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The Monroe Doctrine as the transparent veil of isolation during the League of Nations debate

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The Monroe Doctrine as the Transparent Veil of Isolation
During the League of Nations Debate

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JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

In June 1919, President Woodrow Wilson returned from Paris after several months of negotiating the Treaty of Versailles to end World War One. At the peace conference, Wilson achieved his goal of establishing the League of Nations. However, he had one more hurdle: convince the Republican Senate to ratify the treaty. This was no easy task as Republicans claimed the treaty nullified the Monroe Doctrine, even though the century-old foreign policy was recognized, by name, in the League of Nations Covenant. Why, then, did opponents of the League of Nations in the United States claim isolation and refuse to ratify the treaty even though the Monroe Doctrine was included in the diplomatic agreement?

The answer lies with the Republican foreign policy of expansionism that thrust the United States onto the world stage as a colonial power in 1898. Evidence from letters, diaries, and published articles by major Republican leaders, such as Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, proves that the United States wished to maintain its authority over the Western Hemisphere and other areas controlled by the colonial power. Further, an examination of the interactions between Democratic and Republican leaders illustrates the urgency with which those opposed to the League placed on the protection of the Monroe Doctrine's authority within the Western Hemisphere.

While one cannot disregard the political drama that unfolded during the League of Nations debate in 1919, it is necessary to look at a broader picture in order to understand why opponents wished to include the Monroe Doctrine in the treaty and pretend to be in isolation. The conclusion that the United States wished to remain sovereign with authority over the Western Hemisphere provides the notion that Americans wanted to be

on par with European imperial powers, but also provides answers as to why many in 1919 argued that the United States was an isolationist nation, even when it clearly was not.

Introduction

On December 14, 1919, a flurry of activity engulfed the streets of Paris. Many people lined the broad avenues and looked from their balconies just to catch a glimpse of the man whom they believed would save the world from all future wars.¹ This enthusiasm was not limited just to Paris. Neglected and subservient people all over the world heard this man's message and wholeheartedly supported his vision for a



Figure 1: Parisians Greet Wilson, [c. 14 Dec. 1918], Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library

new international order.² The world loved him, and he loved the world. However, this son of a Presbyterian minister, who witnessed the carnage of the American Civil War as a young boy, was not loved by the *entire* world. In fact, he was despised by a select number of senators from his home country. This man was Woodrow Wilson, twenty-eighth president of the United States.

The story about Wilson's fight for the League of Nations against the recalcitrant Republican senators is all too familiar. Historians cannot get enough of this early twentieth century political drama that engulfed the United States. The suspense, the back-room dealing, the name-calling, and the transition of the United States from a growing

¹ For two vivid descriptions of Wilson's entry into Paris, see Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months that Changed the World* (New York: Random House, 2001), 15 – 16; and, John Milton Cooper, Jr., *Woodrow Wilson: A Biography* (New York: Random House, 2009), 462.

² For a discussion detailing how Woodrow Wilson's message of self-determination sparked conversation and excitement throughout the world, see Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). For an account of two Polish peasants who walked to Paris accompanied by an astronomer and a priest to urge Wilson to include their homeland within the creation of Poland, see Diary of Dr. Grayson, April 11, 1919, in Arthur S. Link, ed., *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, Vol. 57 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987), 237. (*The Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, edited by Arthur S. Link, will hereafter be cited as *PWW*, along with volume number and page number.)

imperial power to a country proud of its isolation grab many diplomatic historians by the heartstrings due to the complexity of the situation. This political power play during Wilson's presidency provides an avenue for a discussion, not just of America's position in the international community, but how Americans perceived their role in the world.

Since the late 1880s, the isolationist shell surrounding the United States began to develop cracks. By the end of the Spanish-American War in 1898, the country burst through its confines and emerged onto the global scene as an imperial power. This new era in American history was marshaled in by ardent expansionists such as William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and Henry Cabot Lodge. Later presidents, such as William H. Taft and Woodrow Wilson, continued to increase America's power, strength, and prestige throughout the world.

By the time the United States became actively involved in World War One, Americans considered their country to be a colonial power, on par with various European nations, such as Great Britain. It was this perception that drove Wilson to insist that the Senate ratify the Treaty of Versailles, believing that the United States could rise to a higher rank of moral leadership in the world. However, Republicans were hesitant to approve the Treaty. They felt that becoming a member of the League of Nations would cause the United States to lose its position of power and influence because other countries would be able to interfere in America's affairs. On a deeper level, Republicans thought that the League would have the ability to take charge of events in the Western Hemisphere, a condition that frightened the conservatives. The foundation for this belief revolved around the Monroe Doctrine and the Roosevelt Corollary, which stated that the United States was in a position of authority over the Western Hemisphere.

To protect America's spheres of influence and the potential ability to expand, Republicans demanded the Monroe Doctrine be included in the Treaty to safeguard it from possible questioning and interpretation by future members of the League of Nations. Believing to be the defenders of America's freedom from European interference, Republicans heralded the Monroe Doctrine and claimed the League of Nations Covenant nullified America's traditional foreign policy. In so doing, the opponents of the Treaty hid behind a transparent veil of isolation. It is abundantly clear, however, that the United States was not in isolation and those who cried it the loudest were actually the ones who had thrust the country onto the international stage.

While there is no doubt that power politics played a major factor with the Senate's rejection of the Treaty of Versailles, the purpose of this study is to demonstrate that the Republican refusal to agree to the League of Nations stemmed from their construction of the Monroe Doctrine, which was redefined at the turn of the century. To accomplish this, secondary sources will be incorporated into the analysis to show that other historians do not recognize the gap that currently exists in the historiography. Essentially, this thesis will fuse two areas of historiography, which widens the scope of history to illuminate what others have missed. By bridging the gap between United States imperialism at the turn of the twentieth century and the League of Nations debate following the Great War, I will demonstrate how the two are actually connected.

Currently, American imperialism and the League of Nations debate are independent of each other in the historiography.³ Perhaps the historian to have come the

³ For a discussion regarding how economics triggered American expansion, see Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860 – 1898* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1963). To gain a sense of Theodore Roosevelt's role in the expansion of the United States, see Howard K. Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power* (Baltimore:

closest to connecting the two is John M. Dobson. In his book, *America's Ascent: The United States Becomes a Great Power, 1880 – 1914*, he argues that the United States became an imperial power for three reasons: economic incentive, political motives, and the ability to tutor other nations in the American democratic tradition. Within his conclusion, he asserts that the United States did not approve the Treaty of Versailles because it sought “to retreat to the status it had held between 1880 and 1914” which allowed it to have “relative freedom from external responsibilities [that] had enabled it to predominate within its chosen spheres of interest.”⁴ If we abide by Dobson’s conclusion, then we must reject his whole argument that the United States continued to expand its position of power and influence during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Instead, I find it more reasonable to agree with his entire argument and contest his conclusion. The United States wished to remain in a position of power unconstrained by an international organization.

Another historian whose work was influential to the production of this thesis is John Milton Cooper, Jr. His first book, *The Vanity of Power*, examined the emergence of America’s isolationist position in the immediate years preceding the entry into World War One. Recognizing the isolationist position the United States held since the American Revolution, Cooper asserts that isolationism did not become a “distinct political position” until America’s participation in the Great War entered the realm of possibility. As the first historian to focus exclusively on the emergence of the isolationist position as a

Johns Hopkins Press, 1956). An illustration of the expansionist trends through Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson’s presidencies can be found in Dana G. Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900 – 1921* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1964).

⁴ John M. Dobson, *America's Ascent: The United States Becomes a Great Power, 1880 – 1914* (DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1978), 225.

political issue immediately prior to World War One, Cooper reduces isolation to the “rejection of forceful commitments beyond the hemisphere.”⁵ After the Great War, however, it seems that the meaning of isolation changed to fit the situation. In 1919, the opponents of the League hid behind the idea that the United States should not become unnecessarily involved in the affairs of a country within another hemisphere that did not directly affect the United States. With this definition in place, they used the Monroe Doctrine to deflect any intrusion into the Western Hemisphere by another power.

Since this thesis examines the League of Nations debate, I would be remiss if I did not mention other historians who have analyzed this issue. A plethora of scholarship exists regarding how Republicans and Democrats orchestrated the defeat of the Treaty of Versailles by divisions in each political party, as well as actions by those in control of each party; namely, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge (Republican) and President Woodrow Wilson (Democrat). Along with John Milton Cooper Jr., prominent historians include Lloyd Ambrosius and Thomas Knock. With a focus on the politics behind the failure of the Senate to ratify the Treaty of Versailles, each author argues that Wilson, either through his stubbornness caused by the psychological effects of his stroke or his lofty ideals, contributed to the defeat of the Treaty. Additionally, historians, such as William C. Widenor and Herbert F. Margulies, who focus on the Republican side of the argument, also concur that Wilson shouldered much of the blame for the Treaty’s defeat.⁶

⁵ John Milton Cooper, Jr., *The Vanity of Power: American Isolationism and the First World War, 1914 – 1917* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Corporation, 1969), 1 – 2.

⁶ John Milton Cooper, Jr., *Breaking the Heart of the World: Woodrow Wilson and the Fight for the League of Nations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Lloyd E. Ambrosius, *Woodrow Wilson and the American Diplomatic Tradition: The Treaty Fight in Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Thomas Knock, *To End All Wars: Woodrow Wilson and the Quest for a New World Order* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); William C. Widenor, *Henry Cabot Lodge and the Search for an American Foreign Policy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California

Throughout the thesis, I combine my original research with the arguments made by the above historians to demonstrate their deficiency in examining this complex and intriguing topic. As this subject analyzes a specific time in history, it is slightly difficult to have a chronological discussion because there were so many historical actors working simultaneously. However, I have endeavored to organize the five chapters in a way that makes the most sense. The first chapter deals with America's foreign policy background, which leads to chapter two's discussion of the divergent views regarding America's participation in an international organization. Chapter three then focuses on the interjection of the Monroe Doctrine at the Paris Peace Conference, while chapter four examines the debate over the League of Nations after the peace conference. Lastly, chapter five brings everything full-circle by linking the evidence together to demonstrate that a significant reason for the Senate's refusal to ratify the Treaty of Versailles stemmed from the desire of Republican leaders for America to be a world power.

The Imperialist Monroe Doctrine

As a young country, Americans were well aware of their vulnerability to imperial European nations. From his position as president of an expanding nation, which was susceptible to attacks by larger armies, James Monroe issued his Doctrine, crafted by his secretary of state, John Quincy Adams. This bold announcement, a daring move by a nation less than half-a-century old, threatened retaliation in the event a European nation attempted to impose its colonizing powers within the Western Hemisphere.

From this declaration, politicians and policymakers, particularly in the late 1800s, began to reevaluate the Monroe Doctrine and apply it for their own unique wants and needs. By 1900, the Doctrine had been stretched to fit virtually every situation involving a foreign country and the United States. With each instance, the foreign policy became more flexible, and its strength increased. In due time, the Monroe Doctrine became America's Manifest Destiny. Through examining post-Civil War foreign policy events, it is clear that the Monroe Doctrine became a catch-all term used to give credence to America's actions and interventions regarding matters beyond its borders.

Until the United States was severed in half by a tragic Civil War, the majority of the population resided along the east coast with small pockets of Americans scattered throughout the country. After the reunification of the country, and the advent of the Transcontinental Railroad, more Americans moved west in search of their own Manifest Destiny. By 1890, so many people had settled throughout the West that the census bureau declared that the frontier no longer existed; the country could expand no more. Or, could it? Frederick Jackson Turner's famous 1893 frontier thesis shocked Americans into believing that the closure of the frontier equaled the beginning of America's demise.

According to Turner, democracy in America thrived when individuals were able to be free. The West provided this freedom as the “opportunity for [Americans] to grow to the full measure of his own capacity.” Therefore, the frontier’s closure served as a measuring point in America’s development. In order to continue the great democratic experiment, the United States needed to seek other lands.⁷

However, prior to the end of the frontier and Turner’s shocking revelation, the country had expanded its influence and toyed with the idea of acquiring additional land. This expansion, according to Walter LaFeber, was rooted in bettering America’s economy through international trade by finding additional markets to sell its industrial products. In his book, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860 – 1898*, LaFeber explains that the motivation to expand was not for traditional imperialistic incentives, such as power and land, but rather for commercial and industrial reasons. Several times throughout the late nineteenth century the United States experienced economic downfalls and each time businessmen and politicians sought to acquire markets outside of the country.⁸ While LaFeber’s argument is persuasive and has validity, it does not provide the entire view. Rather, it serves as a starting point for understanding the extension of America’s business interests and ultimately its political power into areas outside the country.

⁷ Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (1921; repr., Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 2010), 268, 244.

⁸ Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860 – 1898* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1963).

President Benjamin Harrison and his first secretary of state, James Blaine, are credited with the entrance of the United States onto the world scene in search of markets.⁹ To this end, Harrison stayed within the confines of the Monroe Doctrine and limited his quest for markets in the Western Hemisphere, although his mind wandered to Hawaii as a potential naval base and a source of raw materials. In fact, Harrison's administration put forth a treaty annexing Hawaii into the United States. However, upon being elected back into the presidency, Grover Cleveland withdrew the treaty from the Senate's consideration in 1893, but allowed the provisional government, installed by American foreign minister John Stevens, to remain.

Even though Cleveland ended the Senate's formal discussion of annexing Hawaii, the mere conversation of annexation provided the occasion for Americans to reflect and debate the colonial vision of the United States.¹⁰ Essentially, President Harrison and his administration, specifically his secretaries of state, James Blaine and John W. Foster, put the expansionist wheels in motion. Upon re-entering office, Cleveland applied the brakes to those expansionist wheels by not only stopping the Hawaii annexation treaty, but also by quieting any discussion of colonial expansion. Instead, politicians continued to focus on finding export markets to alleviate the economic depression that was spreading throughout the country.

