The peace terms were only rarely mentioned; the debate centered around the covenant for a league of nations. Treaty opponents first tried to postpone the vote and then they tried to amend the covenant; both attempts failed. Unless their efforts for the past twelve months were successful in either "Americanizing" the covenant or rejecting the treaty, the whole opposition to the league would end in failure. The first session of the sixty-sixth Congress convened on May 19, 1919; it would adjourn on November 19. Only days now remained to settle the question of America's league membership. This chapter will analyze these remaining days from November 6 to November 19, and also analyze the events leading to the final rejection of the treaty on March 19, 1920.

Analysis of the Audience

Every index of popular opinion in the early days of

1919 indicated an endorsement of the league. Then the Senate and the American people listened to arguments for and against the covenant for almost ten months. The New York Morning Telegram doubted that the league discussion had been worthwhile: "Fourteen points, forty-five amendments, and four reservations seems all we have got out of the situation to date."¹ On the other hand, Albert Bushnell Hart felt that the league debate had been productive.

The discussion of the league of nations during the last six months has been nothing short of a public education. Millions of people have learned the meaning of such obscure terms as "covenant, league, ratification, reservation, amendment, interpretation, mandatory, existing political independence, arbitration and inquiry." Never since the Federal Constitution was on the knees of the gods a century and a third ago have the American people so carefully studied a document and so anxiously listened to arguments upon its meaning and its application to the welfare of the country.²

As a result of this education, the people had altered their position somewhat. Instead of an automatic approval of the league in its present form, they also indicated a desire to accept some modified form.

Description of the Immediate Audience

The only official statement of the Senate's attitudes had been the "Round-Robin," although informal polls

¹Cited in Literary Digest, LXII (September 27, 1919), 14.

²Cong. Rec., 66th Cong., 1st Sess., 1919, LVIII, Part 8, 7616; unless otherwise indicated, all subsequent references are to this session of Congress.

indicated that a majority favored some league. By November of 1919, almost every Senator could be placed in one of four groups: league supporters, rejectionists, mild reservationists and strict reservationists. League supporters consisted of thirty-nine Democrats. Democratic Senators Thomas, Reed and Trammell, and fourteen Republicans were the rejectionists. The mild reservationists were Republicans McNary, Spencer, McCumber, Colt, Cummins, Kellogg and Lenroot.³ The thirty-two remaining Republicans were the strict reservationists. No one group could command the two-thirds vote requisite to ratify the treaty. On the other hand, with only seventeen men completely opposed, four-fifths of the Senate need only find some common ground on which to indicate their approval.

Description of the Indirect Audience

Although no nation-wide poll tested the overall sentiments of the American people, the pages of the Congressional Record are replete with petitions, resolutions, letters and telegrams reporting attitudes on the proposition.

Individuals and groups endorsed the idea of a league. A petition signed by 14,450 representatives from the leading Christian agencies throughout America asked for

the ratification at the earliest possible date of the Paris peace treaty, embodying the league of

³Identified by the New York Tribune; cited in Fleming, p. 297.

nations covenant, without reservations or such amendments as would require the resubmission of the treaty to the peace conference and Germany.⁴

The St. Louis Post Dispatch polled the delegates to the convention of the American Bankers' Association: 442 favored the present form of the covenant; 308 were in favor of reservations which did not require reopening of negotiations; 84 favored amendments even if the peace commission had to reconvene; and 40 were opposed to any covenant.⁵ Senator Hitchcock read the following petition: "Resolved, that the New York Section of the Council of Jewish Women, consisting of 3,600 citizens, in meeting assembled, indorse the covenant of the league of nations."⁶ A pro-league petition by governors, bankers, lawyers, publishers and other leading figures included the names of Luther Burbank, Alexander Graham Bell, Thomas Edison, Bernard Baruch and Henry Ford.⁷ Petitions either favoring the covenant as proposed or with some interpretative reservations were submitted by the American Federation of Labor, the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World, the American Bar Association, the Massachusetts Republican State Convention and the Texas Legislature.⁸ Senator Hitchcock presented the Senate with a list of 104 organizations in California who approved the league idea; "It

⁴Cong. Rec., 7, 7156.

⁵Ibid., 7, 6173.

⁶Ibid., 8, 7868.

⁷Cited in Cranston, p. 197.

⁸Fleming, pp. 383-385.

will be remembered that I have already introduced a number of reports of that sort from various states."⁹

Various military groups were contacted. The Mississippi State Convention of the American Legion recommended that the treaty be adopted without reservations.¹⁰ The war veterans in Fall River, Massachusetts, voted: 537 in favor of the league; 12 opposed; only 5 favored reservations.¹¹ The veterans of Grand Rapids, Michigan, recorded a different endorsement: 21 favored unconditional ratification; 13 opposed the treaty; and 196 approved of some reservations.¹²

Not all of the reports were favorable to the proposed covenant. Cranston described the opposition to the league.

There was no doubting the fact that the elaborate, skilful, hard-hitting campaign put on by the irreconcilables was building up a strong bloc of opposition to the League of Nations, and somewhat as a by-product, to all forms of internationalism. A rabid nationalist sentiment was growing rapidly in Chicago and the middle west. The omnipotent Chicago Tribune was convincing tens of thousands that the League of Nations would land us in World War II. . . . Mobs attending the mass meetings staged by the League for the Preservation of American Independence behaved like Holy Rollers when Borah and Johnson performed.¹³

The Friends of Irish Freedom meeting in Detroit petitioned the Senate to oppose the covenant; ten thousand signatures

⁹Cong. Rec., 7, 6587; A Los Angeles poll indicated 10,941 for the league; 997 against; only 156 mentioned reservations.

¹⁰Ibid., 8, 7912.

¹¹Cited in Cranston, p. 198.

¹²Ibid., p. 184.

¹³Ibid., p. 196.

accompanied the petition.¹⁴ The Washington Post made a comparison between public sentiment in March and the attitude prevalent in November:

But now, after an inquiry that has by no means searched into all the secrets of the Paris Conference, public opinion is practically a unit in demanding reservations which shall safeguard the vital interests, honor and independence of the United States.¹⁵

Still, most of the people either favored the original treaty or some modification not too far removed.

The Senate Prepares to Vote on the Covenant

On November 6, Senator Lodge introduced certain reservations from the Foreign Relations Committee. Quite a controversy arose over the procedure which the Senate would follow. League proponents were no doubt aware of Lodge's prowess as a parliamentarian. They questioned the Majority Leader about his plans. Lodge said the Senate would discuss the reservations, then any amendments to the reservations, then the resolution of ratification. He wanted this plan because "many of the Senators have stated on the floor of the Senate that they were voting against amendments because they preferred to have them covered by reservations."¹⁶ Then, if the reservations seemed to be suffering the same fate as the amendments, league critics would have some chance to make

¹⁴Cong. Rec., 8, 8365.

¹⁵Cited in Literary Digest, LXII (November 1, 1919), 14.

¹⁶Cong. Rec., 8, 8015.

their will known through an amended or substitute reservation.

League supporters pushed the point further and asked if the Senate would have an opportunity to vote on other resolutions of ratification if this one failed. Lodge gave them a direct answer: "If after adoption of these reservations the resolution of ratification should fail, he [Swanson] may look for a very long delay indeed; it will be the delay of death."¹⁷ Notice had been served; Lodge intended to reserve the treaty or kill it.

At this point, Senator Underwood, Alabama, tried to test the sentiment of the Senate by asking for a vote on the covenant as proposed. This change in the order of business required unanimous consent; first Senator Fall, and then Wesley Jones, Washington, objected and the motion was defeated.¹⁸

Lodge then read the fifteen reservations. From November 6 to November 13, the Senate debated the preamble and the first two reservations. During this time the Senate adjourned on November 12 and 14 due to the death and funeral of Senator Martin. Hitchcock unsuccessfully attempted to invoke the cloture rule on November 13.¹⁹ Lodge's proposal for cloture was successful on November 15 and ten reservations

¹⁷Ibid., 8, 8017.

¹⁸Ibid., 8, 8019-8022.

¹⁹Ibid., 8, 8143-8417.

were passed on that day.²⁰ On November 17, the remaining two reservations were defeated but two substitute measures were passed on the following day. During this period many pro-league amendments to reservations and substitute reservations were introduced but all were defeated or never debated.²¹ League supporters and mild reservationists were unable to offset a coalition by strict reservationists and rejectionists.

On November 19, the Senate voted on the resolution of ratification with the accompanying reservations and then on the covenant as proposed.²²

Argument Analysis

The debate in the Senate during the final two weeks of the first session of the sixty-sixth Congress comes more under the province of the parliamentarian than the rhetorician. Of all the reservations submitted, only three were actually debated before the cloture rule was applied. The time for extensive persuasive argumentation had passed; the skillful parliamentary maneuvers of Senator Lodge barred any attempt at compromise. The choice before the Senate was

²⁰Ibid., 9, 8555-8571.

²¹Ibid., 9, 8795, contains a list of these proposals.

²²During this time there were fifteen reservations debated. During the vote, the numerical designation was removed from the preamble. Thus Lodge's fourteen reservations competed against Wilson and his Fourteen Points.

simply to ratify the treaty with the reservations, to ratify the treaty as submitted, or to reject both versions. During the limited development of arguments, league opponents supported two of their original contentions: the covenant should be rejected altogether; and the covenant has certain undesirable features.

The Covenant Should Be Rejected Altogether

The irreconcilables were not silent just because the controversy focused on reservations. As Senator Hitchcock stated: "Supporters of the treaty during these two months have consumed 27 per cent of the time and the opponents have consumed 73 per cent of the time."²³ Not all the opposition speeches came from the rejectionists but certainly a large proportion of the arguments were presented by this group. In addition, most of the developing arguments which they used as reasons for rejection had subject matter used by other opponents. During the final two weeks the bitter-enders used three main arguments to support their contention: the covenant means a loss of American sovereignty; the covenant gives an unfair voting advantage to Great Britain; and the covenant is not an effective means for peace.

The Covenant Means the Loss of American Sovereignty

The theme of the rejectionists' attack was nationalism.

²³Cong. Rec., 9, 8549.

Hesitant to approve any measure which would threaten America's sovereignty, league critics were especially opposed to this covenant. Brandegee's comment was typical. He would not vote for the covenant "even with all the reservations which the wit of man could devise because it would not be safe for my country." The danger would come from placing the destiny of

my country under the control of a politically selected tribunal of nine, a foreign tribunal sitting forever upon foreign soil, without knowledge, or care for the traditions, of the hopes, or the aspirations, or the interests of my country.²⁴

The pleas for America's protection received their best statement from Senator Borah. Variouslly referred to as his "Little America" or "League of Nations" address, this speech summarized Borah's position as well as the position of rejectionists in general. He criticized the covenant as a war document, as unconstitutional, as a nullification of the Monroe doctrine, as a violation of the principles of Washington. He focused on the league's conflict with the national concepts on which America had been founded.

In opposing the treaty I do nothing more than decline to renounce and tear out of my life the sacred traditions which throughout 50 years have been translated into my whole intellectual and moral being. I will not, I can not, give up my belief that America must, not alone for the happiness of her own people, but of the moral guidance and greater contentment of the World, be permitted to live her own life. Next to the tie which binds a man to his country, and all schemes, all plans, however ambitious and fascinating they seem

²⁴Ibid., 9, 8775.

in their proposal, but which would embarrass or entangle and impede or shackle her sovereign will, which would compromise her freedom of action, I unhesitatingly put behind me.²⁵

These words represent the argument of a man who sincerely opposed the idea of a league from the beginning. He dismissed the idea of reservations when they were first mentioned; no "watered-down" version would compromise his principles. He was publically praised by Williams and Wilson even though he was inexorably opposed to the proposal for which they fought.²⁶ He was the "Father of the Irreconcilables," and deserved much credit for the increase to their present strength of seventeen.²⁷

The persuasiveness of the sovereignty argument had lost some of its appeal, however, as other means of preserving America's honor were being presented by the revisionists. No one wanted to speak or vote against America's interests but if the league could be made safe for America, then why reject the document out of hand. Irreconcilables no longer had the strong appeal which they had enjoyed during the earlier phases of the controversy.

²⁵Ibid., 9, 8763.

²⁶Ibid., 1, 792; Thomas A. Bailey, Woodrow Wilson and the Great Betrayal (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1945), pp. 123-124. Wilson described most critics as "pygmy minds," but he said of Borah, "This man I respect."

²⁷Ralph A. Micken, "Western Senators in the League of Nations Debate of 1919-1920," Western Speech, XVI (October, 1952), 244; Micken concludes that Borah's speech had quite an influence on the final November vote.

The Covenant Gives an Unfair Voting
Advantage to England

From the beginning Great Britain had been the subject of irreconcilable attacks. The domination by the English through their dominion system had been an early reason for objecting to the league. Amendments and reservations to neutralize this domination did not satisfy the rejectionists. The United States might be given equal votes in matters where America was involved in a dispute but many disputes could exist in which America was not directly a party and the five votes of England could still be wielded to adversely affect the United States. Reed presented a hypothetical example about a dispute over mandates.

When that question comes up for consideration the United States may believe those countries should be permitted to set up a government of their own, or may believe that the mandate should be extended or it should be limited. Great Britain may desire them for herself or may advocate any other policy contrary to the policy and wish of the United States. In that question, which involves a tremendous stretch of territory and may concern trade relations of a most vital character, Great Britain casts her 6 votes and the United States casts her 1 vote.²⁸

Senator Knox would not tolerate America to be "bound with 1 vote, with the greatest empire outside of ourselves with 6 votes."²⁹ Poindexter added to the argument in an attack on a reservation.

