

PRESIDENT PLEADS FOR PACT ON LEAGUE

Senators Hold Conference at White House.

FULL REPORT IS TAKEN

Wilson Tells Committee He Thinks Japan Will Get Out of Shantung.

(Continued From First Page.)

position of the German Pacific island of Yap on a suggestion that it was needed for an American naval station.

Some of the senators' questions the president declined to answer on the ground of international policy. How the American delegates voted on Japan's proposal for a racial equality clause in the league covenant he said he could not disclose "in the interest of international good understanding," and for the same reason he said he could not go into the negotiations over the French frontier or give the committee a copy of the record of Japan's Shantung promise.

Early action on the treaty was urged in a statement by the president's outset of the conference. This was necessary, he held, so that a peace basis might be reached, and the other treaties under negotiation now at Versailles were being delayed until the world learned what would happen if the treaty with Germany. He said he saw no reasonable objection to sending reservations, but thought it unwise to incorporate them in the ratification itself.

"Moral Obligation" Explained.
In reply to a long series of questions by Senator Brandegee, republican, Connecticut, the president was led into an exhaustive discussion of the commingling of moral and legal obligations in treaties.

"A moral obligation," said Mr. Wilson, "is of course, superior to a legal obligation, and if I may say so, has a greater binding force. In every moral obligation there is an element of judgment; in a legal obligation there is no element of judgment."
Senator Brandegee suggested there was no important distinction "because we are obligated in any event."
"I think it is a question of importance," replied the president, "because of the element of judgment that enters into it."
"But I am assuming," returned Mr. Brandegee, "if the council should advise us to do a certain thing and congress refused to do it, and if every other nation's representative assembly can do the same thing, it seems to be like a rope of sand and not an effective tribunal which would result in promoting peace."

Such Refusal Held Unlikely.
"The reason I do not agree with you," Mr. Wilson replied, "is that I do not think such a refusal would likely occur. I believe it would be only upon the gravest grounds—and in case congress is right, I am indifferent to foreign criticism."
Senator Harding, republican, Ohio, suggested there was no necessity of a "written compact for this republic to fulfill its moral obligations to civilization," to which the president rejoined:

"But it steadies the whole world by its promise beforehand that it will stand with other nations of similar judgment to maintain right in the world."

When Senator Brandegee asked the president's opinion on the concrete case of the present trouble in China and Poland, the president said he could not answer because that would involve a judgment on a foreign political question in a way he considered inadvisable.

International Law Experts Differ.
Senator Brandegee also called attention that many authorities on international law had differed as to the meaning of various provisions of the treaty and that Charles E. Hughes, William Howard Taft and Elihu Root had suggested different interpretations, but the president insisted that he thought it perfectly safe to leave the present language to the interpretation of future statesmen without fear that the United States would suffer by their construction.

When Senator Fall, republican, New Mexico, suggested any amendments to the league covenant would not require Germany's assent, as she was not a member of the league, the president replied he had thought of that feature. He disagreed with Senators Brandegee and Knox, republican, Pennsylvania, who asserted that the treaty would be submitted to all the signatories as soon as three had ratified it.

Three Hours of Questions.
For more than three hours the committee members questioned the president and afterward they stayed for luncheon at the White House. When the recess was taken there had been no discussion of the treaty after noon, but later it was decided not to do so. There was no intimation tonight whether the committee would seek a further conference. Tomorrow it resumes its open hearings at the capitol.

Senator Fall left with Mr. Wilson a list of questions which he would reply to at length later. They concern the powers of the president or congress to declare a state of peace, details of the resumption of trade and diplomatic relations with Germany, what disposition is to be made of the German colonies and the need for American representation on various European reconstruction commissions.

The president's declaration of a compelling moral obligation under the league was emphasized in a statement issued jointly tonight by Senators Borah, Idaho, and Johnson, California, republican members of the committee and two of the bitterest opponents to the treaty in its present form. They declared the day's testimony had borne out their claim that the league would lead to interminable foreign complications. They also pointed out that Senator Johnson had developed in the day's meeting a good part of the suggestion of a moral obligation for this republic to the prejudices and ne-

cessities of the nations of the old world."
"I do not understand that we do surrender," replied the president.
"Would you not understand a decree by the council to be a suggestion of this moral obligation?"
"Certainly I would, but we would have to consider in that before it had any force of any kind."
"Then what permanent value is there to this compact?"
"To the great permanent value is the point that I have raised. We are assuming that the United States will not succumb in the greatest moral judgment of the world. In my opinion she generally will."

One Vote for Whole Empire.
Asked whether all the British dominions would be barred from voting on any question affecting the British empire, the president said that in such a case the entire empire would have but one vote.

Referring to the clause in the special defensive treaty with France which provides that it can come into force only if approved by the league, Mr. Brandegee asked whether it was constitutionally proper for the senate to approve a treaty with the decision of its validity left to a body not yet organized. The president said he saw no objection.