However, the non-interventionist Cleveland soon had a reason to become entangled in Latin America's affairs under the auspices of the Monroe Doctrine. After the

⁹ LaFeber, *The New Empire*, 104; Robert Beisner, *From the Old Diplomacy to the New, 1865 – 1900*, 2nd ed. (Arlington Heights, Illinois: Harlan Davidson, 1986), 97, 99; George C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 278 – 279.

¹⁰Dobson, *America's Ascent*, 54.

Brazilian Revolution, when Secretary of State Walter Gresham sent six ships to keep the Rio de Janeiro harbor open to American commerce, Cleveland found himself continuously entwined in Latin America.¹¹ With each episode that followed, Cleveland stepped up his rhetoric and pushed the authority of the Monroe Doctrine until it almost recoiled in his face.

The key to Cleveland's elevated rhetoric is found with Richard Olney, whom the president named his new secretary of state after Gresham's death in 1895. Unlike Gresham who preferred to seek markets, Olney understood the politics of larger imperial nations and believed that to be on par with them, the United States had to act like them. Within his first year as secretary of state, Olney managed to incite a diplomatic squabble between the United States and Great Britain. In July 1895, he tested his own backbone and the strength of his nation when he sent a sharply worded message to the British government.

The diplomatic note was sparked by a boundary dispute between Venezuela and Great Britain. The issue arose when a British surveyor included the mouth of the Orinoco River within the borders of British Guiana, stripping Venezuela of its control of the river, which supplied major economic benefits to South America. Seeking to end the disagreement, Venezuelan officials requested that the United States arbitrate the dispute. Many expansionists, such as Henry Cabot Lodge, saw this as an opportunity to wield power against an imperial nation by arguing that the Monroe Doctrine made it

¹¹ LaFeber, *The New Empire*, 210 – 217.

effortlessly clear that Great Britain had no right to take an important waterway from Venezuela.¹²

After pressure from Congress and the public, Cleveland authorized Olney to send a letter to the British government acknowledging the dispute and offering arbitration of the South American territory. Citing the Monroe Doctrine, Olney claimed: “no European power or combination of European powers shall forcibly deprive an American state of the right and power of self-government and of shaping for itself its own political fortunes and destinies.” After establishing that the Western Hemisphere was off-limits to European imperialism, he continued: “the safety and welfare of the United States are so concerned with the maintenance of the independence of every American state as against any European power as to justify and require the interposition of the United States whenever that independence is endangered.” Clearly, Olney used the Monroe Doctrine as the basis for American interference into the question by indicating that the matter at hand was a purely American question, and as such should be settled by the United States.

However, Olney took his message a step further by proclaiming that “the United States is practically sovereign on this continent, and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition.”¹³ With this proviso, not only did the United States have a right to interfere in the British-Venezuelan border controversy, it was compelled to do so as its reign encompassed the entire hemisphere. In one letter, Olney stretched the Monroe Doctrine to not just denying European intrusion past the Prime Meridian, but

¹² LaFeber, *The New Empire*, 243, 248 – 250.

¹³ Richard Olney to Thomas Bayard, July 10, 1895, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*, 1895, Vol. 1, Part 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1895), 545 – 563; LaFeber, *The New Empire*, 259 – 262; Dobson, *America’s Ascent*, 79 – 80.

declared that the United States had full custodial authority over the hemisphere. A brazen move, indeed.

In response to what Cleveland called Olney's "twenty-inch gun," British Prime Minister Lord Salisbury fired back a scathing message. In his retort, he stated that the boundary dispute was not an attempt by the British government to acquire more land, but rather "the determination of a frontier of a British possession which belonged to the Throne of England long before the Republic of Venezuela came into existence." Referring to the Monroe Doctrine, Lord Salisbury argued that no one can "insert into the code of international law a novel principle which was never recognized before, and which has not since been accepted by the Government of any other nation."¹⁴

In spite of this stinging rebuke and the discrediting of the Monroe Doctrine, the British agreed to settle the dispute by arbitration. While it is important to note that the British government acquiesced in allowing the United States to settle the quarrel, the American position on its foreign policy is even more noteworthy. The idea held by expansionists at the time, such as Henry Cabot Lodge and Theodore Roosevelt, was that the United States had complete suzerainty over Latin America. This belief in America's superiority within the Western Hemisphere twisted the Monroe Doctrine into a different shape whereby the United States reigned supreme over issues that arose involving a nation on the west side of the Prime Meridian. As the nineteenth century turned into the twentieth, this principle drove American foreign policy.

At a time when European powers were fighting over land in Africa and elsewhere in the world, expansionists in the United States shied from using the term "imperialism",

¹⁴ Lord Salisbury to Sir Julian Pauncefote, November 26, 1895, *FRUS*, 1895, Vol. 1, Part 1, 563 – 567.

which they felt to be a derogatory term. Since Europeans were considered to be imperialists, Americans did not wish to associate themselves with that term. Plus, America was separate from Europe, and the Monroe Doctrine ensured that no European nation would interfere in the matters of the United States. However, aside from his attitude of not wanting to appear like a European imperialist, Roosevelt believed that “we must grasp the points of vantage which will enable us to have our say in deciding the destiny of the oceans of the East and the West.” Clearly, Roosevelt’s imperialist sentiment shines through with his desire for the United States to determine the future of areas beyond the country’s border.¹⁵

The increase of expansionist rhetoric within the country coincided with growing anti-expansionist sentiments. A majority of the anti-expansionists held that America should not compromise its anti-imperialistic values established in the original Monroe Doctrine. They thought that the United States should be a moral example to the world by not engaging in expansionist and imperialist activities.¹⁶

In spite of the protests against expansionism, the United States continued to seek territories. The outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898 could not have occurred at a better time for the imperialists. Grounded in eliminating Spanish domination over Cuba, the war furthered American imperialism through the acquisition of Puerto Rico in the Caribbean as well as the Philippines and Guam in the Pacific. Similar to the British conflict over Venezuela, the Monroe Doctrine provided the context for America’s

¹⁵ Theodore Roosevelt, “The Strenuous Life,” *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, National Edition, Vol. 13 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1926), 324; Warren Zimmermann, *First Great Triumph: How Five Americans Made Their Country a World Power* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002), 13.

¹⁶ Dobson, *America’s Ascent*, 94; Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, 322.

entrance into the war against Spain, but ended with the United States increasing its imperial power and colonial possessions throughout the world.

The paradox of the Spanish-American War illuminated for many Americans the idea of the United States as a colonizing power. Writing to his former professor, who had recently become president of Princeton University, Allen Corwin asked Dr. Woodrow Wilson to share his thoughts about the United States involvement in the Philippines. In response, Wilson wrote that while he had not yet “tackle[d] the problem ... formally,” he had certainly thought about it. These two letters suggest that the colonies gained outside of the Western Hemisphere sparked curiosity among Americans as to the new role the country was to play in the world.¹⁷

Soon after his former student’s inquiry, Wilson published an article in which he acknowledged the imperial nature of the country and suggested that this was only natural due to the closing of the frontier in 1890. However, recognizing that the Philippines was unlike the United States, Wilson began to flesh out his idea of self-determination, which would emerge later in the century. With the belief that the United States should not impose a government upon the Philippines, he wrote that doing so would provide “a purple garment for their nakedness, - for these things are not blessings, but a curse, to undeveloped peoples, still in the childhood of their political growth.”¹⁸ Clearly, Wilson acknowledged that the United States should guide the Philippines in the establishment of a government that suits its culture, and not thrust an unfamiliar government upon the

¹⁷ Woodrow Wilson to Allen Wickham Corwin, Arthur S. Link, ed., *PWW*, Vol. 11: 1898 – 1900 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971), 573.

¹⁸ Woodrow Wilson, “Democracy and Efficiency,” *Atlantic Monthly* (March 1901), 289 – 299, found in Arthur S. Link, ed., *PWW*, Vol. 12: 1900 - 1902 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972), 6 – 20.

archipelago. Examining the correspondence between the student and his former professor, as well as Wilson's article, provides the sense that the United States was undertaking a new position in the world at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The dawning of this new era witnessed the death of President William McKinley and the subsequent inauguration of Theodore Roosevelt to the Oval Office. Roosevelt's sudden entrance into the presidency occurred while the United States was engaged in the Philippine-American War, which began as a direct result of the United States takeover of the Philippines. Unhappy that his nation did not receive independence from the United States, the Philippine president, Emilio Aguinaldo, led the rebellion. This insurrection ended in 1901 when American forces captured Aguinaldo.¹⁹

After gaining the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Guam, Hawaii, and placing indirect control over Cuba, the United States relaxed its expansionist urge. During this time, America began to realize how much work was involved not only in maintaining, but also in controlling an imperial empire. Commenting that the Philippines had become "our heel of Achilles," Roosevelt inched closer to the edge of the imperialist bandwagon.²⁰ While he thought that acquiring territories made a nation great and strong, he did not foresee the problems associated with being an imperial power. In fact, the thought of annexing more land within the Western Hemisphere prompted Roosevelt to declare that he had as much interest to do so as "a gorged anaconda wants to swallow a porcupine wrong end to."²¹ Clearly, Roosevelt was no longer interested in expanding United States territory, but

¹⁹ Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, 327 – 329.

²⁰ Theodore Roosevelt to Silas McBee, August 27, 1907, quoted in Howard K. Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America*, 456.

²¹ Theodore Roosevelt, March 18, 1904, quoted in Dobson, *America's Ascent*, 161.

certainly was not willing to relinquish any authority over its territory or spheres of influence.

In 1902, Germany, Great Britain, and Italy, in recognition of the Monroe Doctrine, asked Roosevelt's permission to lay siege on Venezuela after the Latin American country defaulted on its loans to the European creditors. Initially, the American president granted the countries permission. However, he retracted his authorization after events escalated to violence. While he believed that European creditors had the right to collect their debts, he also felt that "no European State is to be allowed to aggrandize itself on American soil."²² From this perspective Roosevelt issued his famous corollary to the Monroe Doctrine after the fiasco in Venezuela.

Within his 1904 State of the Union Address, Roosevelt alluded to the recent Venezuelan crisis with his statement that the United States "continue[s] steadily to insist on the application of the Monroe Doctrine to the Western Hemisphere." However, Roosevelt made it clear that the United States was not interested in acquiring more territory within the Western Hemisphere. Instead, Latin American countries could count on the "hearty friendship" of the United States provided they "act with reasonable efficiency and decency in social and political matters." In what seems to be a direct reference to the 1902 Venezuelan issue, Roosevelt mentioned that if a country within the Western Hemisphere "keeps order and pays its obligations, it need fear no interference from the United States." In cases where a Latin American country is not stable, Roosevelt

²² Theodore Roosevelt, "The Monroe Doctrine," *American Ideals and other Essays* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1897), 231.

declared that the “Monroe Doctrine may force the United States ... to the exercise of an international police power.”²³

Within one paragraph, Roosevelt stretched the Monroe Doctrine into a completely new shape, hardly recognizable from its original version. By convoluting its earliest meaning, Roosevelt redefined the Monroe Doctrine and through his redefinition, he strengthened the impact and power the United States had over the Western Hemisphere. Whereas Olney’s diplomatic note stated that the Monroe Doctrine provided the United States authority to oversee and arbitrate disputes within the Western Hemisphere, Roosevelt’s pronouncement allowed the United States to intervene within the internal affairs of a Latin American country. No longer was the Doctrine simply about preventing European colonization in the Americas, but now it gave the United States authority and supremacy over nations within its hemisphere.

Roosevelt’s successors continued to build upon his imperialistic corollary with Taft’s Dollar Diplomacy and Wilson’s use of force to spread constitutional democracy. In 1901, William Howard Taft was appointed to be the Governor-General of the Philippines. In this position, Taft was to oversee the creation of a government there. His background as a lawyer and a judge on the United States Circuit Court of Appeals aided him in this capacity. Later, in 1904, President Roosevelt appointed Taft to be his secretary of war, a position he served until he was elected president. During this time, he also became the Provisional Governor of Cuba after a political crisis triggered the enforcement of the Platt Amendment and the United States stepped in to settle the chaos resulting from a rigged

²³ Theodore Roosevelt, “Fourth Annual Message,” December 6, 1904, Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia, Accessed October 31, 2015, <http://millercenter.org/president/roosevelt/speeches/speech-3776>.

election.²⁴ Naturally, his background as a diplomat served him well as president from 1909 to 1913.

Having been in noteworthy diplomatic positions, Taft understood the financial problems of Caribbean nations and countries throughout Latin America. Following in his predecessor's footsteps, Taft enacted a policy which had its roots in the Roosevelt Corollary. However, rather than intervening after a political or financial crisis in Latin America, Taft believed it would be in everyone's best interest to place Latin American countries in a favorable economic position to prevent European creditors from seeking payments. In fact, Taft's proposition would keep countries south of the United States from seeking assistance from Europe through American loans and the establishment of customs receiverships. This policy became known as Dollar Diplomacy because the United States would use money, instead of weapons to develop stable countries throughout Latin America.²⁵

A by-product of Dollar Diplomacy was the increase of America's political influence throughout Latin America. Now that the Roosevelt Corollary stipulated that the United States could and would intervene within Latin American countries during a financial or political crisis, the introduction of Dollar Diplomacy went a step further by attempting to prevent a financial or political upheaval within the Western Hemisphere. This policy, however, did not work as well as it was intended. In practically all situations

²⁴ Dobson, *America's Ascent*, 167; Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy*, 125 – 134. The Platt Amendment was signed after Cuba gained its independence. It allowed the United States to supervise Cuban affairs.