It does not provide that every other nation in the world is not bound by the decision. The reservation of the Senator still leaves it so that in a dispute,

²⁸Cong. Rec., 9, 8733.

²⁹Ibid., 9, 8734.

for instance, between China and Japan, a dispute which affects the welfare of the entire world, perchance, and in which the United States and Great Britain are interested, Great Britain will cast her 6 votes in the assembly and Great Britain will have 18 delegates in the assembly, whereas the United States will cast but 1 vote and have but 3 delegates.³⁰

Obviously no compromise measure could satisfy these Senators. No reservation could possibly give the United States an absolute voice in the league, a voice which these critics insisted she must have. No business was to be transacted, no decision made, no new nations were to be created which did not first require the stamp of approval from the United States of America. In this clash of nationalism versus internationalism, the irreconcilables had drawn their conclusions months earlier. The Senate might as well proceed with the voting.

The Covenant Is Not an Effective
Means for Peace

A number of the rejectionists would not vote for the covenant because they believed it was not an effective force for peace. Some felt it would even provoke war. Senator Fernald, Maine, objected on that basis.

Those well-meaning people, those churches, who have resolved that this treaty be ratified without a change believe that the league of nations to enforce peace will stop all further war. Oh, what a delirious, Utopian dream! How I wish that it would accomplish

³⁰Ibid., 9, 8738; note the subtle reference to the Shantung controversy in the "example" of a dispute between China and Japan.

this. But it is certain to do just the opposite.³¹ Senator Norris, Nebraska, objected to the covenant because it did not provide for disarmament. In the discussion of a reservation which would permit Congress to regulate America's armed forces, Norris said:

It is a question in my mind whether this reservation strengthens or weakens article 8 of the covenant. I really believe it is mostly academic, because under the provisions of article 8, in my judgment, there never will come disarmament. I do not believe that we will get a permanent peace until we get some form of disarmament.³²

Senator France agreed that the league left many points unsettled. He said that a league should provide for

the elimination of the causes of war and for the elevation of the backward people, while this so-called league of nations has seemed to me to be more in the nature of an entangling alliance with one group of imperialistic powers.³³

No new arguments were developed during this period in attempts to reject the covenant. The rejectionists surely knew they constituted an unalterable minority. Perhaps they knew the importance of their number; perhaps they could foresee the significance of their bloc voting during the final minutes. At any rate, they were a steadfast group. No one veered from the course which had been outlined earlier. The decision was rejection; no compromise sought and none given.

³¹Ibid., 8, 7887.

³²Ibid., 9, 8567.

³³Ibid., 9, 8629.

The effect of the major contention that the treaty should be rejected was probably negligible on either audience. The irreconcilable faction had neither increased or decreased in months. Around forty per cent of the Senate indicated that they were willing to modify the covenant; around forty per cent indicated approval of the proposed covenant. Neither group could share motives with the rejectionists and remain constant in their position. As for the indirect audience, no report listed as much as twenty per cent in favor of complete rejection. In appealing to a basic motive such as national honor, irreconcilables effectively adapted to their audiences. But the argument that America should "go it alone" instead of joining some kind of world organization appears to have been ineffective.

The Covenant Has Certain Undesirable Features

At this stage in the controversy, few doubted the efficacy of some type of interpretative reservations. The problem was the degree of or the language of the conditions. The most effective way to analyze this major contention is to discuss the Foreign Relations Committee reservations since they served as the base for the other proposals.

The Preamble to the Resolution of Ratification

The first reservation which the Senate debated was the preamble to the resolution of ratification.

1. The reservations and understandings adopted by the Senate are to be made a part and a condition of the resolution of ratification, which ratification is not to take effect or bind the United States until the said reservations and understandings adopted by the Senate have been accepted by an exchange of notes as a part and a condition of said resolution of ratification by at least three of the four principal allied and associated powers, to wit, Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan.³⁴

Even some league critics objected to the reservation. Thomas felt that it was an insult to the allied nations: "If a similar preamble or condition should be laid before the Senate by the President, we would not regard it with equanimity."³⁵ Hoke Smith, Georgia, agreed: "It might be embarrassing to ask these other nations to approve them."³⁶ Senator McCumber doubted the necessity of the condition; even if there were no formal declaration of acceptance, the effectiveness of the reservations would stand unimpaired.³⁷

Three attempts were made to amend the reservation. McCumber wanted to strike everything after "resolution of ratification," but the amendment was rejected twice by identical votes of 40 to 48.³⁸ Borah proposed to make the condition read "four out of four," but was defeated 25 to 63.³⁹ King attempted to amend the section concerning the exchange of notes; his measure was defeated 42 to 46.⁴⁰ The preamble

³⁴Ibid., 8, 8023.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid., 8, 8062.

³⁷Ibid., 8, 8024-8025.

³⁸Ibid., 8, 8068.

³⁹Ibid., 8, 8069.

⁴⁰Ibid., 8, 8074.

passed as worded 48 to 40.⁴¹

During the entire debate no one referred to what was perhaps the principle reason for the wording. The condition stated that the ratification would not take effect until three out of the four nations agreed. As a subsequent analysis will demonstrate, Great Britain was not likely to agree to the reservation calling for equal votes for America; for that matter France and Italy might not be inclined to give America a six to one majority over them. Japan was almost sure not to agree with the Shantung modification. Thus, a strong likelihood existed that three out of four nations would not exchange notes; if not, the United States would not become a member of the league of nations. Apparently the irreconcilable majority on the Foreign Relations Committee preferred some margin of safety if the Senate did ratify the treaty.

The Reservation Concerning League Membership

One of the earliest arguments used against the league was that membership was permanent. Wilson obtained an amendment in April which permitted a nation to withdraw after two years notice, provided all its obligations had been fulfilled. An amendment specifying that the United States would be the sole judge of whether its obligations had been met was defeated by the Senate. This reservation had the same purpose.

⁴¹Ibid.

2. The United States so understands and construes article 1 that in case of notice of withdrawal . . . the United States will be the sole judge as to whether all its international obligations and all its obligations under the said covenant have been fulfilled, and notice of withdrawal by the United States may be given by a concurrent resolution of the Congress of the United States.⁴²

Despite the development of the argument during earlier phases, the debate now focused on "concurrent resolution"--the sovereign rights of the United States were not mentioned once in the entire discussion.

Senator Thomas was the first to object. He wanted to strike all after "fulfilled." Any notice of withdrawal was an executive not a legislative function.⁴³ His amendment provoked a debate which lasted two days. During this time the combat arena changed from nationalism versus internationalism to legislative versus executive predominance. Gone for the moment was the specter of an international force swallowing a defenseless and outvoted United States; in its place rose the specter of a power-mad executive which had dominated Congress for seven years. The hatred of monarchies, of colored peoples, of all aliens gave way momentarily to a hatred of Wilson. McCumber challenged the Senate to "get out from behind this screen and meet the issue just exactly as it is." He was sure that

if we had a Republican President today we would not be insisting that he should be eliminated from any voice in the matter of any future action that we

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid.

might take in respect to either staying in or getting out of the league.⁴⁴

Another Republican, Senator Nelson, echoed the sentiment: "Let us not on this side of the aisle be carried away by hostility to the President."⁴⁵

Various amendments were suggested after Thomas had withdrawn his motion "satisfied that it will not receive a majority vote." Senator Gore's alteration would have the last line of the reservation read "by the President or a concurrent resolution." For once the rigid group membership broke down and sixty-eight Senators from various factions rejected the amendment.⁴⁶ Nelson tried to substitute "joint" for "concurrent." A joint resolution is eligible for a veto while concurrent resolutions are normally not. This wording substitution realigned the Senators into their established groups and the amendment was defeated 39 to 45.⁴⁷ Thomas Walsh, Montana, renewed the Thomas amendment; as Thomas predicted, the measure was rejected 37 to 49 and the original resolution was passed 50 to 35.⁴⁸

Just as the first resolution had little or nothing to do with the actual terms of the covenant, neither, apparently, did the second. After ten months of debate, after

⁴⁴Ibid., 8, 8077; a characteristic Lodge reply was, "In two years we will have a Republican President."

⁴⁵Ibid., 8, 8136.

⁴⁶Ibid., 8, 8134.

⁴⁷Ibid., 8, 8135.

⁴⁸Ibid., 8, 8138-8139.

two months of study by the Foreign Relations Committee, the resolution of ratification appeared more a vehicle for personal philosophies than an acceptance of peace terms.

The Reservation Concerning
Article 10

During the earlier phases of the controversy both sides admitted that article 10 was the crux of the controversy. Article 10 proposed to preserve existing territorial boundaries and political independence of member nations against external aggression. Some critics objected to the article as if the word "external" were missing, and some critics objected because the obligation would lead to war.

The Committee reservation attempted to remove both criticisms.

3. The United States assumes no obligation to preserve the territorial integrity or political independence of any other country or to interfere in controversies between nations . . . or to employ the military or naval forces of the United States under any article of the treaty for any purpose, unless in any particular case the Congress, which, under the Constitution, has the sole power to declare war or to authorize the employment of the military or naval forces of the United States, shall by act or joint resolution so provide.⁴⁹

This wording did not really reflect the fundamental objections to article 10 as much as it assigned to Congress the right to evaluate the decisions of the league. Again, nationalism conflicted with internationalism.

Senator Thomas proposed a substitute motion which in

⁴⁹Ibid., 8, 8193.

essence stated that the suggestions of the league council were only advisory. If Congress declined to accept those suggestions, the United States would not violate the treaty. The primary distinction between the two versions was that the Thomas motion eliminated the phrase "sole power . . . to authorize the employment of the military or naval forces."⁵⁰ Thomas Walsh supported the motion; Congress did not have the sole power. He cited instance after instance when the President had employed the military forces without Congressional sanction.⁵¹ Despite these objections the Thomas amendment was defeated 36 to 48.⁵²

Senator Borah then proposed a substitute for the Committee reservation which simply stated that America assumed none of the obligations, either "moral or legal," stated in article 10. His measure was rejected 18 to 68, while David Walsh's amendment, which would relieve all nations from their obligations to America, was cast aside 4 to 68.⁵³ Irreconcilable attitudes were in the decided minority.

After several time consuming digressions, and the funeral of Senator Martin, the Senate returned to article 10 on November 13. Hitchcock proposed a substitute reservation.

That the advice mentioned in article 10 of the covenant . . . is merely advice which each member nation is free to accept or reject, according to the conscience and judgment of its then existing government, and in the

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid., 8, 8193-8200.

⁵²Ibid., 8, 8212.

⁵³Ibid., 8, 8420-8421.

case of the United States this advice can only be accepted by action of the Congress at the time in being. Congress alone under the Constitution of the United States having the power to declare war.⁵⁴

Despite the similarity in meaning with the Committee reservation, the exclusion of the "sole power" clause was sufficient to reject the measure 32 to 44; the Committee reservation was then adopted 46 to 33.⁵⁵

The discussion of this reservation clearly indicated that attempts to compromise were going to be difficult, if not impossible. Hitchcock stated the attitude of league supporters.

There is not any objection on this side of the Chamber, so far as I know, and the President has not objected, to a reservation which shall provide that the advice of the league be mere advice, and that the Congress of the United States shall be free to accept it or reject it, just as any other nation of the league shall be free to accept it or reject it.⁵⁶

Such an admission should have answered the criticism that article 10 would lead America to war; it should have answered the pleas for the "down trodden" nations of the world which would be bound into slavery forever; it should have settled the question of the distinction between an internal and an external war. The defeat of all compromise attempts indicated that league critics wanted something more than the "protection of American rights," which they had professed to the people.

⁵⁴Ibid., 8, 8434.

⁵⁵Ibid., 8, 8436-8437.

⁵⁶Ibid., 8, 8215.

The Reservation Concerning Mandates

The covenant had been amended by Wilson in April to read "and those who are willing" to accept a mandate. The Senate made sure that only Congress could authorize that acceptance.

4. No mandate shall be accepted by the United States under article 22, Part I, or any other provision of the treaty of peace with Germany, except by action of the Congress of the United States.⁵⁷

The Senate must have held a distorted view of Wilson's powers if they thought he could have accepted a mandate without their approval yet no other reason for this particular citation appears valid. The treaty supporters could see no harm in the proposal; it was adopted without debate.⁵⁸

The Reservation Pertaining to Domestic Issues

Another section of the covenant which Wilson had amended in April was article 15. While the covenant gave the council of the league to determine the nature of a dispute, the reservation explicitly specified that the United States would have such a right.

5. The United States reserves to itself exclusively the right to decide what questions are within its domestic jurisdiction and . . . these questions are not under this treaty to be submitted in any way either to arbitration or to the consideration of the

⁵⁷Ibid., 9, 8556.

⁵⁸Ibid.; no votes listed. Lodge called for the votes on November 18 to straighten the record; the results at that time were 52 to 31.

council or of the assembly of the league of nations, or any agency thereof, or to the decision or recommendation of any other powers.⁵⁹

The debate on this reservation continued the struggle between nationalism and internationalism.

Various amendments were proposed. Hitchcock attempted to broaden the scope of the reservation to include any member nation; critics apparently preferred the specific reference to the United States as the amendment was defeated 43 to 52.⁶⁰ Senator Hale wanted to extend the coverage to include the "present boundaries of the United States and its insular and other possessions." The Senator from Maine was concerned about a boundary dispute between America and Canada. Again the rigid group membership disappeared and a combination of opponents and supporters, Democrats and Republicans, joined forces to pass the amendment 52 to 40; the reservation with the Hale amendment was then passed 59 to 36 with ten Democrats in support.⁶¹

The Reservation Concerning the Monroe Doctrine

By now the subject of the nullification of the Monroe

⁵⁹Ibid., 9, 8556.

