

MR. BAILEY JR. OUTLINES TO CORRESPONDENTS THE PROBABLE PROCEDURE AT THE COMING PEACE CONFERENCE—A BUSY GATHERING

Expresses His Opinion of the Proposed League of Nations and Foresees Many Difficulties in Bringing About Such an Institution Because of the Diversity of Civilization Among the Associated Nations to be Represented.

By Frederick Moore.

(Special Cable to The N. Y. Tribune and The St. John Standard.)

London, Dec. 13.—Although Foreign Minister James Balfour reiterated several times that in his public statements he was expressing only his own views, he spoke today in unexpected detail regarding President Wilson's visit to Europe to attend the forthcoming peace conference and what might be taken as Britain's view on the League of Nations. The occasion was the weekly interview formerly given by the now retired Sir Robert Cecil to American correspondents, a score of whom were received today in Mr. Balfour's ample but simple rooms at the Foreign Office, which in no way differs from Secretary Lansing's reception room at the State Department.

The seventy-year-old statesman, six feet tall, looked the perfection of condition and replied to questions with a carefulness, precision and adequacy that surprised even the correspondents accustomed to meetings of statesmen. The interview lasted an hour, and not once did Balfour fail to reply promptly to the correspondents' interrogations.

Mr. Balfour said he did not know whether President Wilson would come to England, but earnestly hoped he would come. He said Premier Lloyd George would not leave England before the elections to be held December 14, and would not, therefore, be among those who will receive President Wilson at Brest. Balfour did not know whether any British statesman would be with the French reception committee at Brest. He declared that the President's wishes in many matters were unknown, but that the British desired to meet them in every way.

Balfour did not believe the actual peace conference could occur for a considerable time, and said that even the formal conferences among the Allies will probably not take place until January.

"The associated countries," Balfour said, avoiding the use of the term "Allies," when including America, "could begin with preliminary discussion about December 16, because of the infinitely numerous aspects of the conference and other cognate considerations involved."

Balfour believed that neither the fourteen points of President Wilson nor the armistice terms precluded the execution from Germany of what she could pay. German reparations, he said, he required to pay first for the reconstruction of Belgium and the north of France, and then to repay for the destruction of shipping. The foreign minister regarded the fourteen points as a general guide of policy rather than a legal statement. He added that on the narrowest interpretation of the fourteen points, Allied requirements will strain German resources to the utmost.

Asked whether the peace conference would be public, Balfour replied they would be unless it was otherwise arranged. He said, at some stages of the proceedings they may probably be open. Precedent, he said, will be followed by which a citizen of the country wherein the conference would be held should be chairman. The mode of procedure, he added, will be decided upon by the delegates themselves.

Balfour asserted that no existing Russian government had the right to represent Russia. It is mighty difficult to determine, he said, who has the right to represent the new states, but their interests will be fully considered and best efforts will be made to ascertain their actual views.

Balfour desired that President Wilson interpret his own opinions and expressed eagerness to exchange personal views with the president. Contrary to what seems to be Roosevelt's opinion Balfour emphasized that clearly for her own good America "must, ought and will" do her share in the work of reconstruction.

Balfour presented an outline of his own idea of the character of the League of Nations.

"It is good for all of us," he said, "to take our proper share in the reconstruction and regeneration of the world. I always thought the League of Nations a vital necessity in some shape or other if this war is to be productive of good as well as of evil. The best thought of the world must combine to prevent the new world from going astray as in the past four years.