²⁵ Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy*, 160 – 163.

where Dollar Diplomacy was used, Latin American republics continued to experience civil war, financial crisis, and political chaos.²⁶

Recognizing the unproductiveness of Dollar Diplomacy, the incoming president, Woodrow Wilson, declined to renew Taft's foreign policy in favor of implementing his own. Formerly a political science professor who believed in the concept of self-determination, Wilson was headstrong in establishing constitutional governments in unstable countries with the hope that those countries would prosper. However, Wilson's decisions almost had a reactionary affect on his foreign policy, as he continued to station troops in the Caribbean and Latin America.

Three weeks after Wilson's inauguration, Mexico witnessed a coup d'état led by General Victoriano Huerta, who overthrew the president, Francisco Madero. Believing Huerta's revolution did not represent the interests of Mexico, President Wilson refused to recognize the Huerta regime as the legitimate government. In January 1914, Wilson threw his support behind the Constitutionalist Party, led by Venustiano Carranza, which caused Huerta to declare himself dictator. Due to the turbulent situation, Wilson eventually sent Marines to Mexico with the order to take Vera Cruz and prevent the Huerta forces from gaining access to weapons en route from Europe. After the deaths of 17 Americans from the exchange of gunfire with the revolutionaries, Wilson ordered that military action would go no further, resulting in the withdrawal of Marines from Vera Cruz.²⁷

The next military intervention ordered by Wilson occurred in Haiti and the Dominican Republic in 1915 and 1916, respectively. Both Haiti and the Dominican

²⁶ Dobson, *America's Ascent*, 205; Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy*, 160 – 268.

²⁷ Cooper, Jr., *Woodrow Wilson*, 239 – 244.

Republic were experiencing internal political problems due to fraudulent elections. After each state proved incapable of adhering to Wilson's request to have democratic elections, both the Dominican Republic and Haiti were placed under provisional military governments. Troops remained stationed in the Dominican Republic until 1924 and in Haiti until 1934.²⁸

Reflecting upon the Mexican Crisis, Wilson referenced President Monroe in assuring that "the independence and prosperity of the states of Central and South America is not altered."²⁹ It is apparent that Wilson authorized American intervention in Latin America under the auspices of the Monroe Doctrine, not to protect the states from European expansion, but to promote stability and order. Wilson's actions, however, were not based on Monroe's original foreign policy, but rather on the redefined Doctrine issued by President Theodore Roosevelt.

After reviewing Taft's and Wilson's Latin American policies, it is apparent that President Roosevelt set the stage for the first quarter of the twentieth century as United States forces occupied Latin American countries until the mid-1930s. Each president, however, had his own strategy for implementing the Roosevelt Corollary. Whereas Taft was interested in building up the Caribbean and Central America's economy through loans and American financial oversight, Wilson wished to forcibly implement constitutional democracy throughout the Western Hemisphere. Regardless, the United States continued to grow in its dominance over smaller states west of the Prime Meridian.

²⁸ Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy*, 314 – 315, 364; Cooper Jr., *Woodrow Wilson*, 247 – 248.

²⁹ Woodrow Wilson, "Third Annual Message," December 7, 1915, Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia, Accessed October 31, 2015, <http://millercenter.org/president/wilson/speeches/speech-3794>.

This increase in authority was cloaked in the fear of European intrusion in the Americas, but the intended result was to strengthen the power and authority of the United States in the Western Hemisphere.

American's innate desire to expand has been present practically since American colonists disobeyed the Proclamation of 1763 and moved westward in search of new lands. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the United States reached the Pacific Ocean with California's application for statehood in 1850. Within the next fifty years, the country experienced tragedy and loss, the closing of the frontier, and the extension of America's Manifest Destiny. American leaders continued to seek other lands and expand, not just geographically, but politically, through America's influence to different parts of the hemisphere, and the world.

This destiny was shaped by those in positions of power and influence. At the dawn of the twentieth century, these decisions continued to be made in order to carry on with the transformation of the United States into an imperial, expansionist nation. While events that led to these decisions may have been happenstance, the decisions made in light of the situations are a reflection upon the notion of Manifest Destiny, made possible through the continual redefining of the Monroe Doctrine.

League to Enforce Peace: A Forum

For many historians, the story about the League of Nations debate normally begins when Wilson embarked on his famous trans-Atlantic journey to establish world peace for all nations. His idealistic notions, as well as his vigor and determination, draw many historians to study Wilson and his quarrel with Europeans and Republican Senators in doing what he believed to be moral and just. Wilson's presidency and his tenure as a global leader not only provide historians with groundbreaking historical events to study, but also perhaps one of the greatest political dramas of all time. With Wilson safely in Paris, many Republican Senators ignited a fight against the League of Nations as an attempt to disavow its credibility and to ensure its demise on the Senate floor. However, the spark that ignited that fight had been smoldering for years before Wilson went to Paris, and even before the United States joined the war in 1917.

Prior to entry into World War One, several peace organizations popped up throughout the United States. The largest and most influential of those became the League to Enforce Peace. While the League to Enforce Peace did not represent official governmental policy, it provided the framework for a lively and vibrant discussion regarding America's role in the international community, which this chapter addresses. Evidence suggests that the League to Enforce Peace helped to directly, as well as indirectly, coordinate and develop the factions that engulfed the later League of Nations debate and prompted Americans to think critically about America's position within the world. To illustrate the differing opinions, this chapter will feature five prominent individuals' ideas and beliefs during that time period.

Theodore Roosevelt became the first prominent individual to speak publicly about a world organization to maintain peace during his Nobel Peace Prize address in 1910. Supporting Roosevelt's idea of a peace league was his good friend, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge. However, their support for a league quickly dwindled when another former president, William H. Taft, joined the league bandwagon by becoming president of the League to Enforce Peace. Unlike Roosevelt and Lodge, Taft's support of a league never decreased as he threw his weight behind Wilson's League of Nations. However, during all of this, one person never wavered from his opposition to a league: William Jennings Bryan, who served as secretary of state under Wilson's administration.

Each of these individuals developed his own idea of peace and what the international role of the United States should be at the end of the war. Each man also had his own idea regarding whether America should become involved in the war and for what reasons. Curiously enough, out of these five people, three were Republicans, who at some point in time supported a league. The other two were Democrats: Wilson who passionately advocated for a league, and Bryan who opposed the idea. From this small cluster of prominent and influential Americans, divisions ruptured not just between political parties, but also within parties, making the discussion regarding America's role in international affairs even more passionate. This rift within the parties illustrates that the debate surrounding a league was not strictly a partisan issue, although by November 1919 the majority of Republicans seemed to coalesce around their leaders and the same held true for Democrats.

Prior to the emergence of the twentieth century, the United States engaged in only a handful of major wars with other countries, such as Great Britain in the War of 1812,

Mexico in the Mexican-American War of 1846 – 1848, and Spain in the Spanish-American War of 1898. During this time, Americans appeared to value peace, which is apparent from the number of peace organizations that sprouted throughout the country. In 1815, both the New York Peace Society and the Massachusetts Peace Society were established, and in 1828, the American Peace Society was founded. By 1850, at least fifty peace organizations had taken root in the country. However, each peace group had its own agenda and interests which prevented them from joining together and becoming one large organization.³⁰

After the world erupted in war in 1914, various members of the New York Peace Society began forming the League to Enforce Peace with the first meeting held at the New York Century Club on January 25, 1915. After the initial meeting, interest grew in establishing a league for peace. Support began pouring in from prominent individuals such as former president William H. Taft and Harvard president Abbot L. Lowell. Eventually, the group gained enough support to officially establish itself as the League to Enforce Peace at Independence Hall in Philadelphia on June 17, 1915. At this convention, members elected Taft to serve as the president of the organization and Lowell as chairman of the executive committee. There, it also adopted its four-plank platform, known as the Warrant from History: 1) establishment of a judicial tribunal for questions between signatories; 2) establishment of a Council of Conciliation for all other questions;

³⁰ Ruhl J. Bartlett, *The League to Enforce Peace* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1944), 3 – 4; see also, Aaron D. Purcell, “Pursuing Peace: Arthur Morgan and Ohio’s League to Enforce Peace, 1915 – 1920,” *Ohio History* 109 (December 2000), 25.

3) use of force against any member that engages in hostility with another member; and 4) periodic conferences to discuss issues related to international law.³¹

Once established, the League to Enforce Peace grew to become the most prominent peace society in the United States. Lowell successfully gained financial backing from the World Peace Foundation with an annual contribution of \$10,000, which certainly helped jumpstart the organization. Then, within 1916 alone, the League to Enforce Peace received \$240,000 worth in pledges.³² Financially speaking, the newfound peace league was doing quite well. Also, by 1916, membership in the League to Enforce Peace had steadily increased with branches in all states, except Minnesota, Nebraska, and Nevada, with the strongest branches being in the East, particularly in New England with Massachusetts being the model branch.³³

As time continued, the League to Enforce Peace engaged in more outreach programs to spread the word of its purpose and vision. With branches throughout the country, the organization sent leaders to speak in various towns and at numerous events, encouraging mayors and members of the clergy to have League to Enforce Peace Days in their towns and churches to promote the organization through speeches and to encourage membership. As the United States inched closer to joining the war, the League developed a preparedness campaign and during 1917, the League to Enforce Peace circulated over two million pieces of material to support its cause. On any given day, the main office of

³¹ Bartlett, *League to Enforce Peace*, 34 – 35, 39, 40 – 41; David H. Burton, *Taft, Wilson, and World Order* (Cranbury, New Jersey: Associated University Presses, 2003), 68.

³² C. Roland Marchand, *The American Peace Movement and Social Reform, 1898 – 1918* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972), 155; Charles Chatfield, *The American Peace Movement: Ideals and Activism* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992), 30; Bartlett, *League to Enforce Peace*, 61.

³³ Purcell, “Pursuing Peace,” 33; Bartlett, *League to Enforce Peace*, 62.

the League to Enforce Peace could send out approximately 2,000 letters, which required it to have a rather large staff.³⁴ The reach and scope of the League had grown tremendously.

Even though the League to Enforce Peace began with some prominent individuals, the opening of chapters and branches throughout the country made it seem more of a bottom-up approach to peace with influential leaders at the top. However, to make the League more appealing and to draw the support of lawmakers, Taft knew he needed to enlist the help of three prominent Republicans – Theodore Roosevelt, Henry Cabot Lodge, and Elihu Root. Each man brought to the table different viewpoints, experiences, and credibility. Roosevelt, as an ex-president was extremely popular among American citizens and Lodge, as a senior member on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, held some sway in Congress, as did Senator Root, who once served as secretary of war and state and was thus very knowledgeable in foreign affairs.³⁵

Neither Roosevelt, Lodge, nor Root officially endorsed the League, but both Roosevelt and Lodge at one time supported the idea of a league; however, their enthusiasm for the League to Enforce Peace never reached the point Taft had hoped. Nevertheless, the League carried on and became extremely influential throughout the rest of the war and during the Paris Peace Conference. By June 1919, the League grew to astronomical proportions with 300,000 official members, 115 employees in the League's main office, 50,000 volunteers, and 36,333 available speakers throughout the country.³⁶

³⁴ Bartlett, *League to Enforce Peace*, 63 – 64, 89, 98.

³⁵ David H. Burton, *William Howard Taft: Confident Peacemaker* (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2004), 90, 103; Bartlett, *League to Enforce Peace*, 43, 134.

³⁶ Bartlett, *League to Enforce Peace*, 127 – 128.

In spite of never formally endorsing or speaking for the League to Enforce Peace, Theodore Roosevelt seems to be the first Republican to advocate for a league. In 1910, Roosevelt visited Norway to accept his Nobel Peace Prize that he won four years earlier for his part in the negotiations that ended the Russo-Japanese War. Within his acceptance speech, Roosevelt's message revolved around the maintenance of peace throughout the world.³⁷ This award smacks with irony as Roosevelt advocated for Big Stick Diplomacy and the threat of force in his corollary to the Monroe Doctrine.

It is clear from Roosevelt's speech that his views on peace were certainly not pacifist or idealistic. Rather, his vision of a new and improved international system was rooted in traditional diplomacy with hints of progressive features. In the beginning of his remarks, Roosevelt offered his general ideas on peace – that it should be righteous and not the result of a cowardly act. In fact, Roosevelt stated: “No man is worth calling a man who will not fight...,” thus providing the idea that Roosevelt believed that war may be necessary to protect a nation's honor. Roosevelt went on to describe four avenues for achieving and maintaining peace. He advocated for arbitration treaties among “all really civilized communities”, the establishment of a world court modeled after the United States Supreme Court, reduction of armaments, and the “master stroke” would be if nations would establish a “League of Peace, not only to keep the peace among themselves, but to prevent, by force if necessary, its being broken by others.”

Even though Roosevelt suggested the reduction of “naval armaments, by international agreements”, he seemed to put great stock in the use of force to protect the peace of the nations. He further went on to state that until some “international police

³⁷ Patricia O'Toole, *When Trumpets Call: Theodore Roosevelt after the White House* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005), 87; Joseph L. Gardner, *Departing Glory: Theodore Roosevelt as ex-President* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), 75, 155.

power” could prevent violence between nations, countries should be “well prepared to defend” their territory.³⁸ Roosevelt’s statements about the use of force in the name of peace illustrate that he certainly was not a pacifist.

At the outset of World War One, Roosevelt agreed with the neutrality policy put forth by President Wilson. In September 1914, Roosevelt stated: “It is certainly eminently desirable that we should remain entirely neutral and nothing but urgent need would warrant breaking our neutrality and taking sides one way or the other.”³⁹ However, after realizing that the German invasion of Belgium violated the Hague treaties, Roosevelt shifted his support away from neutrality to joining the Allied cause. Furthermore, Roosevelt became enraged when he learned how the current administration handled the *Lusitania* incident, referring to Wilson’s diplomatic note as being of “a man whose wife’s face is slapped by another man, who thinks it over and writes a note telling the other man he must not do it.” Under the circumstances, Roosevelt believed that the honor and integrity of the United States had been violated and that the country should put righteousness above peace and retaliate.