⁶⁰Ibid.; Phelan and King also made unsuccessful attempts at amendment, 9, 8556-8558. Senator Smoot observed that every Senator voted on the Hitchcock proposal, "A thing I do not remember to have ever occurred before in the history of this body."

⁶¹Ibid., 9, 8559-8560.

doctrine had been discussed to almost everyone's satisfaction; at least no debate occurred over the purpose of the reservation.

6. The United States will not submit to arbitration or to inquiry by the assembly or by the council . . . any questions which in the judgment of the United States depend upon or relate to its long-established policy, commonly known as the Monroe doctrine; said doctrine is to be interpreted by the United States alone. . . .⁶²

Three amendments had been submitted prior to the cloture ruling. Hitchcock, Pittman and King all sought the same goal: removal of the phrase "interpreted by the United States alone." All three were defeated. Everyone seemed to agree that the doctrine could be specifically protected but the language of the Committee reservation appeared to please the majority; the reservation passed 55 to 34.⁶³

The Reservation Concerning Shantung

From the time that Wilson conceded to permit Japan to gain the Shantung territory, the Senate had argued whether the treaty makers had the moral right to make the transfer. As indicated earlier, six amendments were defeated but many of the Senators vetoed the amendments because they preferred a reservation. The Committee reservation stated:

7. The United States withholds its assent to articles 156, 157, and 158, and reserves full liberty of action with respect to any controversy which may

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid., 9, 8561.

arise under said articles between the Republic of China and the Empire of Japan.⁶⁴

McCumber immediately objected. He explained that England, France and Italy had treaties with Japan which gave the Shantung territory to Japan. Unless they broke those treaties they would have to refuse to agree with the United States' interpretation of the ownership of Shantung. He reminded the Senate of the preamble they had passed requiring "three out of four nations" to agree. He then introduced an amendment which stated: "The United States refrains from entering into any agreement on its part in reference to the matters contained in articles 156, 157, and 158."⁶⁵ This version would permit the allies, except Japan, to honorably agree that the United States would not be a party to the transfer. Lenroot said the original wording stated exactly what the Senate wanted expressed: "full disapproval of this robbery of China by Japan;" enough Senators agreed with Lenroot to defeat the McCumber proposal 42 to 50.⁶⁶ The Committee reservation was approved by a vote of 53 to 41.⁶⁷

Six Procedural Reservations

Reservations eight through thirteen are discussed jointly since, with one exception, they produced no extended debate. The combined support of irreconcilables, strict

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Ibid., 9, 8562.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Ibid., 9, 8564.

reservationists and mild reservationists passed all six proposals in one afternoon. Reservation eight stated that American representatives to the league were subject to Senate confirmation; the measure passed, 53 to 40, with only a mild protest from Thomas Walsh that the resolution was just another personal attack on Wilson.⁶⁸ Number nine stated that the Reparations Commission could not interfere with trade between America and Germany without the approval of Congress; the reservation passed without comment 54 to 40.⁶⁹ Number ten provided that no American funds would be allocated to the league without Congressional approval; it also passed without debate 56 to 39.⁷⁰

Number eleven referred to one of the original objections to the league, regulation of the size of armed forces. The reservation simply gave Congress the power to increase the armaments if America was "threatened by invasion or engaged in war." With no serious objections the reservation passed 56 to 39.⁷¹

Number twelve permitted the nationals of a covenant-breaking state who lived in the United States to "continue their commercial, financial, and personal relations with the nationals of the United States," which article 16 prohibited. Wadsworth, New York, attempted to get one phrase reworded but lacked unanimous consent required under the cloture rule.

⁶⁸Ibid., 9, 8564-8566.

⁶⁹Ibid., 9, 8566.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Ibid., 9, 8567.

Otherwise the reservation easily passed 53 to 41.⁷²

The final procedural reservation referred to the section of the treaty which stated that the affairs of citizens would be subject to "any court or any department of the Government of any of the high contracting parties . . . in pursuance of war legislation." Wadsworth offered a rationale for the reservation:

The purpose . . . is merely to make it clear that this . . . shall not be taken to mean that American citizens are deprived of their rights in our courts to try any case which they are warranted in presenting."

The majority of the Senate agreed and number thirteen passed 52 to 41.⁷³

While the subject matter of all reservations was the peace treaty, the purpose of many was to establish the supremacy of Congress over any international body. The absence of debate can be interpreted as an agreement between the Senators who believed that the treaty jeopardized America's sovereignty and the league supporters who never seriously worried about the alleged loss.

Thus, on November 15, between 10:00 a.m. and 4:15 p.m., the Senate passed ten reservations. After twelve months of debate, league critics took only six hours to give Wilson ten reasons to refuse to sign the peace treaty.

⁷²Ibid., 9, 8567-8570.

⁷³Ibid., 9, 8570-8571.

Two Committee Reservations Are
Rejected

Reservation fourteen was a confusing condition. The reservation stated:

14. The United States declines to accept, as trustee, or in her own right, any interest in or any responsibility for the government or disposition of the overseas possessions of Germany, her rights and titles to which Germany renounces to the principal allied and associated powers under articles 119 to 127, inclusive.⁷⁴

Most of November 17 was spent in debating whether or not the reservation concerning mandates covered this subject. One group of Senators proclaimed that Americans wanted no part of the African and Pacific possessions while another group said America should not remove herself completely from these territories due to their possible military value. At any rate, the reservation was overwhelmingly rejected 29 to 64, with about half of the "yes" votes cast by irreconcilables.⁷⁵

The next reservation, now numbered fourteen, was a specific reference to the supremacy of nationalism in the proposed world order.

14. The United States reserves to itself exclusively the right to decide what questions affect its honor or its vital interests and declares that such questions are not under this treaty to be submitted in any way either to arbitration or to the consideration of the council or of the assembly of the league of nations or any agency thereof or to the decision or recommendation of any other power.⁷⁶

⁷⁴Ibid., 9, 8617.

⁷⁵Ibid., 9, 8617-8634.

⁷⁶Ibid., 9, 8634.

The voice of the irreconcilable majority on the Foreign Relations Committee was evident. Nineteen Senators joined the irreconcilables but the measure was defeated 36 to 56.⁷⁷

Two Reservations Are Added by
the Senate

The Committee reservations accepted by the Senate now numbered thirteen. Since the peace treaty was before the Committee of the Whole, any Senator could propose an addition to the Committee recommendations. Before the cloture rule was put into effect many amendments and substitute reservations were introduced. McCumber had introduced nine reservations which reflected the mild reservationist attitude in the Senate. Seven of these were either discussed or rejected during the action on the Committee slate. The Senate now investigated McCumber's eighth proposal which referred to the international labor organization to be created.

14. The United States withholds its assent to Part XIII (articles 387 to 427, inclusive) of said treaty unless Congress, by act or joint resolution, shall hereafter make provision for representation in the organization established by said Part XIII, and in such event the participation of the United States will be governed and conditioned by the provisions of such act or joint resolution.⁷⁸

The purpose of the reservation was the protection of America's honor. The covenant would set up machinery which purported to protect laborers all over the world. McCumber was not against the policy of protection but rather the means by

⁷⁷Ibid., 9, 8640.

⁷⁸Ibid.

which the guarantee would be implemented. He used as an example the labor union that was at that time sharing the headlines with the league controversy.

The Industrial Workers of the World, the I.W.W. organization that we are now trying to destroy and attempting to drive out of the country, can lodge a complaint with this body [League Commission on Labor] and compel the United States to answer to its charges; and if the United States sends its representative, then this organization may, by a two-thirds vote, refuse to accept the representative sent by the United States. In other words, not only must a great nation come before this organization, bound to kneel and plead before it, but the attorney that nation employs to defend itself may be rejected by that organization. Was ever a sovereign nation reduced to such degradation?⁷⁹

Senator King immediately introduced an amendment which removed America from any action concerning the labor commission, even including its formation.⁸⁰

On November 18, the Senate debated the merits of both proposals. McCumber evaluated the two recommendations as the difference between the use of an ax and an anesthetic in performing a surgical operation: "The difference is that one kills while the other leaves the door open for hope."⁸¹ The vote on the two proposals validates that distinction. King's "ax" was defeated 43 to 48; strict reservationists split their vote and only Cummins represented the mild reservationists.⁸² McCumber's version became the fourteenth reservation with a vote of 54 to 35; all seven mild reservationists, all

⁷⁹Ibid., 9, 8641.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Ibid., 9, 8702.

⁸²Ibid., 9, 8730.

of the strict reservationists and all but two of the irreconcilables combined to secure its adoption.⁸³

The Senate then discussed McCumber's final proposal. In this wording, McCumber attempted to satisfy those critics who objected to the voting edge of Great Britain.

When the case referred to the council or the assembly involves a dispute between one member of the league and another member of the league whose self-governing dominions, colonies, or parts of empire are also represented in the body to which the case is referred, or involves a dispute between one member and any such dominion, colony or part of empire, both the disputant members, including the dominion or principal country and all its said dominions, colonies, and parts of empire, are to be excluded from voting upon any phase of the dispute.⁸⁴

Senator Hitchcock immediately agreed: "I think the reservation . . . expresses what is the real meaning of the league covenant."⁸⁵ With the leader of the treaty supporters in favor of the measure the reservation was almost certain to be adopted.

On the other hand, Hiram Johnson offered a substitute proposal which had three parts: America would have six votes in any phase of the league's voting; Great Britain would have no votes if involved in a dispute with America; and Great Britain would only have one vote in a dispute between America and any other country.⁸⁶ McCumber attacked the general nature of the proposal: "Under the reservation

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Ibid., 9, 8731.

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Ibid.

. . . each of the other nations would, of course, demand an equal 6 votes; and if there were 40 of them there would be 240 votes to be cast."⁸⁷ Senators Reed, Borah and Knox immediately supported Johnson but were unable to explain away McCumber's objection. The amendment was voted on by sections. The Senate rejected the first section 43 to 16; Johnson withdrew the other two sections.⁸⁸

Senator Lenroot also had a substitute motion for consideration.

The United States assumes no obligation to be bound by any decision, report, or finding of the council or assembly in which any member of the league and its self-governing dominions, colonies, or parts of empire in the aggregate have cast more than one vote, and assumes no obligation to be bound by any decision, report, or finding of the council or assembly arising out of any dispute between the United States and any member of the league if such member, or any self-governing dominion, colony, empire or part of empire united with it politically has voted.⁸⁹

The appeal of this proposal was evident; Lenroot captured the spirit of McCumber's motion and most of the Johnson substitute. The rejection of the McCumber version was virtually unanimous, 3 to 86; the Lenroot version passed 55 to 38 to become the fifteenth reservation.⁹⁰

Other Reservations Are Rejected

In the remaining hours, seventeen other reservations were rejected. Phelan proposed that the United States

⁸⁷Ibid., 9, 8733.

⁸⁸Ibid., 9, 8738.

⁸⁹Ibid., 9, 8736.

⁹⁰Ibid., 9, 8741.

interpret the league covenant on the basis of Wilson's Fourteen Points; the Senate objected 12 to 79.⁹¹ Owen presented another version of the same proposal and it was also rejected.⁹² Knox's proposal that the United States be the sole judge on questions of its honor was rejected 30 to 61, and a similar version by Reed was defeated 34 to 50.⁹³ Wesley Jones recommended that Congress be the sole judge of the size of America's armed forces; the Senate disagreed 34 to 50.⁹⁴ He later proposed that the United States withdraw membership after two years unless: Shantung were given to China; Ireland and Egypt were given their independence; and all member nations had disbanded peacetime conscription. The reservation was rejected.⁹⁵ Owen also proposed Egyptian independence; the motion failed 31 to 46.⁹⁶ Senator France suggested that Germany's African colonies be given to the United States; with no debate the Senate refused 3 to 71.⁹⁷ Gore wanted to specify that America would not become entangled in any foreign alliance but the Senate refused 28 to 50.⁹⁸ David Walsh made a motion which in essence protected the First Amendment to the Constitution; the motion was

⁹¹Ibid., 9, 8742.

⁹²Ibid., 9, 8736; no votes listed.

⁹³Ibid., 9, 8744; 8756.

⁹⁴Ibid., 9, 8744-8745.

⁹⁵Ibid., 9, 8748; no votes listed.

⁹⁶Ibid., 9, 8756-8759.

⁹⁷Ibid., 9, 8746.

⁹⁸Ibid., 9, 8745.

rejected 36 to 42.⁹⁹ Hitchcock tried to remove the "three out of four" stipulation in the preamble but was defeated 36 to 45.¹⁰⁰

Senator La Follette proposed six reservations; all six were rejected. The principle that self-determination should be accorded all nations was defeated 24 to 49. That peacetime conscription should be abolished was defeated 21 to 54. That no nation could go to war without giving its citizens a vote on the proposition was discarded 13 to 58. A proposal to force all nations to decrease their military expenditures by one-fifth in five years was overwhelmingly defeated 10 to 60. That no new territory could be acquired unless its citizens agreed was rejected 19 to 51. Finally La Follette proposed that no nation could appropriate the natural resources of any mandatory without the exploited nations' consent; this measure was rejected 23 to 51.¹⁰¹

The major contention that the covenant had certain undesirable features was used by the league critics to achieve the goal of altering the covenant. The developing arguments were those heard since the initial phases of the struggle. Yet the reservations appended to the resolution of ratification were less directed toward the subject of these arguments than toward certain other purposes held by the Senators. The desire to give the Republican party credit

⁹⁹Ibid., 9, 8753.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., 9, 8754-8755.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 9, 8748-8753.

for the peace terms; the struggle between the legislative and executive branches for supremacy in making foreign policy decisions; the conflict between the national state and international cooperation; and the conflict between certain Senators and President Wilson were as much an impetus for the fifteen reservations as the Senate's desire to remove certain undesirable features of the proposed covenant.