"It is true, is it not," asked Senator Brandegee, "that if difficulties arise as to the construction of any provision in the treaty with Germany after we have passed from the scene, what we thought the provisions meant will not be very powerful in the construction that will be placed upon it by those who then have to determine what it means?"
"The vote of the United States will be essential," Mr. Wilson replied.
"I do not mean that. The fact that you think now that everything in the treaty is plain, and the fact that I think there is grave doubt about some of the provisions, will it not seriously affect the opinion of the council?"

Wordings of Treaty Plain.
"No, but the plain wording of the treaty will have a great deal to do, and the meaning of the wording is plain."

"That is simply another way of stating, is it not, that you are clear in your opinion?" queried the senator.
"No, sir; it is a question of being content with what language means, not confident of an opinion."

"But the language is in dispute now between you and certain lawyers of the country and certain senators as to its meaning."
Senator Brandegee added that with regard to article 10 his own understanding of the language was quite clear, continuing that the provision was "an obligation in a contract, and I know of but one way to perform an obligation that you have contracted to perform, and that is to perform it."

The president then made this statement of his understanding of the obligation under that article to follow the advice of the council:

Nation Free to Use Judgment.
"I take it for granted that in practically every case the United States would respond. I quite agree with you that a moral obligation is to be fulfilled and I am confident that our nation will fulfill it, but that does not remove from each individual case the element of judgment which we are free to exercise in two stages."

"We are first free to exercise it in the vote of our representative on the council, who will of course act under instructions from the home government, and in the second place we are to exercise it in the vote of the council, acting upon the action of the council, makes his recommendation to congress."
"Then congress," Mr. Wilson added, "is to exercise its judgment as to whether the instructions of the executive to our member of the council were well founded or not and whether this is a case of distinct moral obligation."

Asked by Senator Johnson whether the obligations assumed under the treaty "go to the extent of compelling us to maintain American troops in Europe," Mr. Wilson replied:

"Such small bodies as are necessary to the carrying out of the treaty, I think."

Troops Stay to Be Short.
"And will those troops have to be maintained under the various treaties of peace until the ultimate consummation of the terms of those treaties?" queried Mr. Johnson.

"Yes, but that is not long. In no case, as I remember, does it exceed 15 months."
"I was rather under the impression that the occupation of Germany was to be 15 years."

"Along the Rhine, yes. I was thinking of upper and lower Silesia and other places where plebiscites are to be carried out. It is the understanding with the other governments that we are to retain only enough troops there to keep our flag there."

"Will we be maintaining American troops upon the Rhine for the next 15 years?"
"That is entirely within our choice; but I suppose we will."
President Wilson, after his opening statement, answered the senators' questions on the status of the various league questions.

President Quizzed by Senators.
After the president had delivered his statement, Senator Lodge said:

"Mr. President: We have no thought of entering upon arguments as to interpretation, but the committee was very desirous of getting information on certain points which they thought would be of value in consideration of the treaty, which they desire to hasten in every possible way."

"If we have to restore peace to the world it is necessary that there should be treaties with Austria, Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria. Those treaties are all more or less connected with the treaty with Germany. The question I would like to ask is what the purpose is of receiving those treaties for action?"

The president: "I think it is very good, sir, and so far as I judge from the contents of the dispatches from my colleagues on the other side of the water, the chief delay is due to the uncertainty as to what is going to happen to this treaty. This treaty is a model of the others."

Senator Lodge: "They are not regarded as such, no sir; they follow this treaty."

Treaty With Poland Signed.
Senator Lodge: "I do not know about the other treaties; but the treaty with Poland, for example, has been completed?"

The president: "Yes, and signed; but it is dependent upon this treaty. My thought was to submit it upon the action of this treaty."

draft had been constituted the basis. I thought afterward that that was misleading and I am very glad to tell the committee just what I meant."

"Some months before the conference assembled a plan for the league of nations had been drawn up by a British committee at the head of which was Mr. Fillemore. I believe that Mr. Fillemore who was known as the authority on international law. A copy of that document was sent to me, and I built upon that a redraft. I will not now say whether I thought it was better or not an improvement; but I built on that a draft which was quite different, inasmuch as I put definiteness where there had been what seemed indefiniteness in the Fillemore suggestion. Then, between that time and the time of the formation of the commission of the league of nations, I had the advantage of seeing a paper by General Smuts of South Africa, who seemed to me to have done some very clear thinking, particularly with regard to what was to be done with the pieces of the dismembered empire."

Smuts' Ideas Embodied.
"Before I got to Paris, therefore, I rewrote the document to which I have alluded and you may have noticed that it consists of a series of articles and then supplementary agreements. It was in the supplementary agreements that I embodied the additional ideas that had come to me not only from General Smuts' paper, but from other discussions. That is the full story of how the plan which I sent to the committee was built up."

Senator Lodge: "Then it is obvious that the General Smuts plan was used?"

The president: "Yes."

Senator Lodge: "Then there was a previous draft in addition to the one you have sent to us. You spoke of a redraft. That was not submitted to the committee?"

The president: "No, that was private to my own."

Senator Lodge: "Was it before our commission?"

The president: "No, it was not."

The president said a draft of article 10, which Senator Johnson had presented to the committee, was "part of the draft which preceded the draft which was sent to you." Senator Johnson said he had it from the independent.