In 1915, Roosevelt changed his views on a league, partly due to his rift with Taft in the 1912 election and also to his belief that the League to Enforce Peace seemed too utopian as he referred to it as “childish make-believe.” In Roosevelt’s words, “Peace is a goddess only when she comes with a sword girt on thigh.” Clearly, he believed that in

³⁸ “Roosevelt Wants League of Peace,” *New York Times*, May 6, 1910, 4.

³⁹ “Roosevelt Lauds U.S. Peace Policy,” *Patriot*, September 24, 1914, 7; Cooper, Jr., *Breaking the Heart of the World*, 12; Gardner, *Departing Glory*, 321.

order for the League to work, the United States would have to increase its military power and provide sufficient force behind the League to Enforce Peace.⁴⁰

After denouncing the League to Enforce Peace and realizing that it was not the official government policy, Roosevelt seemed to remain quiet in regards to the League; rather, he aimed his remarks toward Wilson. It also appears that Roosevelt was afraid to criticize the president publicly since he requested to lead a military division should the United States join the war in Europe. If given the chance, Roosevelt claimed he would serve Wilson “with a single-minded loyalty” as a military officer. However, Roosevelt did not have an issue with criticizing the president privately, as can be shown through his many letters to Henry Cabot Lodge.

One point, in particular, that Roosevelt found fault with Wilson was the president’s lack of action toward preparing the country for the potential of war. Compared to pacifists like William Jennings Bryan, Roosevelt considered Wilson to be the “real danger” with his “sham preparedness.” Roosevelt observed the changing style of warfare and weaponry and knew that sending a soldier to the battlefield without proper preparations would end in disaster.⁴¹ In regards to war and peace, it appears that Roosevelt preferred peace, except when a nation’s honor had been challenged.

An examination of Roosevelt’s views toward the League to Enforce Peace sheds light on the notions of another individual: Henry Cabot Lodge. The relationship between Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge seemed to be one of immense friendship.

⁴⁰ Gardner, *Departing Glory*, 324, 334 – 335; Cooper, Jr., *Breaking the Heart of the World*, 14 – 15; Cooper Jr., *The Vanity of Power*, 60 – 61; Widenor, *Henry Cabot Lodge*, 226; Roosevelt, “The Monroe Doctrine,” *American Ideals*, 249.

⁴¹ Theodore Roosevelt to Henry Cabot Lodge, February 12, 1917, *Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, 1884 – 1918* vol. 2 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1925), 495, 477.

Each one would often end his letter by wishing the other man's wife well and closing with an endearment such as "Ever Yours" or "Always Yours." This tight-knit relationship helps us to understand why both men adopted similar views around the same time frame on preparedness and the international role of the United States after the war. However, Lodge became very vocal regarding a league, at first supporting it and then drawing away his support once Wilson was reelected in 1916.

Due to his influence in Congress, Lodge was one of the men Taft knew he needed to get on board the League to Enforce Peace bandwagon. In fact, at the one-year anniversary of the inception of the League to Enforce Peace, Taft invited Lodge, along with Wilson, to speak at a banquet. At the banquet, Lodge spoke very highly of the League to Enforce Peace and of the need for "adequate national defense." He also stated that in order to maintain peace, the United States needed to do more than to send "punitive expeditions", perhaps alluding to Wilson's decision to send Marines to Vera Cruz.⁴²



Figure 2: Henry Cabot Lodge (R-MA), Senate Historical Office

Lodge's speech at the League to Enforce Peace dinner was not the first time he advocated for a league. He did so a year earlier in his commencement address at Union College. In this speech, Lodge advocated for the use of force in maintaining peace because "it cannot be done by words." He further went on to advocate for a union of nations "to preserve peace and order." Lodge's friend, Roosevelt, applauded his speech,

⁴² "Suggests No Peace Terms," *New York Times*, May 28, 1916, 1.

referring to it as “a capital speech,” illustrating his concurrent opinion in using force to maintain peace.⁴³

Agreeing with Roosevelt’s view on preparedness, Lodge believed the League to Enforce Peace would assist with motivating the American public to accept preparedness, a topic that the League took up with enthusiasm. Lodge hoped that with the League advocating for preparedness, the country would inevitably become embroiled in the war and join the Allied side. Once the United States entered the war, the League to Enforce Peace changed from their preparedness campaign to the “Win the War for Permanent Peace” slogan. The League made itself perfectly clear that it was not a pacifist organization by deleting the word “peace” from several pamphlets and printing “Enforce” in red on its letterheads.⁴⁴

Lodge believed that since the League was for preparedness and ultimately for an Allied victory, it would clash with Wilson’s famous “peace without victory” notion and thus Wilson would be anti-League to Enforce Peace. With the League spread throughout the country, and membership numbering over 300,000, the League to Enforce Peace could indirectly assist with providing an opposing faction toward Wilson’s neutrality policies. A problem arose, however, when Wilson and the Republican candidate Charles E. Hughes maintained similar views on a league, resulting in the League not becoming a huge issue in the 1916 election.⁴⁵

⁴³ “World Peace Only by Force,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 10, 1915, 13; Theodore Roosevelt to Henry Cabot Lodge, August 4, 1915, *Selections from the Correspondence*, 460.

⁴⁴ Widenor, *Henry Cabot Lodge*, 230; Bartlett, *League to Enforce Peace*, 87, 94 – 95; Marchand, *American Peace Movement*, 157 – 158.

⁴⁵ Widenor, *Henry Cabot Lodge*, 227, 242; Bartlett, *League to Enforce Peace*, 81.

By July 1917, Lodge no longer supported a league. This came in part due to Wilson's reelection, and his newfound belief that the League to Enforce Peace would bind the United States "to all kinds of things." However, Lodge continued to favor the use of force in maintaining peace and believed that nations should be prepared at all times for military engagement. He thought that preparedness would protect nations from outside aggression.⁴⁶ Essentially, for Lodge and Roosevelt, the simple threat of force served as a barrier to belligerent nations. However, for this threat of force to be real, a country must have an adequate military to defend itself.

After the U.S. entry into World War One, Lodge remained a steadfast critic of Wilson's peace plan, while being supportive of his war decisions. Here it is evident that Lodge viewed the terms of peace differently than Wilson. Lodge wished for the total annihilation of Germany to the point that it could not resurface and inflict more damages upon the world, whereas Wilson believed that a league could restrict any possible future hostile action by Germany. Lodge, however, disagreed with the president on that point. In fact, he did not believe a league could even be established without compromising some of America's cherished values and doctrines, such as the Monroe Doctrine. For this reason, Lodge launched an all-out attack on Wilson's league ideas to prevent them from becoming established in international law.⁴⁷

Unlike Roosevelt or Lodge, former Republican president William Howard Taft, who once called Theodore Roosevelt a friend, did not waver in his support of a league. As an ex-president, Taft became a major spokesperson for the League and believed that

⁴⁶ Bartlett, *League to Enforce Peace*, 77, 81; Widenor, *Henry Cabot Lodge*, 235.

⁴⁷ Bartlett, *League to Enforce Peace*, 105, 108.

his position as president of the League to Enforce Peace provided him the ability to influence the beginnings of a peaceful post-war society. He believed he would be successful if a league resulted from World War One, even if that league did not resemble the League to Enforce Peace.⁴⁸

Taft preferred to be bi-partisan, regardless of the politics involved. For him, the creation of a league became his focal point. Like his predecessor, Taft believed that a league without any force would be pointless as it might require a strong military to enforce its decisions. He also realized that a league could not prevent all future wars, but a forceful league could prevent some wars from beginning.⁴⁹

Throughout the life of the League to Enforce Peace, Taft continuously advocated for and defended the notion of a league by entering into debates with others and giving speeches in support of a league. Taft liked to use the analogy of the need for law enforcement in communities to help make the point that a league with force was necessary to the maintenance of peace throughout the world. In a written debate with William Jennings Bryan, Taft wrote: “If we need fear of restraint to keep men in paths of peace and law, why not nations? Nations are only men united in communities.” He further stated that force is not always bad, particularly when used for good reasons, such as maintaining peace.⁵⁰

Taft was also called upon to respond to a host of charges, such that a league could impose upon the domestic issues of a country, would nullify the Monroe Doctrine, and

⁴⁸ Bartlett, *League to Enforce Peace*, 141; Burton, *William Howard Taft*, 85, 92.

⁴⁹ Henry F. Pringle, *The Life and Times of William Howard Taft: A Biography* vol. 2 (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., 1939), 930; *World Peace: A Written Debate between William Howard Taft and William Jennings Bryan* (1917; reprint, New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1970), 58.

⁵⁰ *World Peace: A Written Debate*, 34.

would pull the United States into all conflicts. Taft responded to all of these charges negatively, claiming that a league would not interfere with the domestic issues of a country, that the Monroe Doctrine's authority would remain unabated, and that Congress still retained the ability to declare war.

In his written debate with Bryan, Taft noted that the Monroe Doctrine was an American policy and as such would not fall under the jurisdiction of international law, which would keep it from being brought up at the league's world court. If a country questioned the Monroe Doctrine, it would come before the Council of Conciliation, whose decision the United States would not be obligated to accept, unlike the judicial tribunal. Additionally, Taft argued that the league would not allow countries to colonize areas of the world, which is what the Monroe Doctrine states. Therefore, the League would provide all countries protection of the Monroe Doctrine.⁵¹

Regarding the assumption that the league could overstep Congress' authority and force the United States to go to war, Taft contended that the Constitution was still the supreme law of the land in the United States. Under a league, Taft believed that Congress still had the "duty to determine whether the event had arisen, imposing on the United States the task of furnishing its quota of an international police force and taking part in a campaign." To further embellish this notion, Taft provided the example of the United States' obligation to protect Panama. According to Taft, this treaty required the United States to intervene militarily without the expressed approval of Congress in the event that Panama was attacked.⁵² This example provided Taft the evidence he needed to illustrate

⁵¹ *World Peace: A Written Debate*, 106 – 108.

⁵² *World Peace: A Written Debate*, 116 – 117; Pringle, *Life and Times of William Howard Taft*, 941; Burton, *Taft, Wilson, and World Order*, 74.

that the United States had already subjected itself to using force to protect another nation. However, it could possibly be contended that this obligation fell under the auspices of the Roosevelt Corollary.

Even though Taft believed wholeheartedly in a league with force, he was willing to make concessions to see that an actual league was formed. However, Wilson's idea of a league was bound by word only and not by force. Nonetheless, Taft supported Wilson's idea of a league in the hopes that it might actually be formed with the United States as a member. In fact, while Wilson was in Paris, Taft sent him messages offering him support and advice as to how the treaty should be worded so that it would be well-received when Wilson returned to America.⁵³

As a child who grew up in the American South during the Civil War, Wilson knew the dangers and consequences of war. Thus, when World War One broke out in Europe, Wilson was loath to enter the conflict, preferring to watch the unsightly event unfold from the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. However, after events, such as the sinking of the *Lusitania* and the Zimmermann Telegram, Wilson reluctantly entered the country into the war. Prior to doing so, Wilson spent time discussing the issue of preparedness with the American people and making plans for a post-war peace society.

In his State of the Union Address in December 1915, Wilson stated that preparations for war were "absolutely imperative now. We cannot do less."⁵⁴ In this statement, Wilson did not declare war, but rather let Americans know that under the

⁵³ Many of these messages are contained within Arthur S. Link, *PWW* in the volumes containing correspondence during 1919, when Wilson was in Paris.

⁵⁴ Woodrow Wilson, "State of the Union Address," December 7, 1915, Government Printing Office pamphlet, Cary T. Grayson Papers, Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library.

present circumstances the only right thing to do was to prepare for the possibility of war. Approximately a month and half later, Wilson embarked on a tour of the United States to discuss the preparedness issue with the American public.

In a speech in New York, Wilson stated: “the question of preparation for national defense,” was not “a question of war or of peace.” According to Wilson, peace was always preferable to war, and while preparations for war did not mean a declaration of war, doing so ensured the ability to fight if the honor and integrity of the country came under fire. The only reason why the United States would enter into a war would be to fight for the “integrity of its own convictions,” not to acquire territory or for material gain.⁵⁵ Even though Wilson put a lot of emphasis on peace, he also warned against pacifism in another speech while in Des Moines. There, he stated that the pacifists “are making one fundamental mistake” because the United States was no longer in isolation, and “The dangers to our peace do not come any longer from within our own boundaries.” In essence, Wilson acknowledged the benefits of peace, but also understood the realities of the world and the possibility of war.

Also, in his speech in Des Moines, Wilson alluded to the creation of an “international tribunal” at the end of the war to secure peace for the world.⁵⁶ Later in May 1916, Wilson met with anti-preparedness leaders and also addressed the issue of a world organization with the purpose of keeping the peace. In this conversation, Wilson used the word “force” when he referred to maintaining peace throughout the world.

⁵⁵ Woodrow Wilson, “An Address in New York on Preparedness,” January 27, 1916, in Arthur S. Link, ed., *PWW*, Vol. 36 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981), 9 – 10.

⁵⁶ Woodrow Wilson, “An Address in Des Moines on Preparedness,” February 1, 1916, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 36, 78 – 79, 80.

Assuming that the United States would enter into a “family of nations” organized to prevent future wars, all of the nations involved would expect the U.S. to provide “her element of force to the general understanding.” Additionally, according to Wilson, if a nation stated, “we shall not have any war, [then] you have got to have the force to make that ‘shall’ bite.”⁵⁷ It appears from this occasion that Wilson was in agreement with the Roosevelt, Taft, and Lodge coalition regarding the use of force to compel nations to maintain peace.