multiplying the number of democratic states, which, as a result of the war, are likely to increase enormously. Having regard for the number of them now being created in Eastern Europe, many of them small and all more or less democratic, it must not be assumed that when the map of Europe is re-created there will be no more states where war would be unlikely. No true democratic state is capable of a long designed and cherished criminal scheme such as autocrats proved themselves guilty of. The thinkers and government of Germany deliberately pursued a policy of international crime, using other states as stepping stones to their ultimate aim. It is impossible to conceive of democratic states cherishing designs equal to those in iniquity but passions arise between neighboring democracies which may make them quite as prone to war as other forms of government. Some hostile critics say that the result of the changes that seem likely to occur will be to Balkanize Europe but I look forward to what the past would lead us to expect. It would be intolerable if Europe and the United States would merely call into being these new states and make no provision for seeing Europe not turned into a cockpit and a burden. I believe the league of nations is required to supersede and control not only the criminal intentions of great autocrats but see that rash and ill-considered wars should not be permitted again. The league of nations ought to act as a trustee for the communities who have not yet reached the stage of democracy equal to ours. It is very difficult to form a government. It may be difficult for the new communities to adopt forms of government and manners of administration applicable

to the advanced nation. I regard the work of the conference relating to a league of nations as one of the greatest tasks that could be undertaken. There is weakness of human nature and inevitable selfishness to contend against. The result may be imperfect but we must make an effort to deal with the problems thrust upon us. The prominence Wilson has given to the subject is a valuable contribution to civilization."

It was evident from the whole tenor of Balfour's remarks that Great Britain invites the earnest co-operation of America in the great constructive work ahead and is asking her fullest intellectual assistance. The Globe, which is unfriendly to the present administration, emphasizes this today, it says:

"Wilson comes here without the desire to exercise the functions of a dictator. Such has never been his intention any more than it has been or could have been the desire of the European Allies. It is important to remember that there is no nation behind him united on all points. The American domestic position is not without influence from the international situation. The president cannot, as we believe he does not, contemplate the advocacy of any hard and fast policy."

BADEN VILLAGES BECOME SWISS

Berne, Dec. 13.—Seven frontier villages of the grand duchy of Baden have passed resolutions expressing their desire to become united to Switzerland. A delegation of the burgomasters of these villages will submit requests to the Swiss government that the desire of their people be granted.

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NO CONSCRIPTION SAYS PREMIER

Peace Conference Would be a Poor Affair if it Permitted Such a Policy to Continue.

London, Dec. 13.—Premier Lloyd George, in a statement to Reuters Limited tonight, on the subject of conscription, said:

"On the eve of this important election, which means so much to the country, I want to make it clear beyond all doubt that I stand for the abolition of conscript armies in all lands. Without that, the peace conference will be a failure and a sham. These great military machines are responsible for the agony the world has passed through, and it would be a poor peace conference that allowed them to continue. Any delegate that represents Great Britain at that conference must labor to the end I have stated."


MANY SHIPS ARE ON THE WAY HERE

Besides the Minnedosa Today, the Corsican and Melita Have Left the Other Side for St. John.

Ottawa, Ont., Dec. 13.—In addition to the Olympic, the arrival of which at Halifax, with 6,307 military details and 157 civilians on board, has been announced for Saturday morning at about 3 o'clock, the military department has received advice that several other vessels carrying troops are now on the way across the Atlantic. The Minnedosa, carrying 898 troops and 481 civilians, will, it is expected, reach the port of St. John sometime tomorrow.

The Melita, with 1,191 soldiers and civilians on board, will probably arrive at the same port on the 20th of this month, and the Corsican, with 747 troops and no civilians, also about the 21st.

The transport Regina, with 2,070 troops and four civilians, is likely to reach Halifax about the 21st, and the



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hospital ship Essequibo, with 600 invalids on board, is due on the 20th.

LIEGE WANTS WILSON.

Paris, Dec. 13.—The town of Liege, where the Germans were halted several days in their first rush into France, has sent a delegation to Paris to invite President Wilson to visit the historic place.

President Poincare, Premier Clemenceau and Marshal Foch will be invited to accompany President Wilson.

Paris, Dec. 13.—By a unanimous vote the municipal council of Paris today decided to confer upon President Wilson the title of a citizen of Paris.

RESTRICTIONS REMOVED.

The following order has been received from the Canada Food Board: "Order issued today removing restrictions on using sugar and French pastry and making ready for private consumption, also in serving sugar in public eating houses."

W. S. FORT.

Scene from Serial "THE ISLE OF TREASURE"



"Look at your work," roared Long John to the terrified Sol Winkle.

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