No one seriously doubted that certain interpretative reservations would be necessary to obtain the Constitutional two-thirds majority. Extreme reservations were unhesitatingly defeated while other measures were passed only through the bloc support of the irreconcilables. At any rate, league critics who sought to alter the covenant were successful. All that remained was to ensure that the alteration was retained when the final vote was taken on November 19.

The November Rejection of the Peace Treaty

Vice President Marshall laid the Treaty of Versailles before the Senate on November 19. After two months in the Foreign Relations Committee and two more months before the Committee of the Whole, the Senate was ready to take official action. Two communiques to Congress were read before the voting began; both had a potential influence on the vote.

The first was a letter from Wilson to Hitchcock which Senator Lodge read to the Senate.

My dear Senator: You were good enough to bring me word that the Democratic Senators supporting the

treaty expected to hold a conference before the final vote on the Lodge resolution of ratification, and they would be glad to receive a word of counsel from me.

I should hesitate to offer it in any detail, but I assume that the Senators only desire my judgment upon the all-important question of the final vote on the resolution containing the many reservations by Senator Lodge. On that I can not hesitate, for, in my opinion, the resolution in that form does not provide for ratification but, rather, for the nullification of the treaty. I sincerely hope that friends and supporters of the treaty will vote against the Lodge resolution of ratification.

I understand that the door will probably then be open for a genuine resolution of ratification.

I trust that all true friends of the treaty will refuse to support the Lodge resolution.

Cordially and sincerely yours,

(signed) Woodrow Wilson¹⁰²

Wilson again challenged the Senate, as he had done twice the previous spring.

The second communique was read by Senator McNary. A bulletin from the League to Enforce Peace urged "the immediate ratification of the treaty, even with its reservations."¹⁰³ For almost four years this organization had been actively working toward the initiation of a world organization. Even when Taft indicated in July that he would accept some reservations, League officials stood steadfast for unconditional ratification. Now the League had capitulated; Wilson apparently stood alone.

¹⁰²Ibid., 9, 8768.

¹⁰³Ibid., 9, 8774.

The Lodge resolution could probably count on the support of members of all three factions of league critics, a potential of fifty-six votes. But if all thirty-nine Democratic league supporters followed their President's advice, the peace treaty would not be ratified. Twelve months of debate had still not effected a constitutionally acceptable approval of peace terms.

The first vote on the resolution of ratification was taken about 1:00 p.m. on November 19. All thirty-two strict reservationists and seven mild reservationists voted for approval. The thirty-nine league Democrats heeded Wilson; they were joined by sixteen irreconcilables in defeating the resolution 39 to 55. Senator Fall was the only member not voting; the total would have been 39 to 56 with his presence.¹⁰⁴

After hours of parliamentary maneuvering the resolution was voted on again; this time the treaty was rejected 41 to 51. Only three votes changed; Owens, Myers and Pomerene now voted for ratification. Thirty-five league supporters combined with sixteen irreconcilables in rejection.¹⁰⁵ Lodge immediately addressed the chair: "So far as the treaty now submitted goes, the final vote has been taken, and I move that the Senate proceed to the consideration of

¹⁰⁴Ibid., 9, 8786; Kendrick announced Fall's absence: "I am informed he would vote 'nay' on the question."

¹⁰⁵Ibid., 9, 8802; Culberson, yes, and Nelson, no, were absent.

legislative business." Senator Underwood appealed for a vote on an unencumbered resolution. Lodge agreed to make no point of order if the vote were immediate. For two weeks parliamentary procedure had been one of the critics' main weapons; Lodge must have been convinced of the outcome of this vote as he could have prevented it as he had done four times that day.

On that vote the resolution of ratification was defeated 38 to 53. Thirty-seven Democrats and McCumber voted yes; all the other reservationists and the irreconcilables voted no.¹⁰⁶ Lodge moved to reconsider the vote just taken and then immediately moved to lay the motion to reconsider on the table. This maneuver would prevent any league supporter from preventing the Senate's adjourning. With a vote of 48 to 42 the Senate laid the motion to reconsider on the table, and the Senate was through with the treaty for this session. After a brief return to legislative business, the Senate adjourned until December.¹⁰⁷

The Interim Period

Since the rejection of the peace treaty did not truly reflect the majority opinion of the Senate or of the people, the reaction to the defeat was predictably unfavorable. The press blamed either Wilson or the Senate. Wilson was blamed

¹⁰⁶Ibid., 9, 8803; Culberson and Kendrick, for; Nelson and Fall, against, were absent.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 9, 8804-8809.

for refusing to compromise. The pro-league St. Louis Globe Democrat wrote: ". . . with unbending egotism and amazing tactlessness he stood in the way of conciliation and compromise." The Philadelphia Inquirer agreed. Others blamed the Senate. According to the Rochester Times-Union: "The United States Senate under the bankrupt leadership of Senator Henry Cabot Lodge has killed the peace treaty." The New York Times asked its readers:

Who has supported the Treaty of Versailles from the moment of its submission to the Senate, who has toiled and striven for its ratification? Who has opposed ratification, who has piled Ossas and Pelions of obstruction across its pathway? Who has engrafted upon it reservations that blast and destroy it?

The New York Sun was an exception: "Thank God this treaty is dead and we are still a free and independent nation."¹⁰⁸

Public reaction was sufficiently violent to cause Lodge to comment:

In that brief interval I went to Massachusetts for a few days and while there and after I reached Washington at the opening of the regular session I found that a situation had developed, both in the Senate and in the country, which was caused by the continued assertion of the friends of the league that the reservations had been added and the defeat of the treaty had been brought about by the disputes between the two parties on what were merely verbal differences. The statement was false, but I thought its falsity should be publically exhibited.¹⁰⁹

If the Senate's rejection was not acceptable to the people,

¹⁰⁸These reactions of various newspapers are cited in Fleming, pp. 396-397, and Cranston, pp. 233-234.

¹⁰⁹Lodge, pp. 192-193.

league critics still had to prepare a lesson for their public education program.

The Senate Attempts Compromise Negotiations

Most of the criticism of Senate action was its failure to negotiate some type of compromise. The Literary Digest reported: "Yet as the first exclamation of regret or delight gave way to sober editorial thought, we find newspapers of every political hue and geographical location urging compromise."¹¹⁰ The Nashville Banner typified these demands: "Republicans under Lodge's leadership can better afford to leave off some of their stronger reservations than to have the treaty fail altogether and the administration forces can well afford to agree to some of the reservations proposed."¹¹¹

The League to Enforce Peace combined with the American Federation of Labor in sponsoring a conference in Washington. Leaders from thirty-three organizations across the country, representing a combined membership of over twenty million people, adopted a resolution stating that the treaty should be ratified "with such reservations as may secure in the Senate the necessary two-thirds vote."¹¹²

One index of popular opinion was the Intercollegiate Treaty Referendum which was addressed to colleges in every section of the country. The poll is especially significant

¹¹⁰LXIII (December 6, 1919), 14.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 15.

¹¹²Cranston, pp. 241-242.

since, in general, the academic world had supported Wilson's attempt to organize peace.

Unreserved ratification	48,232
Ratification with Lodge reservations	29,970
Ratification with compromise reservations	61,494
Complete rejection	13,933 ¹¹³

Although the proposed covenant had a four to one majority over a rejected league, a modified league was almost a two to one favorite over Wilson's proposal; the compromise attitude was decidedly preferred to either Wilson's or Lodge's program.

Thomas Bailey commented on the compromise demands of the period: "The tremendous ground swell is an impressive tribute to the power of public opinion, and its ability to secure action, if not results, when it makes up its mind that something must be done."¹¹⁴

The financial leaders also began to exert pressure for compromise. According to Carl Ackerman, a Washington Post correspondent: "The business interests are doing everything within their power to have the treaty of Versailles ratified by a compromise between President Wilson and the Republican leaders of the Senate."¹¹⁵ Underwood presented Ackerman's analysis to the Senate as a reason for

¹¹³Cong. Rec., 66th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1920, LIX, Part 2, 1695; unless otherwise designated, all citations are to this session of Congress.

¹¹⁴Bailey, p. 226.

¹¹⁵Cong. Rec., 1, 531.

reconsidering the treaty; he proposed a Committee of Conciliation be appointed to draft a compromise. With typical sarcasm, Lodge dismissed the analysis "by a gentleman named Carl Ackerman, apparently of German origin, whose name, I think, I have before observed during the war."¹¹⁶ Lodge also dismissed the idea of a committee; his stand was that the treaty was not before the Senate and would not be until Wilson resubmitted the document. Underwood reminded him that if the treaty were resubmitted it would go to the Foreign Relations Committee, which had held it two months the last time, and would not be before the Senate where action was needed immediately. Lodge did not answer.¹¹⁷

Lodge's refusal to compromise alienated some members of his own party. The New York Times reported that a dozen or so Republicans were provoked by Lodge's refusal and issued an ultimatum that they would deal directly with the Democrats if necessary.¹¹⁸ Lodge did not take immediate action but these murmurings of discontent helped initiate the Bi-Partisan Conference in January, 1920.

The Action of the Bi-Partisan Conference

Lodge takes credit for calling the conference¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶Ibid., 1, 533.

¹¹⁷Ibid., 1, 534-535.

¹¹⁸December 27, 1919, pp. 1, 3.

¹¹⁹Lodge, p. 193; for some reason Lodge lists McKellar as Republican.

although Senator McKellar, Tennessee, said the idea originated with Senator Colt.¹²⁰ Five Democrats and four Republicans met to see if they could reach some agreement. Lodge described the proceedings.

This conference met and sat constantly for two weeks and considered all the reservations. We came to tentative agreements on certain changes in the wording of some of the reservations . . . but we could not agree on the reservation relating to the Monroe doctrine, or the reservation pertaining to the equality of voting in the league, and we failed conspicuously and emphatically to agree on any changes in the reservation relating to article 10.¹²¹

The New York Tribune commented on the meeting on January 22: "While nothing is actually settled, the language of the compromise program is regarded as distinctively milder in its terms than the Lodge reservations."¹²²

On January 30 the conference mysteriously broke up.¹²³ Both Lodge and Hitchcock issued statements about the results of the conference.¹²⁴ Lodge gave his reason for the failure: "I had made up my mind at the beginning that if the conference was to break up without an agreement it would

¹²⁰H. Maurice Darline, "Who Kept the United States Out of the League of Nations," Canadian Historical Review, X (September, 1929), 198-200; Fleming, p. 406, prints McKellar's letter giving Colt the credit.

¹²¹Lodge, p. 193.

¹²²Cited in Fleming, p. 407.

¹²³Infra, p. 205 for the influence of the irreconcilables.

¹²⁴Lodge, pp. 195-205, has copies of both statements.

be on article 10, which was the crucial point throughout the contest."¹²⁵

The Final Rejection of the Peace Treaty

On February 9, after a hectic parliamentary inquiry concerning the status of the treaty, the Senate approved Lodge's motion to send the treaty back to the Foreign Relations Committee. The only votes against the motion were cast by irreconcilables. The next morning Lodge reported the treaty back from the Committee but suggested that debate be postponed until the following Monday, February 16, due to the absence of so many Senators.¹²⁶

Debate on the Treaty Is Resumed

On that day Lodge introduced an amendment to the first reservation, which dealt with the withdrawal procedure. He proposed to remove the objectionable "concurrent resolution" clause which created such a controversy in November. The last line now read: "notice of withdrawal by the United States may be given by the President or by Congress alone whenever a majority of both Houses may deem it necessary."¹²⁷

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 194. Fleming, pp. 433-439, contains a detailed account of the conference including the substitute proposals by Simmonds, Hitchcock and Taft for the reservation on article 10.

¹²⁶Marshall evaluated the coming debate to a group of reporters, "Boys, why don't you just take your files on this treaty debate and print them over again."

¹²⁷Ibid., 3, 2944.

Hitchcock labelled the new wording "not a compromise but more obnoxious than before." America's membership was not to be determined on an "either-or" basis; the only true solution was a joint resolution. He proposed an amendment to that effect which was defeated 26 to 38.¹²⁸ Lodge's substitute was also defeated 32 to 33, and the Senate reapproved the original reservation 45 to 20.¹²⁹ The forty-five votes represented a curious combination of five league supporters, ten irreconcilables, six mild reservationists and twenty-three strict reservationists.

Lodge suggested that the Senate save the second reservation, on article 10, until last. The third reservation, on mandates, was reaccepted without debate 68 to 4.¹³⁰

The fourth reservation, concerning domestic issues, was reconsidered on February 26. Hitchcock proposed a substitute which stated that no member nation would be required to submit any question which it considered to be wholly domestic in nature. The only major distinction between this wording and the Committee reservation was the omission of the specific reference to the United States. The death of Senator Bankhead, Alabama, interrupted debate on the treaty; discussion on the Hitchcock substitute was resumed on March 2, 1920. This substitute was defeated 36 to 44, and the original reservation was again adopted by a vote of 56 to

¹²⁸Ibid., 4, 3241.

¹²⁹Ibid., 4, 3242.

¹³⁰Ibid., 4, 3514.

25.¹³¹ Five league supporters had changed their votes and now supported the reservation: Ashurst, Henderson, Myers, Nugent and Pittman.