The question, however, is whether Wilson meant the use of military force? It appears he did, but his definition of force from a speech in New York on January 27, 1916 to the Clerical Conference of the New York Federation of Churches implies otherwise. In his address, Wilson stated that “the greatest force in the world, is character.” Nations that earnestly believed in peace would not resort to war. If they did, they would abandon their principles and their self-respect.⁵⁸ It seems that Wilson believed that the greatest force was morality, not the military, and that peace loving nations would not walk away from their values.

Upon hearing of Wilson’s speeches and his suggestion of a world organization to maintain peace, Taft invited Wilson, along with Henry Cabot Lodge, to speak at the League to Enforce Peace banquet in Washington, D.C. on May 27, 1916. Wilson made it clear within his speech that he did not attend the banquet to endorse the League to

⁵⁷ “A Colloquy with a Group of Antipreparedness Leaders,” May 8, 1916, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 36, 645.

⁵⁸ Woodrow Wilson, “Remarks to the Clerical Conference of the New York Federation of Churches,” January 27, 1916, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 36, 5 – 6.

Enforce Peace, but merely to “avow a creed.”⁵⁹ As president of the United States, Wilson had to be careful about the words he used because he needed to remain vague on the issue of a league until the time that the issue could be discussed officially.⁶⁰

Unlike Roosevelt, Lodge, Taft, and Wilson, the pacifist William Jennings Bryan disliked the notion of a League to Enforce Peace from its inception. He believed that the organization did nothing to advance peace, but rather helped to promote preparedness due to its support of force in the maintenance of peace. Bryan even referred to the League to Enforce Peace as “peace by terrorism.” In fact, Bryan disliked anything that had to do with war so much that he resigned from his position as Wilson’s secretary of state following Wilson’s terse diplomatic note to the German government after the *Lusitania* sunk.⁶¹

Throughout his written debate with William H. Taft, Bryan argued against a league, particularly one with force because he believed that it violated our isolationist foreign policy, required the surrender of the Monroe Doctrine, took away Congress’ authority to declare war, and replaced respect with fear. According to Bryan, the use of force for any reason precipitated a declaration of war. In response to Taft’s assertion that the United States was no longer isolated, Bryan argued that the country’s relations with Europe provided more reason to protect the integrity of the Monroe Doctrine and secure the Western Hemisphere.⁶²

⁵⁹ Woodrow Wilson, “An Address in Washington to the League to Enforce Peace,” May 27, 1916, in Link, *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, Vol. 37, 116.

⁶⁰ Cooper, *Breaking the Heart of the World*, 27.

⁶¹ Cooper, Jr., *Vanity of Power*, 55; Cooper Jr., *Woodrow Wilson*, 290 – 292; *World Peace: A Written Debate*, 66.

⁶² *World Peace: A Written Debate*, 39, 138 – 139, 121 – 122.

Rather than acquiesce on any of Taft's points, Bryan offered his own suggestions for securing world peace. Those suggestions included treaties with individual countries, an international court, a referendum on war except in the case of an attack, and the reduction of armaments. Bryan's attacks on the League to Enforce Peace, Ruhl J. Bartlett argues, provided the kindling in the mid-1910s that was used to support the isolationist argument during the League of Nations debate in 1919 and 1920.⁶³

After examining the different points of view of five individuals, of whom all were political leaders and whose opinions held sway with different pockets of the population, it is clear this topic sparked a lot of controversy. The discussion surrounding the League to Enforce Peace became the forerunner to the later debate over the League of Nations. In essence, the league battle actually began in the mid-1910s, as those interested in establishing peace began to split into factions. This time period became crucial to developing ideas and the reasoning behind either agreeing to Wilson's League of Nations, or not. The immense size and influence of the League to Enforce Peace provided something similar to a forum that allowed Americans to open up and think critically not just of wartime issues, but also of their beliefs and values. The insightful discussions that emanated from the League to Enforce Peace helped to determine the perception of the United States' role in the world.

⁶³ *World Peace: A Written Debate*, 141; Bartlett, *League to Enforce Peace*, 72.

The Paris Peace Conference

World War One had a devastating effect on the entire world, particularly Europe.

The war severely damaged the infrastructure and economies of the combatant nations.

In the aftermath of the war, many politicians and statesmen from the Allied countries met in Paris to bring justice to the victims and attempt to divide the spoils of war. The most powerful men of the world at the time led the Paris Peace Conference: Prime Minister of France, Georges Clemenceau; Prime Minister of Great Britain, David Lloyd-George; and President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson.



Figure 3: David Lloyd George, Vittorio Orlando (Prime Minister of Italy), Georges Clemenceau, Woodrow Wilson, 27 May 1919, Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library

Being a historian, Wilson believed the underlying reason for the First World War was due to traditional imperialism – something he wished to prevent from reoccurring.⁶⁴ Prior to the Paris Peace Conference, Wilson outlined his plan for peace, known as the Fourteen Points. The Fourteenth Point was the League of Nations, which became the primary vehicle for changing the attitude of the world to one of continual peace. For Wilson, the League of Nations would be comprised of countries who would attempt to mediate conflicts between nations in an effort to prevent wars. Thus, the introduction by

⁶⁴ Woodrow Wilson, “Address on War Aims,” Delivered at a joint session of the two houses of Congress, February 11, 1918. Congressional Office Pamphlet, Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library.

Woodrow Wilson of the League of Nations was foreign to Europeans and served as an entity to disrupt their influence and power.⁶⁵

Wilson, a very idealistic man, introduced within the League of Nations Covenant the idea of self-determination: the universal right of people to set up their own government and to govern themselves. It would appear that the concept of self-determination – the right of people to govern themselves – would have undermined and eliminated the imperialistic goals of countries such as Britain and France. However, this was not the case. The Paris Peace Conference continued to breed imperialism by naming various European countries as mandates over less-privileged countries for an indeterminate amount of time under the guise that someday they may acquire self-determination and conduct their own affairs.

The introduction of “self-determination” was quite frightening, particularly to Europeans, because it was so vague. Even members of the American delegation were perplexed as to what Wilson meant when he said, “self-determination,” including Secretary of State Robert Lansing. Lansing understood that Wilson meant something similar to the phrase “consent of the governed” that had been in-use for quite some time. He realized that statesmen from imperialistic nations were not fond of this phrase as it encroached upon their “national safety” due to the threat of revolt from their colonies. Yet, Lansing questioned the phrase “self-determination” wondering exactly what Wilson meant by it: “Does he mean a race, a territorial area, or a community?” However, Lansing also realized the implications behind Wilson’s usage of “self-determination,” stating: “The phrase is simply loaded with dynamite.” It appears that Lansing understood that all

⁶⁵ Clemenceau argued for keeping the balance of power. Robert Lansing, *The Peace Negotiations: A Personal Narrative*. (1921; reprint, Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1969), 77.

eyes and ears from all nations, including colonized ones, were on Wilson. However, the phrase “self-determination” was not written into the League of Nations Covenant, begging Lansing’s questions of what was self-determination and who would receive it.⁶⁶

Like Europeans, many Americans, particularly Republicans, were fearful of the League of Nations. They believed it would destroy American sovereignty and influence, namely the Monroe Doctrine. Thus, they pushed for the inclusion of the Monroe Doctrine into the League of Nations Covenant. However, according to Wilson’s authorized biographer, Ray Stannard Baker, Wilson applied “traditional American policies,” including the Monroe Doctrine, when designing the League of Nations.⁶⁷ Along these lines, Wilson countered his critics by claiming that the Monroe Doctrine was already embodied within the League of Nations Covenant, and that the League of Nations extended the Monroe Doctrine to the world.⁶⁸ The urging of Republican senators to safeguard the Monroe Doctrine into the Covenant illustrates the idea that Republicans were just as concerned about self-determination as imperial Europe. The possibility of Latin America receiving true self-determination would prohibit the United States from playing “big brother” and interfering under the auspices of the Roosevelt Corollary.

Following the Great War, President Woodrow Wilson ventured across the Atlantic Ocean to take part in the Paris Peace Conference with the goal of preventing future wars. At this time, Wilson began his two-front battle to ensure the League of Nations’ survival. He fought Republicans within the United States and statesmen in Paris.

⁶⁶ Lansing, *The Peace Negotiations*, 96, 97, 95.

⁶⁷ Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement*, 2 Vols. (Gloucester, Massachusetts: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1960), Vol. 1, 325.

⁶⁸ A News Report: “President Holds Levee at Capitol; Opposition Senators Unconverted,” February 27, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 55, 295.

Embarking on his journey, Wilson took a plethora of American statesmen and diplomats to assist him in his endeavors to save humankind from future wars and oppression while delivering to the world a new way of living that would ensure peace and stability.

Two of Wilson's more prominent aides were his close friend and confidante, Colonel Edward M. House, and Secretary of State Robert Lansing. Wilson did not take any Republican members of the Senate with him to Paris, which caused much contention between Wilson and Republicans, namely Henry Cabot



Figure 4: Edward M. House, Robert Lansing, Woodrow Wilson, Henry White, Tasker H. Bliss, Dec. 19, 1918, Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library.

Lodge. For many Republicans, it would have seemed proper to invite Republican senators to the conference since the election of 1918 brought a Republican majority to Congress. Furthermore, under the Constitution, it was the Senate's responsibility to ratify treaties. Wilson eventually named ex-diplomat Henry White as the Republican to the delegation. However, according to Wilson's personal physician, Cary Grayson, and Robert Lansing, Wilson had a reason for not bringing any Republicans: he did not wish any opposition within the American delegation.⁶⁹

For Wilson, the inclusion of the League of Nations in the peace treaty was of utmost importance. However, Europeans were not keen on the idea of a League of Nations. Therefore, neither British Prime Minister David Lloyd-George nor French Premier Georges Clemenceau appointed himself on the League of Nations committee, rather it was headed by Woodrow Wilson.⁷⁰ According to Charles Seymour, in a letter

⁶⁹ Cary Grayson, *Woodrow Wilson: An Intimate Memoir* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1960), 58; see also, Lansing, *The Peace Negotiations*, 41.

⁷⁰ MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, 91.

dated Saturday, February 15, 1919, without Wilson's presence at the conference, the League "would have never been carried."⁷¹

Early in the conference, Wilson developed a draft of the League of Nations Covenant. This draft contained an unarticulated clause regarding the Monroe Doctrine within Article III: "The Contracting Powers unite in guaranteeing to each other political independence and territorial integrity." While the Monroe Doctrine was not mentioned by name, the substance of the article had the same effect, evident by the comment by David Hunter Miller, an American legal expert present at the conference. Miller stated that the above phrase did not protect the Doctrine, but rather nullified it. To solve this problem, Miller believed the Covenant "should contain an express recognition of the Monroe Doctrine." However, it is interesting that in his suggested rewording of the Article, he did not mention the Doctrine by name, but described and guaranteed the continued function of the Doctrine.⁷²

Later, in February 1919, Woodrow Wilson returned to the United States to be present for the closing of 65th session of Congress so he could sign legislation into law. Two days after his return, Wilson hosted a dinner at the White House in which his guests were members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee. At this informal gathering, Wilson fielded questions from senators and

⁷¹ Charles Seymour, *Letters from the Paris Peace Conference*, ed. Harold B. Whiteman Jr., (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University, 1965), 5.

⁷² Document 7: "Wilson's Second Draft or First Paris Draft, January 10, 1919 with Comments and Suggestions by D.H.M.," in David Hunter Miller, *The Drafting of the Covenant*, 2 Vols (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1928), Vol. 2, 70 – 72.

representatives with responses that were very frank and direct.⁷³ During the evening, Wilson was informed of the desire by certain congressmen to see an expressed recognition of the Monroe Doctrine within the League of Nations Covenant. The president, however, believed no explicit mention of the Doctrine was necessary because the League of Nations was an extension of the Monroe Doctrine for the entire world.⁷⁴

Additionally, while home, Wilson met with Senate Democrats to discuss the current strategy, which mainly focused on discovering which Republicans would most likely break from their party and vote with the Democrats on the Treaty. Scouting potential Republicans who would break from their party suggests there was no doubt that Senate Democrats would certainly vote for the Treaty. However, in order to capture the votes of swaying Republicans, Senator Thomas J. Walsh advised the president to make efforts to insert changes in the Treaty upon his return to Paris.⁷⁵ Recognizing that the Covenant could be clarified, Wilson then requested advice from Walsh regarding suggestions as to where senators believed improvement was needed.⁷⁶

Walsh, however, was not the only Democrat who encouraged Wilson to amend the Treaty in order to secure Republican votes. Senator Gilbert M. Hitchcock, outgoing chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, also advised Wilson to the same effect. However, Hitchcock went further than Walsh by suggesting six different amendments that he believed would ensure Republican acceptance of the Treaty. These changes

⁷³ A News Report: "President Expounds League of Nations to Dinner Guests," quoted in Link, *PWW* Vol. 55, 268 – 276.

⁷⁴ A News Report: "President Expounds League of Nations to Dinner Guests," quoted in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 55, 268 – 276.

⁷⁵ Thomas James Walsh to Woodrow Wilson, February 25, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 55, 262 – 263.

⁷⁶ Woodrow Wilson to Thomas James Walsh, February 26, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 55, 280.

included the ability of each government to have “exclusive control over domestic subjects,” “a reservation of the Monroe Doctrine,” a process to withdraw from the League, the right to decline trusteeship over a former colony, and a few instances of clearing up the language used in the Treaty.⁷⁷ Each of these suggested amendments would allow the United States to retain its sovereignty, a major Republican criticism of the League.