President's Memory Refreshed.
The president: "I had forgotten it, but I recognized it as soon as I read it."

Senator Johnson: "It was the original plan?"

The president: "It was the original form of article 10, yes."

Senator Lodge said he had been about to ask whether article 10 in its present form had been in the British plan, but if there were no definite drafts of these plans, of course, the committee could not get them.

Asked by Senator Lodge whether he had seen the resolutions for a league submitted by Secretary Lansing, the president replied:

"Yes."
Senator Lodge: "No specific action was taken upon them?"
The president: "Not in a formal way."

Senator Lodge then asked whether the United States would receive any part of the German reparations fund.

The president: "I left that question open, senator, because I did not feel that I had any final right to decide it. Upon the basis that was set up in the reparations clauses, the portion that the United States would receive would be very small at best. My own judgment was frequently expressed, not as a decision, but as a judgment that we should claim nothing under these general clauses. I did that because I covered the general advantage that that would give us in the councils of the world."

Senator McCumber: "Did that mean we would claim nothing for the sinking of the Lusitania?"

The president: "Oh, no. That did not cover questions of that sort at all." The president added that the claims not covered by the reparations clause, the reparations committee would decide. He repeated that the American position in the reparations remained to be decided.

Senator Lodge: "By the commission?"
The president: "By the commission." Senator Lodge added that there had been any recommendations by American naval authorities as to whether the United States should have one of the captured German islands for naval purposes.

President Hears About Yap.
The president: "There was a paper on that subject, senator, which has been published. I only partially remember it. It was a paper laying out the general necessities of our naval policy in the Pacific. The necessity of having some base for communication upon those islands was mentioned, just in what form I do not remember. But let me say that there is a little island which I must admit I had not heard of before."

Senator Williams: "The island of Yap?"
The president: "Yap. It is one of the bases and centers of cable and radio communication on the Pacific, and I made the point that the whole of that island should be reserved for the general conference, which is to be held in regard to the ownership and operation of the cable. It is mentioned and disposed of in this treaty, and that general cable conference is to be held."

Senator Lodge had understood that our general board of the navy department, our chief of operations, had recommended that we should have a footing there, primarily in order to secure cable communication."

The president: "I think you are right, sir."

Shantung Deal Brought Up.
Senator Lodge referred to the secret treaty between Great Britain and Japan regarding Shantung and said that in the correspondence relating to the treaty, it was said that Great Britain should have the German islands south of the equator and Japan those north of the equator.

Senator Lodge: "If it should seem necessary for the safety of communication for this country, that we should have a cable station there, would that secret treaty interfere with it?"

The president: "I think not, sir, in view of the stipulation that I made with regard to the question of construction by this cable convention. That note of the British ambassador regarding the German islands was a part of the diplomatic correspondence covering that subject."

Senator Lodge: "That was what I understood."

Senator McCumber: "Was the stipulation that that should be reserved for the consideration of the cable convention a formally signed protocol?"

The president: "I think it is very good, sir, and so far as I judge from the contents of the dispatches from my colleagues on the other side of the water, the chief delay is due to the uncertainty as to what is going to happen to this treaty. This treaty is a model of the others."

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Senator Lodge then asked whether the president could show the committee the tentative league of nations draft submitted by Great Britain, France and Italy.

The president: "I would have sent them to the committee with pleasure, senator, if I had them. I look it for granted that I had them; but the papers that were in my hands remain here in a haphazard way. I can tell you the character of the other drafts. The British draft was the only one, as I remember, that was in the form of a definite constitution of a league. The French and Italian drafts were in the form of a series of propositions laying down general rules and assuming that the commission, or whatever body made the final determination, would build upon those principles if they were adopted. They were principles quite consistent with the final action."

British Draft Made Basis.
Remember saying to the committee when I was here in March something to the effect that the British

draft had been constituted the basis. I thought afterward that that was misleading and I am very glad to tell the committee just what I meant."

"Some months before the conference assembled a plan for the league of nations had been drawn up by a British committee at the head of which was Mr. Fillemore. I believe that Mr. Fillemore who was known as the authority on international law. A copy of that document was sent to me, and I built upon that a redraft. I will not now say whether I thought it was better or not an improvement; but I built on that a draft which was quite different, inasmuch as I put definiteness where there had been what seemed indefiniteness in the Fillemore suggestion. Then, between that time and the time of the formation of the commission of the league of nations, I had the advantage of seeing a paper by General Smuts of South Africa, who seemed to me to have done some very clear thinking, particularly with regard to what was to be done with the pieces of the dismembered empire."

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THE FEATURE

OLIVE THOMAS in LOVE'S PRISONER

In describing "Love's Prisoner," we are not going to throw a typographical fit; the picture doesn't need it. The star, the unique story and the picture are all that you expect and quite a bit more. We are turning it loose on its merits. Incidentally, the last Olive Thomas picture we had—"The Girl From Paris"—was proclaimed one of the best pictures ever shown at the Columbia.

THE FILLERS

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Coming Sun.

WM. FARNUM in

"The Lone Star Ranger"