The fifth reservation, pertaining to the Monroe doctrine was reconsidered and reapproved 58 to 22.¹³² Nine Democrats who had previously voted against the proposal now favored the reservation: Beckham, Fletcher, Henderson, King, Myers, Nugent, Phelan, Pittman and Hoke Smith.

The sixth reservation, the Shantung clause, was discussed on March 4. Lodge proposed an amendment which removed the specific reference to China and Japan. Hitchcock questioned the force of the reservation now that France, Japan, Italy and Great Britain had ratified the treaty. The territory had been officially transferred. If the Senate wanted to protect China's interest, then state it in the reservation: "It is of no benefit to China unless we are going to back up our protestations by active means."¹³³ Even so, Hitchcock agreed that excluding the specific reference would lessen the tension. The Senate concurred and voted for the amendment 69 to 2, and the reservation as amended was adopted 48 to 21.¹³⁴ Six Senators changed their votes: Chamberlain, Henderson, Myers, Nugent, Pittman and Hoke Smith.

The six procedural reservations were readopted with

¹³¹Ibid., 4, 3741.

¹³²Ibid., 4, 3748.

¹³³Ibid., 4, 3839-3840.

¹³⁴Ibid., 4, 3857.

no real opposition from league supporters.¹³⁵

The thirteenth reservation, on the international labor organization, was readopted without debate 44 to 27.¹³⁶ No one who had previously voted against the reservation now favored the measure. Senator Dial's opposition represented the only change from the previous vote in November.

The fourteenth reservation, concerning the inequality of votes, was resubmitted on March 8. Lodge proposed an amendment which added two parts. The first section stipulated that the covenant would have to be amended to entitle America "to cast a number of votes equal to that which any member of the league and its self-governing colonies, dominions, or parts of empire in the aggregate, shall be entitled to cast. . . ." The second part stated that the United States was not bound by any decision where any nation or dominion, colony, or part of empire, voted if a nation connected with it had voted.¹³⁷ Lodge was apparently not interested in compromise. He not only demanded votes equal to England but wanted all six of her votes to be nullified in any dispute with America.

The debate centered around the distinction between an amendment and a reservation. League supporters claimed that a reservation which forced the covenant to be amended was

¹³⁵Ibid., 4, 3864-4007.

¹³⁶Ibid., 4, 4010.

¹³⁷Ibid.

actually an amendment, no matter what label the Senate gave it.

Lodge's two part amendment was adopted by the Senate. The vote on the first part was 49 to 28; no votes were listed for the second part.¹³⁸ The fourteenth reservation, as amended by Lodge, was adopted 57 to 20.¹³⁹ Seven Democrats who had voted against the Lenroot version now supported the reservation: Ashurst, Chamberlain, Henderson, Myers, Pittman, Nugent and Pomerene.

The Debate over the Reservation
to Article 10

Lodge asked the Senate to discuss the second reservation last. On March 12, he introduced a substitute reservation.

2. The United States assumes no obligation to preserve the territorial integrity or political independence of any other country by the employment of its military or naval forces, its resources, or any form of economic discrimination, or to interfere in any way in controversies between nations, whether members of the league or not, under the provisions of article 10. . . .¹⁴⁰

He had removed the sole power clause which had been one of the original objections but his addition of "any form of economic discrimination" was equally distasteful to league supporters. This addition virtually removed America's obligation under article 16 as well as under article 10. The

¹³⁸Ibid., 4, 4061-4062.

¹³⁹Ibid., 4, 4067.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., 4, 4211.

inclusion of "resources" indicated a new interpretation of the dangers inherent in the article. Even if the United States refused any obligation to preserve territorial boundaries, she would have to help pay the cost of any league action for such a preservation. One critic stated that the financial obligation "would be likely to prove as much of a burden to the United States as any military obligations. . . ." ¹⁴¹

Frelinghuysen submitted a substitute resolution which simply refused American obligation to article 10 under any circumstances; the amendment was rejected 17 to 59. ¹⁴² Only irreconcilables were interested in rejecting article 10 completely.

After five days of discussion, Senator Kirby, Arkansas, was the first league supporter to actively enter the debate. He proposed to add the phrase: "Nothing here shall be deemed to impair the obligation in article 16 concerning the economic boycott." The motion was defeated 31 to 45. He then offered the Taft Reservation to article 10 which Kirby said had the assent of forty Democrats.

The United States declines to assume any legal or binding obligation . . . to employ the military or naval forces of the United States under any article of that treaty for any purpose; but the Congress . . . will consider and decide what moral obligation, if any, under the circumstances of any particular case, when it arises, should move the United States in the interest of world peace. . . . ¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ Cited in Cranston, p. 248; author of quotation unknown.

¹⁴² Cong. Rec., 5, 4321.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 5, 4324.

The motion was the most effective compromise which had been considered. Congress could still determine America's obligations. With legal obligations denied, the covenant could not be labelled a war-breeder. Congress would still control America's armed forces. Yet without debate the league critics rejected the measure 30 to 46.¹⁴⁴

Simmonds, Senator from North Carolina, offered a substitute motion which he said Wilson would accept. The Senate did not accept it; the measure failed 27 to 51.¹⁴⁵ With the failure of these last minute compromise attempts, the new Lodge reservation was adopted 56 to 26.¹⁴⁶ Seven Democrats had switched votes from the previous November: Ashurst, Gerry, Myers, Nugent, Phelan, Pittman and Pomerene.

Article 10 was supposedly the basis for accepting or rejecting the treaty. The Senate had passed this reservation with a two-thirds majority. With this requisite majority, the treaty apparently stood a good chance of ratification; but this vote was the closest that America came to being a member of the then functioning league.

A New Reservation Is Adopted
by the Senate

The symmetry of fourteen reservations opposing the Fourteen Points was broken when a league supporter, Senator Gerry, Rhode Island, submitted a new reservation which stated

¹⁴⁴Ibid., 5, 4325.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., 5, 4332.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., 5, 4333.

America's position toward Ireland.

In consenting to the ratification of the treaty with Germany the United States adheres to the principle of self-determination and to the resolution of sympathy with the aspirations of the Irish people for a government of their own choice, adopted by the Senate June 6, 1919, and declares that when self-government is attained by Ireland, a consummation it is hoped is at hand, it should promptly be admitted as a member of the League of Nations.¹⁴⁷

Thomas proposed to extend the statement to include Korea but the Senate refused 34 to 46.¹⁴⁸ The fifteenth reservation was adopted 45 to 38.¹⁴⁹

Gerry's reasons for submitting this reservation are not positively known. One reason might have been political. Many other nations had been discussed in the Senate, including Egypt, Armenia and Korea. The selection of Ireland was probably an attempt to appeal to the Irish-American electorate in particular and to the anti-British element in general. Another reason might have been to prohibit the acceptance of the treaty with reservations. The preamble read "three out of four" nations must approve; Japan would surely be displeased by the Shantung condition while England would probably not accept both of the reservations--the one dealing with equal votes and Gerry's concerning Irish independence--if either. Whatever the reason for the initiation and passage of the reservation, it represented an anomaly. Some of the very Senators who decried any interference in America's

¹⁴⁷Ibid., 5, 4499.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., 5, 4512.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., 5, 4532.

internal affairs now proposed to meddle in the affairs of England; some of the very men who protested England's six to one voting margin now proposed to increase that margin to seven to one.

The Final Vote on the Treaty

On March 19, the resolution of ratification with the accompanying fifteen reservations was again officially before the Senate. The first order of business was to alter the wording of the preamble. The "three out of four" clause was replaced with one which read, in effect, "if no nation disagrees" the resolution will become effective.¹⁵⁰ Senator Brandegee wanted to add a sixty-day stipulation; league supporters violently objected on the basis that the Senate had no right to specify how and when the President could obtain approval. The jealously guarded rights of the Senate endangered by the executive again became the focal point of the debate. The Brandegee stipulation narrowly failed 41 to 42.¹⁵¹ Actually the change in the language was even more favorable to the rejectionists than to any other position. They no longer had to count on Japan and another nation to disapprove; any one nation's refusal would be sufficient to invalidate the resolution.

The struggle was virtually over. Some seventeen

¹⁵⁰Ibid., 5, 4567-4569; no votes listed.

¹⁵¹Ibid., 5, 4574.

months had passed since the armistice had been signed and Wilson had decided to go to Paris. In the remaining minutes representatives of several factions closed the debate. Two league critics--Lenroot, a mild reservationist, and Hoke Smith, a strict reservationist--argued for the resolution. Five league supporters gave their reasons why they planned to vote for the reservations. No word was heard from the irreconcilables.

Even though seventeen Democrats left the league supporters, the Senate refused to adopt the resolution by a vote of 49 to 35, seven votes short of ratification.¹⁵² Fifteen irreconcilables joined twenty league supporters to defeat the proposition.¹⁵³ Twelve Senators did not vote but each one's opinion was announced as his name was called. If all ninety-six Senators had voted, the total would have been 57 to 39, still seven votes short. For the fourth and final time the Senate refused America's membership in the League of Nations.

Conclusion

The third and final phase of the treaty struggle was completed. The league opponents were successful in preventing Wilson's proposed covenant from being accepted. The revisionists successfully attached certain interpretative reservations

¹⁵²Ibid., 5, 4599.

¹⁵³The irreconcilable vote changed. Trammell voted for the resolution but was replaced by Shields, a strict reservationist. Penrose did not vote but would have supported the irreconcilable position this time.

which would "protect" America's interests. The rejectionists achieved their goal but not through the use of arguments; most Senators were not convinced that America should abstain from joining any league.

The prime accomplishment of league critics during this phase of the controversy was to shift the issue from the previous choice between Wilson's league versus no league. Now the issue was twofold: Wilson's league versus a modified league; and a modified league versus no league. Critics were successful in obtaining a modified league in preference to Wilson's version but the coalition between the Wilsonites and the Borahites prevented a majority of the Senate from obtaining their goal of a modified league in preference to no league.

As for the indirect audience, many in the Senate hoped the people would make their will known in the coming presidential election. Wilson shared that belief as he proposed to make the next election a "great and solemn referendum as to the part the United States is to play in completing the settlements of the war."¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁴From a letter to the Democrats read at the Jackson Day celebration; cited in Fleming, p. 404.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

After the final rejections by the Senate, the question of league membership became one of the issues in the campaign between Harding and Cox. How much influence the league question had on the eventual Republican victory is a subject for another study. If the country had not indicated in 1918 that Republicans were coming back into power around the country; if the myriad of domestic issues had not clouded the results; if the voters had been given a more clear-cut choice between the two parties on the league dispute, the influence on the 1920 election of America's decision to stay out of the league might prove a useful final analysis for the controversy. As it was, America did not join the League of Nations and that chapter in her history was closed.

The purpose of this study has been to ascertain the role of persuasion in the outcome of the Treaty of Versailles. Major contentions and supporting arguments were isolated when possible and evaluated for the significance they held in the controversy. The arguments used by speakers, however, were not solely responsible for the final rejections of the peace

treaty. Some of the contributing causes operated independently of the arguments while others enjoyed a close relationship to the arguments. The function of this chapter is to discuss the relationship of these factors which contributed to the rejection of the treaty to the arguments used in the debate.

Factors Contributing to the Treaty Rejection

Many writers have cited various causative factors for the failure of the Senate to ratify the Treaty of Versailles. This study concludes that five contributing factors were interwoven with the persuasive arguments of the anti-league speakers. These elements sometimes caused arguments, sometimes resulted from arguments, sometimes were unaffected by the arguments. The five factors are: Henry Cabot Lodge, Woodrow Wilson, the irreconcilables, the two-thirds majority rule and the influence of factional rivalries.

The Influence of Henry Cabot Lodge

As Senate Majority Leader, Lodge was in an enviable position to solidify partisan opposition to the covenant. Lodge held his party together on the "Round-Robin" resolution in March of 1919 and again during the final voting. Only a total of four Republican votes were cast against the entire slate of the original fourteen reservations; three by Senator McCumber and one by Senator Sherman. Of course Lodge failed to retain the support of the Republican irreconcilables but

Lodge knew of their revolt and was able to plan accordingly. Lodge's influence as Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee has already been demonstrated, and, as a skillful parliamentarian, he was able to carry out his demands in a way that a less adept performer would have found difficult.

Waldo Braden concluded: "The league had no powerful advocate on the floor of the Senate capable of matching the eloquence or parliamentary tactics of the opposition."¹ A New York Sun correspondent described the November proceedings as the most "amazing parliamentary tangle that anyone could remember."²

Lodge had long upheld the right of the Senate to make treaties; on this occasion he had an added incentive, his dislike for Wilson. He explained to James Watson what Wilson's response to the reservations would have to be:

You do not take into consideration the hatred that Woodrow Wilson has for me personally. Never under any set of circumstances in this world would he be induced to accept a treaty with Lodge reservations appended to it.³

Watson had an interview with Wilson a week later. Wilson's reaction to Lodge reservations was: "Never! I'll never consent to adopt a policy with which that impossible name is so prominently identified."⁴ Lodge referred to Wilson as the man produced by the "Presidential lottery" of 1912. The

¹"The Senate Debate of the League of Nations, 1918-1920," Southern Speech Journal, XXV (Summer, 1960), 281.

²Cited in Cranston, p. 226.