One Republican senator, Porter James McCumber, broke ranks from his Republican majority and supported Wilson in the Senate. In his letter to the president, McCumber proposed three amendments regarding topics such as keeping domestic concerns out of the League’s jurisdiction, preserving each country’s “full, free and independent sovereign powers,” and safeguarding the Monroe Doctrine.⁷⁸ Aside from Taft, McCumber was one of few Republicans who reached out to Wilson, illustrating little attempt from across the aisle at bi-partisanship. A staunch supporter of Wilson’s League, McCumber was hesitant to follow the lead of Henry Cabot Lodge, the new Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee once the 66th Congress convened.

In addition to Hitchcock and McCumber, Senator Samuel McCall of New Jersey also wrote to Wilson suggesting the Monroe Doctrine be recognized in the treaty, thereby allowing it to become “the public law of the world.”⁷⁹ In response to McCall’s suggestion, Wilson believed it would “be worth while” to introduce the topic when he returned back to Paris. Furthermore, Wilson doubted his European colleagues would

⁷⁷ Gilbert Monell Hitchcock to Woodrow Wilson, March 4, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 55, 437.

⁷⁸ Porter James McCumber to Woodrow Wilson, March 13, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 55, 491 – 492.

⁷⁹ Samuel Walker McCall to Woodrow Wilson, February 26, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 55, 292 – 293.

object to the specific recognition of the Doctrine.⁸⁰ It is clear that not only was Wilson open to suggestions in order to ensure the future ratification of the treaty, but also the issues of protecting the Monroe Doctrine and America's sovereignty seemed to be a major factor in whether the Senate would ratify the treaty.

Leaving nothing to chance, Lodge organized a campaign against Wilson's League of Nations. He circulated a petition, known as the Round Robin, which was signed by thirty-seven senators who stated their disapproval of the proposed peace organization.⁸¹ Resentful of Wilson's League because they believed it would entangle the United States in European affairs and destroy America's sovereignty over the Western Hemisphere, Republicans demanded the Monroe Doctrine be safeguarded within the League of Nations Covenant.

A few days prior to returning to Paris, Woodrow Wilson and William Taft made a joint appearance at a pro-League rally at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City on March 4. Wilson and Taft both criticized Republican opposition to the League of Nations. While Wilson did not make reference to the Monroe Doctrine, he countered Republican claims that the League of Nations would destroy the American foreign policy of not engaging in entangling alliances, put forth by George Washington. In countering this claim, Wilson stated that Washington would be pleased because the League of Nations would "disentangle all the alliances in the world."⁸²

⁸⁰ Woodrow Wilson to Samuel Walker McCall, February 28, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 55, 328 – 329.

⁸¹ Cooper, Jr., *Breaking the Heart of the World*, 56 – 57.

⁸² Woodrow Wilson, "An Address at the Metropolitan Opera House," March 4, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 55, 419.

On the way back to Paris aboard the *U.S.S. George Washington*, journalist Ray Stannard Baker issued a memorandum related to the public opinion of the League of Nations. While Baker identified that the majority of public opinion favored the League, he believed the vagueness of the League's ideals allowed the opposition to build a strong argument against it. To counter this, Baker suggested that Wilson needed to explain the workings of the committee so the public would understand the pressures Wilson encountered in Paris. Also, Baker believed that amendments for added clarity would be helpful in passage of the League by the Senate.⁸³

On March 14, Wilson arrived back in Paris to resume the challenges of establishing the League of Nations. It could be assumed that Wilson, who desperately wanted to ensure the passage of the League of Nations in Europe and in the United States, would have heeded Republican senators' advice in ensuring inclusion of certain amendments to the Covenant, one being the explicit recognition of the Monroe Doctrine. However, Wilson was a very stubborn, hard-headed individual who was very passionate about what he was trying to do, and was unwilling to acquiesce to the desires of his opponents.⁸⁴

When Wilson returned to the peace conference, he had no intention of incorporating the Monroe Doctrine, in name, within the Covenant. He believed it was already implicit within the document, and that including it would be "yielding to the Senate."⁸⁵ For Wilson, this was not just a moral, but a political debate. He detested

⁸³ A Memorandum by Ray Stannard Baker, March 6, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 55, 449 – 451; Diary of Ray Stannard Baker, March 8, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 55, 463 – 464.

⁸⁴ Wilson admitted he had a "single-track mind." When he had his mind set on accomplishing something, he was determined not to deviate from his original plan. Cooper, *Woodrow Wilson*, 237.

⁸⁵ Diary of Colonel Edward Mandel House, March 16, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 55, 538.

Republican members of the Senate, and their recommendation of amendments gave him reason to uphold the Covenant as it was written.⁸⁶ Wilson deplored his opposition so much that he blamed them for the state of his health. He once told Dr. Grayson: “ ‘My trouble is this, and I have worked it out myself: I am suffering from retention of gases generated by the Republican Senators – and that’s enough to poison any man.’ ”⁸⁷ Wilson’s opponents equally despised him, in particular the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Henry Cabot Lodge. Prior to his first departure to Paris, Lodge gave Henry White, the Republican diplomat, a note to give to the European delegates instructing them not to follow through with Wilson’s wishes of establishing a League of Nations. That letter was never delivered.⁸⁸

Nevertheless, Wilson wanted to obtain the passage of the League of Nations, and thus, “constrained by political necessity to go forward,” knew he needed to propose an amendment recognizing the Monroe Doctrine, but such an amendment would not come for almost a month.⁸⁹ In drafting a Monroe Doctrine clause, Wilson realized the consequences of such an amendment. He recognized that the Monroe Doctrine had allowed the United States to use force to enter into Latin American republics.⁹⁰ His acknowledgement of this intervention allowed by the Monroe Doctrine suggests the notion that a Monroe Doctrine clause would still provide the United States a medium to

⁸⁶ Diary of Ray Stannard Baker, March 8, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 55, 465.

⁸⁷ Diary of Dr. Grayson, March 11, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 55, 473.

⁸⁸ William C. Widenor, *Henry Cabot Lodge*, 298 – 299; Ann Hagedorn, *Savage Peace: Hope and Fear in America, 1919* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007), 119.

⁸⁹ Baker, *Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement*, Vol. 1, 329

⁹⁰ Diary of David Hunter Miller, Tuesday, March 18, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 56, 80.

enter countries in the Western Hemisphere and for America to retain its sphere of influence. In addition, the delegation agreed on the notion that if the Monroe Doctrine was explicitly protected within the League of Nations Covenant, other nations, particularly Japan, would insist on a similar doctrine for themselves, an issue the delegation did not approve.⁹¹ It is apparent that even the United States did not want other powers, such as the Japanese, to acquire more power and influence in the world, which would erode America's imperial power in Asia.

Wilson continually received encouragement to include the Monroe Doctrine within the Covenant, particularly from former Republican president, William Howard Taft. In his note of March 18, Taft noted that the inclusion of the Doctrine would probably be enough for the Senate to ratify the treaty in its entirety, illuminating the importance of the Doctrine to Republican senators who valued its ability to allow the United States to have a sphere of influence. In his telegram, Taft included a possible amendment to be used:

Any American State or States may protect the integrity of American territory and the independence of the government whose territory it is, whether the member of the League or not, and may, in the interests of American peace, object to and prevent the further transfer of American territory or sovereignty to any European or non-American power.⁹²

⁹¹ Diary of Colonel House, March 18, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 56, 82; Miller, *The Drafting of the Covenant*, Vol. 1, 453. Japan introduced an amendment similar to what the American and European delegates had expected. The Japanese delegation created an "equality of nations" amendment which failed. The commission determined that the amendment was dangerous because it would allow states to increase their armaments, which was inconsistent with the Covenant. "Minutes of a Meeting of the League of Nations Commission," April 11, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 57, 248 – 251. A member of the British delegation believed that Britain should have a Monroe Doctrine regarding the Southern Pacific. David Lloyd George, *Memoirs of the Peace Conference*, 1939, Reprint (New York: H. Fertig, 1972), 121.

⁹² William Howard Taft to Woodrow Wilson, March 18, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 56, 83.

It is interesting that in Taft's proposed amendment, the Monroe Doctrine is not explicitly mentioned by name, alluding to the assertion that the Doctrine did not have to be named, but instead a description or definition would be appropriate.

A few days later, Taft sent Wilson another telegram with further detailed explanations as to his suggestion regarding the Monroe Doctrine. Taft argued that the current state of the Covenant only covered members of the League. Knowing that there would be Latin American states that would not be directly admitted into the League, this provision Taft wrote would provide protection for them. In addition, it specified exactly the purpose of the Monroe Doctrine, that "European or non-American" states should not seek further acquisition of American territory.⁹³ Taft's belief that he needed to further explain the purpose and implications of his amendment suggests the complexity and vagueness of the matter at hand. In addition, this illustrates the American desire to retain its sphere of influence over Latin America in the face of self-determination.

Furthermore, Thomas Lamont, a member of the American peace delegation, wrote to Wilson and enclosed Senator Elihu Root's thoughts on the League of Nations Covenant. Root acknowledged that due to the participation in the war, the United States had a hand in world affairs. However, the United States' interest in world affairs stemmed from the expansion of the war in Europe. Conversely, Europeans should have no concern with American interests unless those matters threaten to spread and endanger world affairs. In writing this, Root begged a rhetorical question regarding the Monroe Doctrine's authority. He believed the Doctrine had been diluted, but that America's

⁹³ William Howard Taft to Woodrow Wilson, March 21, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 56, 158.

primary interests remained in the Western Hemisphere and Europe's primary interest remained in the eastern.⁹⁴

Despite his dislike of Republican senators, Wilson finally hinted at the introduction of the Monroe Doctrine clause at the twelfth meeting of the League of Nations Commission. As the commission worked through the Covenant, Wilson retained the right to propose an amendment in the future to Article X which maintained that states should respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of other states.⁹⁵ It appears that Wilson had in mind an amendment preserving the Monroe Doctrine as it would fit nicely within the context of the existing article.

In fact, an amendment was in the process of being written by the American delegation, along with a member of the British delegation, Lord Robert Cecil. On March 18, Wilson met with Colonel House and Cecil to discuss amendments to the League of Nations Covenant. At this meeting, a discussion of a Monroe Doctrine amendment occurred, which Lord Robert Cecil did not initially support, but eventually agreed to.⁹⁶ Cecil's reluctance is odd because according to a *New York Times* article, published months before this meeting, he praised the Doctrine saying it had provided "satisfactory

⁹⁴ Thomas William Lamont to Woodrow Wilson, with Enclosure, March 19, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 56, 100. Senator Root, a Republican, who served as Secretary of War under McKinley and both Secretary of War and State under Roosevelt, believed the League of Nations Covenant had flaws. As a judicialist, Root believed the Covenant should contain more international law features, such as a recognition of the Monroe Doctrine. Margulies, *The Mild Reservationists*, 23 – 24.

⁹⁵"Minutes of a Meeting of the League of Nations Commission," March 24, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 56, 226.

⁹⁶ Diary of Lord Robert Cecil, March 18, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 56, 81 – 82; Diary of Colonel House, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 56, 82. Contrasting these two sources, House's diary indicates that he and Cecil had a meeting prior to the one with Wilson. Also, House noted that David Hunter Miller was present at the meeting as well. However, House does not specify which meeting Miller attended.

results in practice which justifies its further application as a model of operation.”⁹⁷ It is not clear as to why Cecil changed his mind, possibly due to the fact that in January the Covenant made no direct mention of the Doctrine, but was only modeled after it, and thus, Cecil objected to the inclusion of the name, not the principle.

Finally, Cecil approached Prime Minister Lloyd George regarding the Monroe Doctrine clause. According to Lloyd George, he could not make any decision without first discussing the matter with the British delegation, yet this was only to hide his real intentions. Being a seafaring nation with a number of colonies and dominions around the world, Lloyd George thought it best that Britain retain a large navy. Lloyd George viewed the League of Nations to be Wilson’s toy and believed Wilson would not be happy unless it was written into the treaty.⁹⁸ Britain’s prime minister wanted to develop a strategy to use the Monroe Doctrine as a bargaining chip in order to keep the Americans from building up their navy against the British.⁹⁹ However, Cecil urged Lloyd George to keep the Monroe Doctrine separate from the naval question because without the inclusion of the Doctrine, the chances of the United States ratifying the treaty were slim.¹⁰⁰ While

⁹⁷ “Praises Monroe Doctrine: Cecil Would Have It Maintained by the League of Nations,” *New York Times*, January 30, 1919, 2.

⁹⁸ Lloyd George, *Memoirs of the Peace Conference*, 121.

⁹⁹ Diary of Lord Robert Cecil, March 26, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 56, 297; Lord Robert Cecil to Edward Mandell House, April 8, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 57, 143. Cecil discovered a circulating idea that the United States had plans to increase its naval power while simultaneously asking other nations to reduce their armaments through the League of Nations. Cecil told House, “such an attitude is wholly inconsistent with the conception of the League of Nations.”

¹⁰⁰ Diary of Lord Robert Cecil, April 8 – 10, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 57, 142. Lloyd George also knew that the United States would only ratify the treaty if the Monroe Doctrine was included.

Lloyd George was looking out for the welfare of his own nation, Colonel House referred to him as a “mischief maker” for his role in complicating Wilson’s plans.¹⁰¹

After Wilson learned of Lloyd George’s disapproval regarding the inclusion of the Monroe Doctrine without the American concession to the British regarding the building of ships, he was fairly calm. He was willing to risk his chances with the Senate without putting the Monroe Doctrine clause within the treaty.¹⁰² It appears that Wilson was more inclined to ensure the freedom of the seas, part of his Fourteen Points, rather than include a provision that preserved the Doctrine when the League of Nations was modeled on the Doctrine. Or possibly, Wilson saw his chance to tell Republican Senators that his request to include the Monroe Doctrine was denied, therefore he could triumphantly tell the Senate that he had done his best.