³Cited in Cranston, p. 142. ⁴Ibid., p. 150.

antagonism grew during the incident in the 1916 campaign and became so pronounced that the two men would not attend the same public function. Lodge disliked Wilson for many reasons; one of the most pressing was his indignation over Wilson's reputation as a scholar. Lodge wrote that Wilson was "not a scholar in the true sense at all, although the newspapers were fond of applying that term to him, as they are apt to apply it to anyone who has held a position of educational importance."⁵ Lodge criticized Wilson for being a poorly-read man because he did not use literary quotations in his speeches, addresses or writings. Lodge believed

a true lover of literature and letters instinctively and almost inevitably thinks of the words of the poet or great prose writer which expresses better than he can in writing or speaking the idea he is trying to enforce.⁶

Even Wilson's presidency of Princeton was suspect to Lodge: "I was aware that he had serious difficulties as president of Princeton that led to his resignation, which, I have reason to believe, was a forced resignation."⁷

Finally, Lodge was influential in this controversy because he was instrumental in setting up a series of alternatives for the Senate which must meet with their approval or no treaty would be signed. He would not permit any other choices; he was not interested in compromise measures. After the November rejection an Associate Press release printed the

⁵Lodge, p. 220.

⁶Ibid., p. 221.

⁷Ibid.

results of an interview with Lodge in which he said: "These reservations as presented will stand. There is no room for further compromise between Americanism and the super-government presented by this league."⁸ A treaty with Lodge's name on it or a treaty killed by Wilson; either solution would satisfy the Senator from Massachusetts.⁹

The Influence of Woodrow Wilson

Wilson's influence in the controversy has been described by many as "the" cause of treaty rejection. Arthur S. Link's comment is typical: "Because of his consuming hatred of Lodge he, too, refused to compromise; he ignored the advice of his best counselors and threw away the only possible chance for ratification."¹⁰ Braden wrote: "The idealist and professor forgot the necessity of being a politician. . . . [His] all-or-nothing technique was probably a political mistake."¹¹

Actually, Wilson was willing to make some compromises but the Senate was not aware of his action. In late August, 1919, he wrote Senator Hitchcock stating the conditions he would accept. Wilson's words were:

Inasmuch as Article ONE of the Covenant of the

⁸Cong. Rec., LIX, 1, 535.

⁹For more details on Lodge's role in the defeat of the league, see Fleming, pp. 475-487; Darling, pp. 196-211; and Holt, pp. 290-306.

¹⁰p. 233.

¹¹"The Senate Debate of the League of Nations, 1918-1920," p. 281.

League of Nations provides no tribunal to pass judgment upon the right of a member state to withdraw from the League, the Government of the U.S. understands the provision of Article ONE with regard to withdrawal as putting no limitation upon the right of a member State to withdraw except such as may lie in the conscience of the Power proposing to withdraw. . . .

It understands that the advice of the Council of the League with regard to the employment of armed forces contemplated in Article TEN of the covenant of the League is to be regarded only as advice and leaves each member State free to exercise its own judgment as to whether it is wise or practicable to act upon that advice or not.

It understands that under Article FIFTEEN . . . no question can be raised either in the Assembly or in the Council which will give that body the right to report or to make any recommendations upon the policy of any member state with regard to such matters as immigration, naturalization, or tariffs.

It understands, also, that the reference to the Monroe Doctrine in Article TWENTY-ONE . . . means that nothing contained in the Covenant shall be interpreted as in any way impairing or interfering with the application of the Monroe Doctrine in the American hemisphere.¹²

Fleming and Darling agree that Wilson wanted Hitchcock to submit these conditions under the Minority Leader's name. Wilson reasoned if he openly gave in on certain demands, the Lodge forces would only ask for more, as they had done after the amendments Wilson had secured in April.

When the Senate refused to accept the Hitchcock-Wilson proposals, Wilson became as unyielding as Lodge. If Wilson truly wanted America in the league, his letter to the Democrats just before the November voting was probably

¹²Cited in Fleming, p. 493; the original is among Wilson's papers.

unadvisable.¹³ First, the Democrats knew how Wilson felt; such evidence of pressure from the White House as the letter represented could only antagonize many Senators who already feared that the executive had too much power. Secondly, Wilson's continued reference to the covenant with the attached reservations as the "Lodge resolution" would be an affront to many in the Senate. The authorship of the various reservations was known and the debate over those conditions indicated that many other Senators also approved. Wilson's label gave the impression of spite and personal animosity instead of a desire to get some proposal passed which would be of benefit to the whole country. Third, Wilson's phrase "genuine resolution of ratification" was potentially offensive to many Senators. The President's inference that the motion was a false or insincere reflection of Senatorial attitude was simply not true. The inference presented as much of a challenge to Senators as he had hurled to them in his Boston address in February and again in his New York speech in March. Those challenges had riled many in the Senate; this challenge would likely produce a similar effect. Thus, from both a political and a persuasive standpoint, the letter was ill-advised and poorly phrased. The same criticism can be leveled against Wilson's letter to the Democrats at the annual 1920 Jackson Day dinner in which he said the people should decide if he had been wrong in opposing Lodge.

¹³Supra, p. 179.

In addition to the letter, Wilson had two Cabinet officers on the floor of the Senate "using every possible effort to keep enough Democrats in line to assure defeat of the Treaty."¹⁴ Oscar S. Straus, an official in the League to Enforce Peace, showed Senator McNary a list of seventeen Democratic Senators who had signed a pledge to vote for the Lodge reservations during the November balloting. According to Straus, Wilson's letter made it impossible for them to keep that pledge.¹⁵ No names were given by McNary but seventeen Democratic Senators did change their votes and approve the resolution in March, 1920. If seven more men had made that switch, the Treaty of Versailles would have been ratified.

The Influence of the Irreconcilables

The narrow margin by which most of the reservations were passed indicated the importance of the bloc voting of the irreconcilables. They were not going to vote for the treaty under any circumstances so their votes do not reflect the value of the disputed reservations. Only five reservations would have been adopted without their votes if every other Senator had voted as he did.

In addition to the bloc voting influence, the rejectionists also prohibited attempts at compromise. After the November defeat of the resolution with the reservations, Senator Pomerene made a compromise attempt.

¹⁴Lodge, p. 214.

¹⁵Cited in Fleming, p. 396n.

I move that the treaty, the resolution of ratification, and the reservations heretofore presented to the Senate be referred to a committee of conciliation composed of six Senators to be appointed by the President of the Senate . . . and that said committee be instructed to prepare and report to the Senate such a resolution of ratification and reservations as in their judgment will meet the approval of not less than two-thirds of the Senate.¹⁶

The motion was defeated 48 to 42. Fourteen irreconcilables voted with the majority. Minutes later Hitchcock made another compromise attempt and tried to get the resolution of ratification sent back to the Committee of the Whole. The results were similar; the motion was defeated 41 to 50, with the fourteen irreconcilables contributing to the defeat.

Another effort to compromise, the Bi-Partisan conference, was also influenced by the irreconcilable element. They had no official representation in the conference and were upset by various reports of the changes that were being made. McCormick, Brandegee and Johnson were reportedly "greatly disturbed." Frelinghuysen stated he would not be bound by the conference's decision. Sutherland confessed he was irreconcilable at heart, that he had reluctantly voted for the Lodge reservations and would accept nothing less. Sherman threatened to bolt the party if any changes were made.¹⁷ Borah called Lodge out of the conference to a meeting with the rejectionists. He questioned Lodge about why he was giving in to the

¹⁶Cong. Rec., LVIII, 9, 8800.

¹⁷Darling, p. 205; New York Times, January 25, 1919, pp. 7-8.

Democrats. Lodge became angry and threatened to resign if they did not like the way he was handling the affair. Borah retorted: "I won't give you a chance to resign. I'm going to the Senate Chamber Monday morning and say that the Republicans must have a new leader and I will tell them why one is needed."¹⁸ The next day the Bi-Partisan conference adjourned.

A New York Tribune reporter concluded that the irreconcilables objected to compromise measures because any changes in the Lodge version would make the conditions become known as the "Hitchcock Reservations."¹⁹ Actually, most of the differences between the Committee slate and the substitute measures favorable to the Democrats occurred in the phrasing, not the content. For example, at one point the only distinction between the Committee version of the article 10 reservation and one of the Hitchcock substitutes was one word. The original wording used the phrase "unless in any particular case. . . ." Hitchcock's version read "until in any particular case. . . ." The other ninety-eight words were exactly the same.²⁰

In short the irreconcilables were influential in rejecting the league proposal by their actions as much as by their argumentation. Arthur S. Link evaluated their influence: "Although sincere conviction . . . cause them to raise

¹⁸Claudius O. Johnson, Borah of Idaho (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1936), pp. 243-248.

¹⁹Cited by Fleming, pp. 409-410.

²⁰Cong. Rec., LVIII, 9, 8547.

the standards of battle, they fought bitterly and unscrupulously. Not truth but misstatements, perversions of fact, and false alarms were their chief weapons."²¹ Allan Nevins described their actions: "If the strict reservationists had been willing to fight, they might have won but whenever a fight was required they bent weakly to the bitter-enders."²²

The Influence of the Two-thirds Rule

Another factor which contributed to the defeat of the treaty was the Constitutional stipulation that treaties be ratified by two-thirds approval of the Senate. Such a stipulation influenced the rejection of the league in four ways. First, Senators elected for six-year terms frequently have conservative tendencies which lead them to vote against doubtful propositions. Howland applies such a tendency to the controversy concerning the peace treaty.

Wilson's task required him to secure the two-thirds votes in the Senate necessary to the ratification of the treaty. Its fate . . . [depended] partly on the fact that the Senate was unfamiliar with the European conditions and impatient of the study necessary to envisage the setting of the new institution and the lines of its probable development, under the principle of unanimity. Some Senators devoted themselves mainly to the lawyer's task of considering . . . the extent of the damage to the national interest that could be wrought in extreme cases under the contract.²³

Second, a president seldom has two-thirds of the Senate in his

²¹p. 228.

²²"Borah and World Politics," Current History, XXXVI (April, 1932), 24.

²³Howland, p. 271.

own party. Wilson had considerably less; he was forced to seek support from the Republicans just as Lodge was forced to seek support from the Democrats for the amended version. Neither man could even obtain a simple majority for his proposal in November although Lodge obtained fifty-nine per cent in March.

Third, the Senate* basically favors the smaller states and consequently one-third of the Senators can represent a decided minority of the population. Senators from sixteen states could reject a proposal which Senators representing four-fifths of the population might approve. For example, the irreconcilables represented sixteen states with 35,209,846 population, according to the 1920 census. Only Illinois had two irreconcilable Senators. The other Senators from the remaining states supported some kind of league; four were league supporters and eleven were reservationists. If the population of these fifteen states were divided, half for the irreconcilable Senator and half for the other Senator, the irreconcilable minority in the Senate would represent only 20,847,563 people, less than one-fifth of the total population in 1920. Various sources which discuss the indirect audience agree that twenty per cent is about the maximum which asserted that America should not join the league.

Fourth, the two-thirds stipulation required the coalition of several groups, a condition difficult to achieve. Even a majority vote is gained only through alignment of

groups. Roland Young explains how the term "a majority" can be misleading.

Ready made majorities do not necessarily exist and may have to be developed by various, frequently temporary, alignments of groups, blocs and partisans. A number of majorities will be formed in the total process . . . for the composition of majorities fluctuates constantly as the locus of debate shifts from place to place and the attention of Congress from topic to topic.²⁴

This analysis helps to explain the Senate in 1919-1920. More than a two-thirds majority favored a somewhat similar league, but the Senate was divided into four distinct groups. These groups would have to combine to form various temporary alignments. A temporary alignment was present in March when a two-thirds majority was achieved on eight of the reservations, including the highly controversial article 10 and the inequality of votes. During the November rejection of the treaty with the reservations, Democrats opposed Republicans in one group alignment while in November, and in the March vote, league supporters joined irreconcilables in still another alignment. A straight party alignment was sufficient to reject the treaty in November but not in March when the twenty league supporters and fifteen irreconcilables prohibited the two-thirds majority.

Young's analysis of the voting record of Congress on many issues indicates "an everchanging mosaic of groups and individuals, with similar patterns forming and reforming on the various categories of issues."²⁵ Both Wilson and Lodge

²⁴Young, p. 157.

²⁵Ibid., p. 160.

were aware of the necessity to keep their respective groups intact. Wilson failed in March to prevent almost half of the Democrats from changing positions to vote for the treaty with reservations. This change allowed the Republicans to claim that the rejection was not party-inspired; a claim that surely assisted them in the 1920 campaign.

In the league controversy, the two-thirds requirement by the Constitution was an influential factor in defeating a proposition which a majority of the Senate and a majority of the electorate approved. This reason could not operate alone but coupled with the personal influences of Lodge and Wilson, and the bloc voting of the irreconcilables, the two-thirds ruling operated as a nullifying force on the arguments which were used to find some common ground for agreement. Actually the two-thirds rule is not even consistent with other Constitutional powers given to the Senate. A simple majority is all that is required to start a war but a two-thirds majority must approve action to officially stop that war.²⁶

The Influence of Factional Rivalries

Unlike the preceding factors which influenced the defeat of the covenant, a fifth factor was more closely related to the arguments. It consisted of three factional struggles:

²⁶ Daniel S. Cheever and H. Field Haviland, Jr., American Foreign Policy and the Separation of Powers (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1952), pp. 178-181, has more data on the inefficiency of the two-thirds rule.

Republicans versus Democrats; nationalism versus internationalism; and legislative versus executive predominance.

Republicans Versus Democrats

The sixty-sixth Senate was composed of forty-nine Republicans and forty-seven Democrats. Although the crucial votes in the contest did not represent an absolute party alignment, the following table clearly demonstrates the partisan voting.²⁷

Reservation		November 1919		March 1920	
		yea	nay	yea	nay
1. Withdrawal	Democrats	5	35	10	20
	Republicans	45	0	35	0
2. Article 10	Democrats	4	33	14	26
	Republicans	42	0	42	0
3. Mandates	Democrats	9	31	30	4
	Republicans	41	0	38	0
4. Domestic Issues	Democrats	10	36	14	25
	Republicans	49	0	42	0
5. Monroe Doctrine	Democrats	9	34	17	22
	Republicans	46	0	41	0
6. Shantung	Democrats	5	40	10	21
	Republicans	48	1	38	0
7. League Representatives	Democrats	5	40	17	14
	Republicans	48	0	38	0
8. Trade with Germany	Democrats	5	40	6	22
	Republicans	49	0	35	0
9. U.S. Funds to League	Democrats	7	39	8	25
	Republicans	49	0	38	0

²⁷A similar table appears in Holt, p. 260.

Reservation		November 1919		March 1920	
		yea	nay	yea	nay
10. Regulation of U.S. Forces	Democrats	7	39	9	26
	Republicans	49	0	40	0
11. Nationals of League States	Democrats	5	41	5	28
	Republicans	48	0	39	0
12. American Citi- zens' Rights	Democrats	4	41	8	26
	Republicans	48	0	37	1
13. International Labor	Democrats	8	34	6	27
	Republicans	46	1	38	0
14. Equal votes	Democrats	8	37	17	20
	Republicans	47	1	40	0
15. Irish Inde- pendence	Democrats			21	16
	Republicans			17	20
Ratification with Reservations	Democrats	4	42	21	23
	Republicans	35	13	28	12
Ratification with- out Reservations	Democrats	37	7		
	Republicans	1	46		

The average number of "nay" votes on the reservations in the November voting, thirty-seven, directly corresponds to the number of the Democratic Senators who supported the league. Even on the third reservation, which was not debated, thirty-one Democrats voted against the proposal.

These votes reflect the influence of party-politics; they do not adequately reflect the attitudes of many Senators on the league issues.

Nationalism Versus Internationalism

This conflict is not so much a factional struggle within the Senate as it is a struggle between the philosophies

which would chart America's future. The great nationalists in the Senate were also the irreconcilables; yet even some of the leading international thinkers, such as Elihu Root, momentarily balked at the prospect of American entanglement in an unmodified league of nations. The point which is relevant to this study is that those Senators who argued for the preservation of national characteristics appeared unduly concerned over the alleged loss of sovereignty. While perhaps no country should be condemned for seeking to protect its sovereignty, the United States Senate appeared to be overly fearful of the potential threat to sovereign rights, or else the anti-league Senators inaccurately pictured the bleak future in the dominated league. As of January 17, 1920, the following countries had ratified the treaty without reservations.

Belgium	Guatemala	Panama	Norway
Bolivia	Haiti	Peru	Paraguay
Brazil	Honduras	Argentina	Persia
British Empire	Italy	Chile	Spain
Cuba	Japan	Columbia	Sweden
Ecuador	Liberia	Denmark	Switzerland ²⁸
France	Nicaragua	Netherlands	

If the league were to be that destructive of national rights, these twenty-seven nations representing different forms of government, culture and tradition did not consider this potential threat as sufficient grounds to refuse to become league members.

²⁸Literary Digest, LXIV (February 28, 1920), 13-15. Fleming, pp. 384-385, also questions why other nations did not share the Senate's fears.

Some users of this argument were undoubtedly sincere while others might have joined in its development because of its persuasive potential appeal for the American people. As Senator Pittman stated: "The nationalistic spirit was too strong in this country to allow any great hope for ratification of the league."²⁹

Legislative Versus Executive

That many in the Senate were alienated by Wilson is evident; even had no personal alienation existed, however, the legislative-executive conflict would undoubtedly still have been an influential factor in the league controversy. One study indicated why the conflict is particularly unfortunate in matters of foreign policy.

The most deplorable aspect of this situation is that at a time when the very survival of the free world depends upon positive and consistent United States leadership, constant interbranch conflict has seriously crippled that leadership. Criticism of foreign policy must not be stifled, but narrowly partisan executive-legislative sniping, which is encouraged by our system of government, should be avoided.³⁰

The Versailles Treaty controversy publicized this conflict between the Senate and the executive so dramatically that the entire nation became concerned. An outgrowth of that concern in later years was the increasing use of executive agreements in place of treaties, the promotion of bipartisanship, and the

²⁹Micken, "Western Senators in the League of Nations Debate," p. 244.

³⁰Cheever and Haviland, p. 3.

general improvement of executive-legislative relations as demonstrated in the overwhelming Senatorial approval of the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty.³¹

During the actual league debate, reference after reference was made to Wilson as if he and not the league were on trial. Holt stated:

It was on the appeals to the Senate's jealousy of its powers that the irreconcilables chiefly depended in their early efforts to rally the Republican majority to an attack on Wilson's program. Scarcely a speech was made by the opposition in which some variation of this idea was not included.³²

The arguments used to obtain adoption of the reservations appealed to the Senate's concern about their powers. Also, six reservations--numbers one, three, seven, eight, nine and thirteen--specifically stated that "Congress shall have the power. . . ."

In short, many Senators were influenced by their desire to protect Senatorial rights. Lodge had warned Wilson in December, 1918, that it was within the rights of the Senate to amend the treaty in whole or in part. He carried out his threat; assistance from some of the Senators was probably guided by a similar desire to protect the treaty-making rights of the Senate.

These three factional struggles were quite active in

³¹The entire work by Cheever and Haviland is an excellent historical background and commentary on the executive-legislative struggle from Washington to Truman.

³²Holt, p. 303.

influencing not only the arguments used but also the actual votes rejecting the peace treaty.

The Influence of Arguments on
the Immediate Audience

In the early phase of the controversy, enough Senators were willing to endorse the proposed league of nations to cause Lodge and Borah not to gamble on an immediate vote on the measure. When the final votes were taken in November and again in March, some attitudes of the Senators had been altered. Certain causative factors have been discussed earlier in this chapter, however, the argumentation of league critics was in part responsible for that alteration.

To support their positions most league critics had argued against the proposed covenant for the following reasons.

1. The covenant destroys America's sovereignty.
2. The covenant nullifies the Monroe doctrine.
3. The covenant interferes with administration of domestic policies.
4. The covenant restricts America's withdrawal of membership.
5. The covenant does not adequately provide for peace.
6. The covenant permits America's domination by foreign powers.
7. The covenant violates Washington's warning against entangling alliance.
8. The covenant is unconstitutional.

Each of the three major contentions will be discussed to ascertain the effects of these arguments on the achievement of the persuasive goals.

The Influence of Arguments Designed
to Postpone the Vote

The postponement critics, led by Senator Knox, were unable to make their proposal sufficiently persuasive to the bulk of the Senate. These critics developed their contention independently of the other league opponents by arguing that the peace terms should be settled first and that the people should, by their votes, validate America's league membership. Even though Knox was still attempting in June to gain support for his resolution to postpone the league discussion, most of the Senate held firm in their convictions that the matter ought to be settled, one way or another, at that time. The eight arguments on the above list would still be pertinent to league membership when the question was discussed. To postpone the problem would not solve it.

The Influence of Arguments Designed
to Reject the Covenant

The irreconcilables were the most consistent Senate group as far as purpose was concerned. From the earliest days in the controversy, they were steadfast in their claims that no league could prove beneficial to American interests. That some influence was exerted by rejectionist arguments in increasing the number of irreconcilables is apparent. In his study on Borah, Waldo Braden lists the original irreconcilables as four: Borah, Poindexter, Sherman and Frelinghuysen.³³

³³Braden, pp. 301-302.

Medill McCormick also numbered the irreconcilables in March of 1919: "Four Senators oppose a League of Nations, two Republicans and two Democrats."³⁴ Although Frelinghuysen voted as a strict reservationist, the number of irreconcilables had increased to seventeen by November, 1919, and to eighteen in March, 1920. The arguments in the Senate may not have effected this increase but the possibility cannot be summarily dismissed. While all eight of the arguments could have persuaded someone to join the ranks of the bitter-enders, the threat to America in four of the arguments--numbers five through eight on the preceding page--could not be removed by reservations.

The Influence of Arguments Designed to Alter the Covenant

When the first draft of the covenant was published, many in the Senate demanded that certain changes be made. Even after Wilson's four amendments were secured in April, the necessity to alter the covenant was still pronounced. The informal poll of May, 1919, discussed earlier, listed thirty-four Senators who were opposed to any further amendments. At that point in the controversy, amendments were assumed to be any change in the peace document as prepared by the Peace Commission. Thirteen of these men voted in March of 1920 for the resolution of ratification with the reservations: Ashurst,

³⁴Washington Post, March 25, 1919, p. 1; no names are listed.

Beckham, Fletcher, Henderson, Kendrick, Nugent, Pittman, Pomerene, Ransdell, John Smith, Trammell, David Walsh and Thomas Walsh. These men also actively supported one or more of the individual reservations as they were reconsidered in March. In that same poll, seven of the Senators were undecided; six of them voted for the March resolution: King, Myers, Owen, Phelan, Hoke Smith and Wolcott. Of these, Myers indicated the influence of the revisionists; he was not even sure that all the requisite changes had been made.³⁵ Hoke Smith had left the "undecided" camp the previous November to favor the fourteen reservations.

That these men voted for the reserved treaty does not mean that the arguments had changed their minds but it does indicate that the league critics who argued for revision had been influential in forcing these men to vote for the revised treaty or none at all. For example, Pomerene stated: "My soul rebels at the thought that I shall do nothing because I can not do all that I feel I ought to do."³⁶ Thomas Walsh said: ". . . but as we are compelled to take what is offered or to take nothing, I am prepared to accept what can be had."³⁷ Senator Ransdell, Louisiana, revealed his reason for voting for the resolution. Although satisfied with the original version, Ransdell felt America would be remiss in her

³⁵Cong. Rec., LIX, 5, 4588.

³⁶Ibid., 5, 4579.

³⁷Ibid., 5, 4582.

obligations to mankind if she did not join the league.³⁸ In securing the reservations, the revisionists had effectively employed their strategy of amendment.

Actually, almost the entire body of Democratic league supporters ultimately favored certain changes in the proposed covenant. Even if the appeals of the anti-league critics had not been instrumental in persuading these men to change the views they held in early May, the appeals had caused enough pressure to make necessary certain pro-league concessions. Regarding the highly controversial article 10, Hitchcock told the Senate that the Democrats would accept any reasonable interpretation of the article.³⁹ Even Wilson was amenable to a change in the "heart of the covenant," a change which would remove America's unalterable obligation by stating that the advice of the Council was to be regarded only as advice, leaving each member nation free to accept it or reject it as they saw fit. All other things being equal, almost four-fifths of the Senate would have undoubtedly accepted this concession as it did remove the label of "war-breeder" from the covenant. Perhaps the Senate refused to accept Wilson's concession because it would not have removed from the covenant the label of "Democratic executive" and, for the Senate, this label was equally as important.

All but one of the arguments catalogued by this study

³⁸Ibid., 5, 4585.

³⁹Cong. Rec., LVIII, 9, 8779.

could have led members of the Senate to conclude that the proposed covenant must be changed. While some of the disputed areas could have been altered by amendments to the document, the reservation method was obviously the preferable means to achieve that alteration.

Of the five factors previously discussed, only the factional struggles generated the eight major arguments. That the remaining causative factors were not argued as such can perhaps be explained by their relative lack of appeal to the indirect audience. The average American citizen could possibly be swayed by the alleged threats to America by the proposed international organization; his opinion was not as likely influenced by appeals based on personalities or political rivalry.

In short, the Senate obviously did not want to accept the proposed document and, as obviously, did not want to reject the league idea altogether. Some common ground was necessary on which the requisite two-thirds of the Senate could agree. The argumentation of the revisionists would normally have been sufficient to produce this common ground but this segment of the Senate's history was not normal. The factors of Lodge, Wilson, the irreconcilables, the two-thirds rule, and the factional struggles prevailed over the usual process of "advise and consent."

The Influence of Senate Arguments
on the Indirect Audience

Most of the arguments in the Senate were directed primarily toward the indirect audience. Their purpose and design appeared to explain the vote to the American people rather than influence the vote of the Senators. Two aspects of the speakers' development of these arguments were the interweaving of arguments by the various types of league critics and the appeal to the basic motives held by the people.

The Interweaving of Arguments
by League Critics

Most league critics were able to capitalize on their mutual use of supporting arguments to develop the various major contentions. For example, the use of the Monroe doctrine issue as a reason for rejecting the covenant also became a reason why the covenant should be amended. The distinction between these purposes was probably more evident to the Senate than to the indirect audience. Since the irreconcilables represented the most active faction of league critics, the American people were more often exposed to their arguments than to those of either group of reservationists. Hence, when the people learned that the Senate planned to adopt a reservation protecting the Monroe doctrine for America, they had been prepared for this action by the speaking of the bitter-enders. The same principle applies to the arguments concerning article 10, the exclusion of domestic issues, the inequality of votes, and the withdrawal of league membership.

In short, league critics who wanted to amend the covenant to protect America did not have to carry their case to the people; the irreconcilables demonstrated the flaws in the proposed league. The postponement critics were unable to benefit from this overlapping of arguments. "Peace now and the league later" could not effectively be blended with the arguments used for rejection or revision.

The task of the league supporters was to justify the existence of the covenant, to defend the practicality of making the covenant part of the peace treaty, and to uphold the terms drafted by the Peace Commission. They had to combat purposes as well as arguments. A majority of them followed Wilson's lead and tried to make the "America is the hope of the world" theme serve all three defenses. Whereas this theme might justify discussing a peace organization at that time and might make the necessity of some league of nations appear valid, the theme would not counteract the pleas for modifying the proposed document. The change in a public endorsement of Wilson's league to a willingness to accept a revised league supports this conclusion.