On April 10, Wilson received a telegram from the League to Enforce Peace, co-written by Taft and Lowell. Within the message, the leaders of the peace organization stated their opinion that unless the Monroe Doctrine was protected in the Covenant, “Republican Senators will certainly defeat ratification of treaty.”¹⁰³ It is doubtful that this telegram prompted Wilson’s action later that day. Nonetheless, the telegram serves as a reminder that the Republicans controlled the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and inherently the decision whether the United States would join the League of Nations, or not.

¹⁰¹ Diary of Colonel House, April 1, 1919, in Link, *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, Vol. 56, 517.

¹⁰² Diary of Colonel House, March 27, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 56, 335.

¹⁰³ William Howard Taft and Abbott Lawrence Lowell to Woodrow Wilson, April 10, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 57, 233.

Finally, in the late hours of April 10, Woodrow Wilson proposed the Monroe Doctrine amendment to the League of Nations Covenant:

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.

Mr. Wellington Koo from the Chinese delegation and Mr. Reis and Mr. Larnaude from the French delegation had slight objections to the inclusion of the Monroe Doctrine. Both delegations had reservations regarding the inclusion of the amendment for security reasons. However, Mr. Koo did not object to the inclusion of the Monroe Doctrine by name, rather he disagreed with the term “regional understandings” as he feared it would allow Japan to create an Asiatic Doctrine and have an imperialistic influence over China.

The French delegation, conversely, did object to the inclusion of the Monroe Doctrine, as the amendment did not contain a precise definition of the Doctrine. Both Mr. Reis and Mr. Larnaude requested a definition of the Monroe Doctrine, as they were concerned whether or not the United States would come to the aid of France if attacked. Lord Robert Cecil acknowledged that while the Monroe Doctrine had never truly been defined and if it were to be defined, its scope would be limited or extended. Cecil further noted that the Doctrine was used only as an example of other regional understandings and that it did not prohibit the United States from coming to the future aid of Europe.¹⁰⁴

Fearful that the Monroe Doctrine would not be included within the League of Nations Covenant, Wilson gave an impromptu and passionate speech “full of eloquence

¹⁰⁴ Miller, *The Drafting of the Covenant*, Vol. 1, 442 – 450. Wilson also echoed Cecil’s claim that the United States would still come to the aid of European countries under attack. In reference to Mr. Koo’s objections to “regional understandings” see, “The Minister in China (Reinsch) to the Secretary of State,” November 23, 1918, *FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, vol. 2 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 491 – 498.

and good sense” regarding the Doctrine.¹⁰⁵ Wilson’s remarks, aimed at the French, reassured delegates that the Monroe Doctrine was in no way incompatible with the League of Nations Covenant. According to Wilson, if the Doctrine did violate the Covenant, then the Covenant had precedence over the Doctrine in American interests.¹⁰⁶ However, the French delegation was still frustrated that the Monroe Doctrine clause would be placed within Article X, which they believed guaranteed their security, so they requested that it be placed elsewhere within the Covenant.¹⁰⁷ A new article was inserted, and the Monroe Doctrine clause became Article XXI.¹⁰⁸

One of the more interesting elements within Wilson’s speech of the Monroe Doctrine is his reasoning for why it should be included. Wilson stated: “You see, the whole object of this mentioning of the Monroe Doctrine is to relieve a state of mind and misapprehension on the other side of the water.”¹⁰⁹ It is clearly evident that in his impassioned plea, Wilson referred to Republican Senators who requested the inclusion of the Doctrine. Wilson’s statement reinforces the fact that not only morality, but politics, played a factor in the peace conference. Wilson already believed that the Monroe Doctrine had been embodied within the Covenant, but was desperate to have the United

¹⁰⁵ Diary of Colonel House, April 11, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 57, 237.

¹⁰⁶ Remarks on the Monroe Doctrine, April 11, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 57, 267; Miller, *The Drafting of the Covenant*, Vol. 1, 458.

¹⁰⁷ Miller, *The Drafting of the Covenant*, Vol. 1, 442 – 450.

¹⁰⁸ Article XI of The Covenant of the League of Nations in the Treaty of Versailles, in Lansing, *The Peace Negotiations*, 310.

¹⁰⁹ Remarks on the Monroe Doctrine, April 11, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 57, 267. Wilson’s speech was recorded by one of the League’s secretaries, Whitney Hart Shephardson. The actual title of the document is “Verbatim Copy of Remarks made by President Wilson on the Monroe Doctrine at the meeting of the League of Nations Commission in Paris.” However, it is unknown as to how much of the published remarks are verbatim as Shephardson took shorthand notes of the speech.

States Senate ratify the treaty, and thus, he was forced to request the inclusion of the Monroe Doctrine by name.

The day after the Doctrine was inserted into the Covenant, the French delegates acted as if the question was still up for debate. They posed questions and amendments related to the further specification of the Monroe Doctrine. However, Wilson, Cecil and House did not entertain French requests and continued on with business.¹¹⁰

Learning of the inclusion of the Monroe Doctrine in the Covenant elicited a negative response from Latin American countries, such as Mexico and Honduras.¹¹¹ A Honduran delegate, Mr. Bonilla, proposed an amendment to safeguard Latin America from intervention into their “internal government or administration” or actions that would “diminish their autonomy or



Figure 5: Mexico Refuses to Recognize the Monroe Doctrine: 2 Sept. 1919, Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library

wound their national dignity.”¹¹² From this amendment, it appears that Mr. Bonilla referred to Wilson’s intervention into Mexico, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. In addition to the Honduran delegate’s amendment proposal, the Mexican Ambassador declared that Mexico would not recognize the Monroe Doctrine, “nor any other which

¹¹⁰ Diary of Colonel House, April 12, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 57, 285.

¹¹¹ Prior to the adoption of the Monroe Doctrine within the Covenant, many Latin American countries were against it. “Cold to Monroe Doctrine: Latin American Envoys Not Anxious for its Reaffirmation,” *New York Times*, March 24, 1919, 2.

¹¹² This amendment was not passed. “The Preliminary Peace Conference: Minutes of the Plenary Sessions (1919),” April 28, 1919, *FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, vol. 3 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 310.

attacks the sovereignty and independence of Mexico.”¹¹³ Both the actions of the Mexican ambassador and the Honduran delegate illustrate the apprehension by Latin American states of the Monroe Doctrine’s authorization for the United States to interfere in Latin America.

Not only were Latin American states unhappy, but Americans were not pleased with the language used in the Covenant. In a telephone message to Wilson, former president Taft and president of Harvard, Abbott Lowell, complained about the language used in the Monroe Doctrine clause, but offered no explanation.¹¹⁴ This does not seem to have been a personal disappointment because a few days later, Taft praised the clause, calling it “eminently satisfactory.”¹¹⁵ Perhaps Taft and Lowell meant that other Republican Senators who were already opposed to the League of Nations disagreed with the Monroe Doctrine clause, foreshadowing events to come.

¹¹³ “The Mexican Ambassador (Bonillas) to the Acting Secretary of State,” April 25, 1919, *FRUS, 1919*, vol. 2 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 545.

¹¹⁴ Diary of Dr. Grayson, April 14, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 57, 331.

¹¹⁵ Oscar Soloman Straus to Woodrow Wilson, April 17, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 57, 445.

Pro-League Senators

As domestic and international events unfolded, 1919 became the worst time to marshal a treaty through the Senate.¹¹⁶ The November 1918 congressional election caused the Democrats to lose control in both houses of Congress and placed Wilson's arch-nemesis, Henry Cabot Lodge, directly in the path of Wilson's treaty. By the time Wilson returned from Paris in June 1919, the new Congress had convened and Republican senators were already in their new leadership positions, ready to tackle the peace treaty. The Democrats were not fully ready to fight, though. Their actions while Wilson was in Paris illustrate that they would take a defensive position, allowing the Republicans to call the shots. The Democrats' lack of initiative and their reliance on parliamentary procedures to ratify the Treaty split both the Republicans and the Democrats on the League of Nations issue.

Rather than rehash previous historians' work in regards to the fight between Wilson and the Republicans, this chapter will focus on the tedious relationship between Wilson and his supporters in the Senate. As loyal as the Democrats were to Wilson throughout the war and the treaty-making process, many abandoned him in his moment of need. Much of this desertion was due not just to the lack of compromise on Wilson's part, but to the poor leadership and lack of effective strategies developed by Democratic leaders.

Prior to the United States entering the war, it was no secret that President Woodrow Wilson had a plan for relieving the world of all future wars. In his speech to Congress on January 22, 1917, Wilson outlined his vision for future world order. His plan

¹¹⁶ To read about domestic events in the United States in 1919, see Ann Hagedorn, *Savage Peace: Hope and Fear in America, 1919* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2007).

included a League of Nations, comprised of countries committed to preserving peace through discussion instead of resorting to violence.

Wilson's speech received a divided reaction. While many supported his vision for peace, others were outraged that Wilson would propose an idea that could cost the United States its sovereignty. One person in particular, William Jennings Bryan, had already left Wilson's circle of support by resigning as secretary of state on June 9, 1915 amidst the succession of diplomatic notes to Germany regarding its use of unrestricted submarine warfare. A three-time presidential candidate, Bryan led the Democratic Party from 1900 to 1912, espousing isolationist and pacifist ideas. The thought of a Democratic leader proposing to entangle the United States in any event or organization outside of the Western Hemisphere was virtually unthinkable. Rather, it was the Republican Party that believed the United States should take its rightful place among the nations as an imperial country. The acquisition of the Philippines and Hawaii, along with the Roosevelt Corollary, only strengthened this belief.¹¹⁷

True to their foreign policy beliefs, main-stream Republicans agreed with the ideas behind Wilson's League of Nations. In 1910, former Republican president, Theodore Roosevelt declared his support for a "League of Peace" among the "great powers... not only to keep the peace among themselves, but to prevent, by force if necessary, its being broken by others." Additionally, Roosevelt's long-time friend, Henry Cabot Lodge, concurred with the need for a "united nations."¹¹⁸ However, neither of these men endorsed Wilson's League of Nations, citing their belief that it would

¹¹⁷ Cooper, Jr., *The Vanity of Power*, 87.

¹¹⁸ "Roosevelt Wants League of Peace," *New York Times*, May 6, 1910, 4; "World Peace Only by Force," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 10, 1915, 13.

jeopardize American sovereignty. Yet, another former Republican president, William Howard Taft, wholeheartedly supported Wilson's League.

In light of the bi-partisanship between Wilson and Taft, the League of Nations' approval in the United States seemed assured. Yet, Republican senators were unwilling to agree with Taft's and Wilson's notions. Furthermore, Democrats, previously led by Bryan, were not easily disposed to agree to an international organization. However, Wilson's idealistic tendencies regarding peace made it easier for Democrats to agree with him. Additionally, the thought of not supporting their first two-term Democratic president since Andrew Jackson would be political suicide.¹¹⁹ In this sense, Democratic leaders were incredibly loyal to Wilson. In the end, this loyalty cost Wilson the League of Nations because the Democrats were too afraid to act independently of Wilson until the 11th hour of the League of Nations' fight. By then, it was too late.

After his reelection in 1916, Wilson began to publicly show support for the League of Nations idea. Simultaneously, Republican leaders, such as Roosevelt and Lodge, started to criticize the president's version of a League. This criticism and opposition continued and increased in intensity once Wilson reached Paris and began the task of negotiating a peace treaty with the European heads of government. With Wilson in Paris, Democrats had no one to lead them in defending the League of Nations from Republican attacks. Wilson's supporters took it upon themselves to deflect criticism, but they were often left without clear directions or advice on the Treaty itself. When Treaty opponents criticized certain parts, such as their belief that the treaty nullified America's sovereignty within the Western Hemisphere, Democrats could only vaguely announce that the treaty protected the Monroe Doctrine. One of Wilson's biggest blunders was his

¹¹⁹ Cooper, *The Vanity of Power*, 160.

choice not to take anyone from the Senate with him to negotiate the Treaty. Perhaps if he had, communication would have been more effective and directions made clearer, providing Democrats with more of an argument and defense.¹²⁰

Nonetheless, Democrats attempted to please their leader and often wrote to him for guidance. However, the advice that returned from Paris was usually very vague. When Wilson's private secretary, Joseph Tumulty, wrote to him requesting direction for the Democratic senators, Wilson responded by simply giving Democrats the authority to speak on behalf of the League. Without any definite position or details, supporters were left to speak in very general terms with nothing concrete to strengthen their position. When questioned about the League of Nations, the outgoing Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Gilbert M. Hitchcock, replied that he was unable "to define what the League of Nations was to be, but that it was possible to say what it was not to be." Clearly, Hitchcock was not as well-versed on the League as he should have been, but knew enough to explain that it would not be a "super-nation."¹²¹

As Wilson continued to bargain with Europeans over the Treaty, fighting to include amendments to appease his opponents in the United States, League supporters at home continued to be barraged by critics. Again, with little knowledge as to the Treaty's development in Europe, many were left desperately seeking answers to defend the League against what was believed to be unfounded attacks by members of the opposition. Serving as the acting secretary of state, Frank L. Polk sent an urgent plea to Secretary of

¹²⁰ Robert Lansing, *The Peace Negotiations*, 41. According to Lansing, Wilson did not wish to have any opposition within the American delegation at Paris. Thus, he only selected people to go with him who he believed were loyal and trustworthy.

¹²¹ Woodrow Wilson to Joseph Patrick Tumulty, February 21, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 55, 222; "Sees No Danger in Peace League," *New York Times*, January 26, 1919, 3.