The Appeal to Basic Motives Held
by the Audience

Anti-league speakers were able to appeal to basic motives of the American people which were not available to league supporters. Selig Adler explains why this capability was present.

While the isolationists had the advantage of a well-defined program that was easy to grasp, Wilson had made no provisions for the inevitable sobering aftermath of war. As long as the nation was poised to send troops anywhere, the League idea sounded attractive. But with demobilization and the sign of relief that it was "over, over there," Americans began to look at it in an entirely different light. The implications of Article X were too much for a provincial people to accept upon second thought. Hidebound isolationists were not the only ones shocked at the specter of a perpetual guarantee of the boundaries and independence of scores of states. Internationalists like Elihu Root, Herbert Hoover, and . . . Charles Evans Hughes balked at the idea.⁴⁰

Lodge and Borah had said "get the word to the people;" the strategy of delay had obviously been effective.

To further demonstrate the blend of motive appeals, the development of arguments by Wilson is contrasted with typical developments of league critics. Wilson was not the only pro-league speaker whose efforts had a potential influence on the indirect audience but his speeches served as models for other pro-leaguers, notably Hitchcock, Thomas Walsh and Williams. As Braden noted, "the Democratic Senators relied upon him to call the moves and to frame the arguments."⁴¹ Clair Henderlider evaluated the speaking techniques employed in thirty-three major speeches delivered by Wilson in his tour of the country. Henderlider cites six major motive appeals which predominated in the speeches.

⁴⁰Adler, p. 95.

⁴¹"The Senate Debate of the League of Nations, 1918-1920," p. 278; Dulles, p. 123, and Howland, p. 270, have some interesting comments on Wilson's failure to identify his proposal with vital motive appeals.

1. Fear of the consequences of rejection of the league and return to the old system of international anarchy and war.
2. Indignation at the injustices of the former system.
3. Pity of the plight of the denizens of small nations.
4. Duty to the world, to our fighting men, to justice, to liberty.
5. Pride in the United States and its tradition.
6. Profit from the removal of international chaos and from participation in international economic intercourse.⁴²

Contrast these appeals with some of the major motive appeals used by League critics.

1. America will lose her sovereignty as a league member.
2. America will no longer be able to control her domestic problems.
3. American men will be called out to fight in the wars of the world.
4. America will be dominated by the foreign powers of the world.
5. America rejects the wisdom of action initiated by our founding fathers.
6. America will become a partner to the subjugation of people yearning to be free.

Faced with these alternatives, the American people probably found the appeals of league critics more attractive. Wilson had a propensity to speak "at" his audience rather than "with" them. He explained the "what's and the how's" while neglecting the "why's." The American people have a tendency to say "what's in it for me?" Wilson was generally unable to answer that question.

Some specific citations from randomly selected speeches will exemplify the appeals of league supporters and league critics. On his western tour Wilson often spoke of

⁴²"Woodrow Wilson's Speeches on the League of Nations, September 4-25," Speech Monographs, XIII (#1, 1946), 30.

America's duty to become a member of the league.

If by any mysterious influence or error America would not take the leading part in this new enterprise of concerted power, the world would experience one of those reversals of sentiment, one of those penetrating chills of reaction, which would lead to a universal cynicism, for if America goes back upon mankind, mankind has no other place to turn.⁴³

Compare with a section of Borah's "League of Nations" address in which he portrayed what would happen to America as a league member.

When you shall have committed this Republic to a scheme of world control based upon force, upon the combined military force of the four great nations of the world, you will have soon destroyed the atmosphere of freedom, of confidence in the self-governing capacity of the masses, in which alone a democracy may thrive.⁴⁴

On another occasion Wilson explained to his audience the reason why he supported the covenant as it was drafted in Paris.

I want to say that this is an unparalleled achievement of thoughtful civilization. To my dying day I shall esteem it the crowning privilege of my life to have been permitted to put my name to a document like that; and in my judgment, my fellow citizens, when a passion is cooled and men take a sober, second thought, they are all going to feel that the supreme thing that America did was to help bring this about and then put her shoulder to the great chariot of justice and of peace which was going to lead men along in that slow and toilsome march, toilsome and full of the kind of agony that brings bloody sweat, but nevertheless going up a slow incline to those distant heights upon which will shine at last the serene light of

⁴³Cong. Rec., "Addresses Delivered by President Wilson on His Western Tour," 66th Cong., 1st Sess., pp. 86-87.

⁴⁴Cong. Rec., LVIII, 9, 8783.

justice, suffusing a whole world in blissful peace.⁴⁵

Notice the phrasing which Lodge used in defending the right of the Senate to alter the document.

Our first ideal is our country, and we see her in the future, as in the past, giving service to all her people and to the world. Our ideal of the future is that she should continue to render that service of her own free will. She has great problems of her own to solve, very grim and perilous problems, and a right solution, if we can attain it, would largely benefit mankind. We would have our country strong to resist a peril from the West, as she has flung back the German menace from the East. We would not have our politics distracted and embittered by the dissensions of the other lands. We would not have our country's vigor exhausted, or her moral force abated, by everlasting meddling and muddling in every quarrel, great and small, which afflicts the world. Our ideal is to make her ever stronger and better and finer, because in that way alone, as we believe, can she be of the greatest service to the world's peace and to the welfare of mankind.⁴⁶

The league critics appeared to counter the basic Wilsonian theme with "a safe America is the hope of the world."

Of course, not all the league supporters imitated Wilson's development any more than did all league critics follow the Lodge or Borah models. The point is this: the league supporters appeared to be justifying why America should consider the rest of the world in forming a league; the league critics appeared more concerned with America's future as a member of that organization. Wilson offered the people a hope for the future; league critics offered them the stability of

⁴⁵"Addresses Delivered by President Wilson on His Western Tour," pp. 101-102.

⁴⁶Cong. Rec., LVIII, 4, 3784.

the past.

In general the revisionists were again more successful in adapting their arguments. League supporters were unable to retain the support of the people; league rejectionists were unable to obtain their support. The majority of the electorate apparently concurred with a majority of the Senators: if America were to become a member of the league, certain conditions must be fulfilled.

Summary Evaluation

The Senate debate concerning the league of nations lasted some seventeen months, comprising the bulk of as many volumes of the Congressional Record. The purpose of this study was to see what persuasive effect the league critics had in the final outcome of the Treaty of Versailles. To achieve that purpose, the debate was analyzed during three major phases of the controversy. In the process, the arguments and ideas of some sixty-one Senators were evaluated to ascertain the relationship of the arguments and major contentions to the outcome.

The conclusions of this study indicate that a myriad of contributing factors affected the votes of the Senate with the league critics' arguments being often more reflective of these factors than causative. On the other hand, the persuasion of the speakers in the controversy did have a marked effect on the indirect audience, usually not influenced by the

personality conflict, the legislative-executive supremacy struggle or the partisanship. Lodge indicated early in the controversy that a "direct vote would be hopeless." He was referring to the Senate but the conclusion also applies to the people. In early 1919, the people approved of the proposed League of Nations. Had the Senate gone against that approval, even if the sufficient votes could have been mustered, the people would undoubtedly have voiced their disapproval. Later, in the weeks following the November rejection, the people clamored for some kind of compromise measure, some kind of a league of nations. Following the March rejection, the press, the nation's leaders and the people themselves seemed adjusted to the decision. By the time of the November election, two years had passed since the end of the war; enthusiasm for peace which had been so predominant in early 1919 was no longer evident. The people were apparently satisfied that America should not become a member of the League of Nations which had been described by league critics as a detriment to the future of their country.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

- Adler, Selig. The Isolationist Impulse: Its Twentieth Century Reaction. New York: Abelard-Schuman, Ltd., 1957.
- Bailey, Thomas A. Woodrow Wilson and the Great Betrayal. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1945.
- Baker, Ray Stannard. Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement. 3 vols. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1923.
- Baker, Ray Stannard and Dodd, William E. (eds.) The Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson. 6 vols. New York: Harper & Bros., 1925-1927.
- Bartlett, Ruhl F. The League to Enforce Peace. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944.
- Beales, A.C.F. The History of Peace. London: G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., 1931.
- Bolling, John R., et. al. (eds.) Chronology of Woodrow Wilson. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1927.
- Brandt, Carl G. and Shafter, Edward M., Jr. (eds.) Selected American Speeches on Basic Issues, 1850-1950. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1960.
- Cheever, Daniel S. and Haviland, H. Field, Jr. American Foreign Policy and the Separation of Powers. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952.
- Cranston, Alan. The Killing of the Peace. New York: The Viking Press, 1945.
- Curti, Merle E. The American Peace Crusade, 1815-1860. Durham: Duke University Press, 1929.
- Dahl, Robert A. Congress and Foreign Policy. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1950.

- Dulles, Foster Rhea. America's Rise to World Power: 1898-1954. New York: Harper & Bros., 1955.
- Fleming, Denna F. The United States and the League of Nations. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1932.
- Galloway, George B. Congress at the Crossroads. New York: Crowell, 1946.
- Goldsmith, Robert. A League to Enforce Peace. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1917.
- Harvey, George. Henry Clay Frick the Man. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928.
- Holt, W. Stull. Treaties Defeated by the Senate. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1933.
- House, Edward Mandell (ed.) What Really Happened at Paris. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921.
- Howland, Charles P. Survey of American Foreign Relations, 1928. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1928.
- Johnson, Claudius O. Borah of Idaho. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1936.
- Knudson, John I. A History of the League of Nations. Atlanta: Turner E. Smith & Co., 1938.
- Lansing, Robert. The Peace Negotiations. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1921.
- Latane, John H. (ed.) Development of the League of Nations Idea. 2 vols. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1932.
- Lawrence, William. Henry Cabot Lodge. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1925.
- Link, Arthur S. American Epoch. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1925.
- Lodge, Henry Cabot. The Senate and the League of Nations. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925.
- Mangone, Gerard J. A Short History of International Organization. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1959.
- Marburg, Theodore. League of Nations: A Chapter in the History of the Movement. 2 vols. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1917.

- Matthews, Donald R. United States Senators and Their World. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960.
- Miller, David Hunter. Drafting of the Covenant. 2 vols. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1928.
- Morison, Elting E. (ed.) The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt. 6 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press., 1952.
- Morison, Samuel E. and Commanger, Henry S. The Growth of the American Republic. 2 vols. New York: Oxford University Press, 1950.
- Nevins, Allan. Henry White: Thirty Years of American Diplomacy. New York: Harper & Bros., 1930.
- Potter, Pitman B. (ed.) The Covenant of the League of Nations: Text, Index, Interpretations. New York: Carnegie Endowment, 1927.
- Reid, Loren (ed.) American Public Address. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1961.
- Roosevelt, Theodore. America and the World War. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1925.
- Seymour, Charles (ed.) The Intimate Papers of Colonel House. 4 vols. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, Co., 1926.
- Trueblood, Benjamin F. The Development of the Peace Idea. Boston: Plimpton Press, 1932.
- Tumulty, Joseph P. Woodrow Wilson As I Know Him. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1921.
- Young, Roland. The American Congress. New York: Harper & Bros., 1958.

Articles

- Braden, Waldo W. "The Bases of William E. Borah's Speech Preparation," Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXIII (1947), 28-30.
- _____. "The Senate Debate of the League of Nations, 1918-1920," Southern Speech Journal, XXV (1960), 273-281.
- _____. "William E. Borah's Senate Speeches on the League of Nations, 1918-1920," Speech Monographs, X (1943), 59-60.

Darling, H. Maurice. "Who Kept the United States Out of the League of Nations?" Canadian Historical Review, X (September, 1929), 196-207.

Hart, A.B. "His Place in American History," Current History, XXXII (May, 1930), 297.

Henderlider, Clair. "Woodrow Wilson's Speeches on the League of Nations, September 4-25," Speech Monographs, XIII (1946), 26-30.

Independent, LXVIII (May 12, 1910), 1027-1029.

Literary Digest, LX (March 8, 1919), 11-13.

Literary Digest, LX (March 15, 1919), 13-17.

Literary Digest, LX (April 5, 1919), 13-17.

Literary Digest, LXII (September 27, 1919), 13-15.

Literary Digest, LXII (November 1, 1919), 20-22.

Literary Digest, LXIII (December 6, 1919), 14-15.

Literary Digest, LXIV (February 28, 1920), 13-15.

Mckinney, Madge M. "The Personnel of the Seventy-seventh Congresses," American Political Science Review, XXXVI (February, 1942), 67-73.

Micken, Ralph A. "Western Senators in the League of Nations Debate of 1919-1920," Western Speech, XVI (October, 1952), 239-244.

Nevins, Allan. "Borah and World Politics," Current History, XXXVI (April, 1932), 21-25.

Newspapers

New York Times, 1918-1920.

Washington Post, 1918-1920.

Government Documents

U.S. Congressional Record. Vols. LV-LIX.

Unpublished Material

- Braden, Waldo W. "A Rhetorical Criticism of Invention of William E. Borah's Senate Speeches on the League of Nations, 1918-1920," Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Iowa, 1942.
- Micken, Ralph A. "A Rhetorical Study of the Senate Debate on the League of Nations," Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Northwestern University, 1948.
- Pendleton, Anna J. "Woodrow Wilson's Speeches on the Western Tour in 1919." Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Illinois, 1931.
- Rucker, Ruth. "Woodrow Wilson's Concept of American Principles as Revealed in the Speeches of His Western Tour, September 4-25." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Northwestern University, 1936.