State Robert Lansing requesting that he send “secret proceedings” to assist Hitchcock in his endeavors to squash Republican opposition. Responding to this request, President Wilson concurred with the British opinion not to release the text of the Treaty as it was “subject to alteration until our discussions with the Germans are finished.”¹²²

This decision only added fuel to the fire as Republicans continued to charge that the Treaty would limit American sovereignty by infringing on domestic issues and repealing the Monroe Doctrine. Again, Polk cabled Lansing requesting information to assist Democrats as they had “no adequate answer to the Republican attack and urges (most?) if not all of the treaty be given out.... [Senator Pomerene] and Hitchcock both urge that they (should?) have as much light on the subject as possible.” Once more, Wilson declined the request citing that “it would be a tactical blunder to publish the details” because the Treaty was not yet finished and thus changes could still be made to it.¹²³ The continued lack of clear information and vague guidance left Democratic leaders unsure of what course they were to take and in some cases gave the appearance they were not supportive of the president’s actions in Paris.

In his diary, Dr. Grayson practically charged Senator Hitchcock and other Democrats with being disloyal to the president. Writing of the “organized campaign of misrepresentation,” Grayson objected to the “lack of efficient Democratic Senators” who were not “defend[ing] the President’s course until such time as he is able.” In particular, Grayson singled out Senator Hitchcock who now served as the unofficial minority leader in the Senate and the minority leader on the Foreign Relations Committee. According to

¹²² Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, with Enclosure, May 19, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 59, 282; Woodrow Wilson to Robert Lansing, May 21, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 59, 346.

¹²³ Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, with Enclosure, May 23, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 59, 450 – 451; Woodrow Wilson to Robert Lansing, May 24, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 59, 471.

Grayson, Hitchcock “made it plain that he was not very familiar with the League of Nations covenant.” In reality, Hitchcock did not have much information about the Treaty because Wilson refused to provide any information. Truthfully, Grayson may have been more knowledgeable of the Covenant than Hitchcock because he served in Paris as Wilson’s personal physician.

Although Grayson’s accusations were harsh, his criticism had merit. The Democrats were fighting a defensive battle, led by none other than former President Taft. Being a Republican, Taft did not answer to Wilson, but the Senate Democrats were not about to speak without Wilson’s consent for fear of going against his wishes. Finally, Wilson cast some light onto the course his supporters were to take. In response to Republican opposition to Article X in the League of Nations Covenant, which was akin to an agreement enforcing collective security, Wilson told his supporters not to waver on that subject as “Article X of the Covenant is the king pin of the whole structure.” He then instructed Hitchcock and other Democrats to “take a most militant and aggressive [sic] course, such as I mean to take the minute I get back.”¹²⁴ At last, Wilson provided his supporters the chance to switch tactics and fight on the offense by declaring that there would be no surrender or compromise on Article X. Even with this new line of attack, Democrats still found it difficult to answer critics’ attacks on the League without any additional information.

In early June 1919, the Democrats’ situation worsened when Lodge publicly boasted that he had seen a secret copy of the Treaty. This startling revelation left Democrats unsure of what to do, again. Now that someone in New York had a copy of

¹²⁴ Diary of Dr. Grayson, May 27, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 59, 528 – 529. Woodrow Wilson to Robert Lansing, May 24, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 59, 470 – 471. Hitchcock was thrust into his unofficial position as Senate Minority Leader due to Senator Martin’s illness and later death.

the Treaty and Lodge knew it, Wilson's argument for keeping the Treaty secret was spoiled. To make matters worse, a debate was ongoing in the Senate regarding a pending resolution to release the text of the Treaty to the public. Given the circumstances, Hitchcock was left in a dire predicament and sought advice regarding parliamentary procedure on how to handle the situation in the Senate. In the meantime, he also began an investigation to uncover how a copy of the Treaty was leaked.¹²⁵ As a former journalist, this investigation was something at which Hitchcock could excel, and would not need advice to be successful.

Where Hitchcock was skilled in investigative journalism, he lacked in parliamentary skills as he requested advice in regards to the pending resolution. Pleased with Hitchcock's initiative to launch an investigation of what Lodge had seen, Wilson wrote to Tumulty that the Treaty was still in "negotiation and subject to change." In addition to Wilson's note, Lansing communicated to Polk that the Democrats should oppose the resolution to make the Treaty public. According to Lansing, to vote for the resolution would be tantamount to suffering the wrath of Wilson as anyone "other than a State Department official who is found in possession of an official copy of the text of the Conditions of Peace should be regarded as guilty of a grave breach of faith."¹²⁶ Naturally, with that type of response, anyone would have been hesitant to step outside the bounds established by Wilson for fear of political retribution.

Still, the situation regarding the Treaty in the United States seemed bleak. With Wilson in Paris, Democrats suffered from a lack of efficient leadership owing to

¹²⁵ Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, with Enclosures, June 6, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 60, 242.

¹²⁶ Woodrow Wilson to Joseph Patrick Tumulty, June 7, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 60, 287. Robert Lansing to Frank Lyon Polk, June 6, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 60, 246 – 247.

Hitchcock's reluctance to do anything without Wilson's approval. Writing to Wilson, Tumulty lamented over the situation in the United States, characterizing it as a "great depression in our ranks here." Additionally, Tumulty suggested to Wilson that upon his return, he should meet daily with friendly senators and members of the press to "push our programme forward." In concurrence with Grayson's earlier opinion, Tumulty advised Wilson: "we must take the offensive and never cease until our foe is driven back." Clearly, Tumulty believed Wilson's absence was a "tremendous handicap" to supporters of the League, but Wilson's eventual return to the United States in early July 1919 would "be of great psychological value to us."¹²⁷ Wilson's return to the United States would lift the spirits of League supporters and relieve Democrats from the heavy burden of defending the Treaty without assistance.

After the German delegation signed the Treaty of Versailles on June 28, 1919, Wilson embarked on his journey across the Atlantic. He arrived in New York City on July 8, 1919, amidst a generous, heartwarming welcome that consisted of "the largest crowd that has ever greeted the President in this great metropolis." Immediately, he went right to work by delivering a speech at Carnegie Hall, defending the Treaty against its opponents.¹²⁸ As Dr. Grayson believed, the president had a "Herculean" task to perform in order to convince the country and opponents to ratify the Treaty as it stood.¹²⁹ However, Republicans were already squirming to make changes in the League of Nations Covenant to the point of annulling America's part to the Treaty.

¹²⁷ Joseph Patrick Tumulty to Woodrow Wilson, June 16, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 60, 610-611.

¹²⁸ From the Diary of Dr. Grayson, July 8, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 61, 400 – 401. An Address in Carnegie Hall, July 8, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 61, 401 – 404.

¹²⁹ From the Diary of Dr. Grayson, May 27, 1919, in Link, *PWW*, Vol. 59, 528 – 529.

Wilson was already one step ahead of the Republicans. He considered any changes, whether amendments or reservations to the Treaty, synonymous with nullifying all of the work done in Paris. Any amendment or reservation that changed the substance of the Treaty would require “reconvocation of the Peace Conference.”¹³⁰ Wilson had a good reason for rejecting any suggestion to insert amendments or reservations to the Treaty. In Paris, the subject of reservations became a topic of conversation when the Chinese objected to a particular clause within the Treaty that gave Japan jurisdiction over the Shandong Province. In light of this situation, Mr. Wellington Koo, the leader of the Chinese delegation, requested to sign the Treaty with a reservation. However, European delegates responded that doing so would “invalidate the whole document.” Wilson implored the Europeans to allow reservations with the thought that “any sovereign Power could make reservations in signing.” However, French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau held steadfast in his belief that “A Treaty which was signed with reservations was not a Treaty.”¹³¹

With this knowledge and background, Wilson had a delicate situation on his hands because Republicans, led by Henry Cabot Lodge, demanded reservations be placed into the Treaty prior to ratification. These reservations would require members of the peace conference to acknowledge and approve of the dissent, which according to Wilson

¹³⁰ Notes of a Press Conference by Walter Edward Weyl, June 27, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 61, 240; Woodrow Wilson to Joseph Patrick Tumulty, June 23, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 61, 115 – 116.

¹³¹ Diary of Dr. Grayson, June 28, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 61, 302 – 306; Hankey’s Notes of a meeting of the Council of Four, June 26, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 61, 209; “Chinese Explain Refusal to Sign,” *New York Times*, June 29, 1919, 3; Hankey’s and Mantoux’s Notes of a Meeting of the Council of Four, June 25, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 61, 155. The Shandong Province was acquired by Germany in 1899 after a diplomatic dispute with China. During the war, Japan entered into a secret agreement with Britain and France to keep the Shandong Province if the Japanese could successfully eliminate the German threat from the Pacific. This flagrant denial of self-determination embodied within a secret treaty forced Wilson to cave to Japanese pressure to keep the Shandong Province in exchange for approval of the League of Nations.

could prolong the waiting period, keeping the treaty from going into effect sooner than it could. In addition to several reservations that nullified America's obligation to deploy forces to international conflicts, another provided the United States the sole jurisdiction over interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine.¹³² Afraid the League of Nations would be able to interpret the Doctrine and encroach upon America's authority within the hemisphere, Republicans wanted to retain all rights to the Doctrine, including defining it.

In order to achieve the necessary two-thirds vote, Democrats needed to persuade Republicans to join their ranks. Yet, the Republican leader's insistence upon reservations caused concern among some supporters. Still, Wilson remained persistent that he would not accept any textual change to the Treaty, no matter how small. Senator Hitchcock echoed Wilson's sentiments with his statement: "No compromise whatever is possible on the League of Nations." Wilson and Democratic senators believed that if they held strong to their position, their opponents would acquiesce in the fight against the Treaty.¹³³ Additionally, the president had the support of his predecessor and his peace organization.

At this point, the League to Enforce Peace, headed by Taft, knew it needed to throw all of its support behind the president in order for the Senate to ratify the treaty. Throughout the summer and fall of 1919, the League to Enforce Peace began a massive lobbying effort on Capitol Hill to convince Senators to agree to the treaty without the reservations that Lodge proposed. During this time, the American Bar Association

¹³² Henry Cabot Lodge, *The Senate and the League of Nations* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), 195 – 203.

¹³³ Thomas William Lamont to Woodrow Wilson, with Enclosures, July 11, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 61, 448; "Hitchcock Sure Treaty Will Win," *New York Times*, June 28, 1919, 1.

endorsed the unconditional ratification of the peace treaty, which the League to Enforce Peace considered a major victory.¹³⁴

In response to Wilson's refusal to compromise, Republicans rallied around their leader and their staunch position to include reservations in the Treaty. Even a sympathetic supporter of Wilson, Senator Porter J. McCumber acknowledged the fact that "it would be necessary for that body [the Senate] to adopt 'explanatory reservations' in ratification of the treaty."¹³⁵ Slowly, but surely, Wilson began losing supporters as they recognized his unwillingness to compromise. This loss of support was something that Wilson could not afford, forcing him to remain vigilant in his efforts to promote the Treaty.

In an attempt to help him woo and court potential supporters, Wilson received guidance from various friends of the League. Much of the advice given to Wilson centered on the tone of his speeches. Both Taft, and Wilson's son-in-law, William G. McAdoo, who incidentally also served as his secretary of treasury from 1913 - 1918, suggested that Wilson keep his speeches informative and refrain from attacking his opposition. Issuing harsh attacks on Republican senators, they argued, would push the debate into a partisan fight, which would only solidify Republican support.¹³⁶ However, Wilson's distrust of his opponents made it difficult for him to be amicable.

On July 10, 1919, Wilson strode into the packed Senate chamber alongside Senator Lodge, who offered to carry the Treaty for Wilson. To this, Wilson smiled and jokingly replied: "Not on your life." In the Senate that day, Wilson commanded his

¹³⁴ Cooper, Jr., *Breaking the Heart of the World*, 212.

¹³⁵ "League Opponents Uniting," *New York Times*, June 29, 1919, 1.

¹³⁶ William Howard Taft to Woodrow Wilson, June 28, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 61, 353; William Gibbs McAdoo to Woodrow Wilson, with Enclosure, July 11, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 61, 459.

audience's attention with a speech regarding his trials in Europe to get the peacemakers to come around to his way of thinking. Afterward, Wilson met with Democrats to discuss the current strategy in place to achieve ratification of the Treaty, specifically focusing on how to overcome the threat of reservations. Again, Wilson reiterated his position that he was opposed to any change in the Treaty. Recognizing that the Treaty was not perfect, Wilson told his supporters that it was a step in the right direction, particularly in regards to an international recognition of the Monroe Doctrine.¹³⁷

With Wilson back in the United States, Democratic senators transferred much of the onus of defending the Treaty to the president. Wilson wasted no time in getting to work by inviting members of the opposition to the White House for individual conferences. Beginning with friendly Republicans, such as McCumber, Colt, and Nelson, Wilson hoped to gauge their opinions of the League and impress upon them reasons why the Treaty should be ratified without reservations or amendments. Wilson's strategy was to scope out those who would be willing to support him with the hope of making a dent in the Republican majority.¹³⁸

However, many senators who met with Wilson were not very willing to change their viewpoints. Some even advised Wilson that he needed to compromise by accepting reservations to the Treaty. In reality, these individual conferences may have done more harm than good because it appears that many Republicans defended their views while talking to the president, which strengthened the Republican opposition. One senator,

¹³⁷ Diary of Dr. Grayson, July 10, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 61, 416 – 417; “Ovation to the President,” *New York Times*, July 11, 1919, 1; “Wilson Greets Callers,” *New York Times*, July 11, 1919, 1.

¹³⁸ “Three Hear Wilson,” *Washington Post*, July 18, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 61, 515 – 516; “Wilson Callers Firm,” *New York Times*, July 18, 1919, 1; Margulies, *The Mild Reservationists*, 50.

George Norris, even declined Wilson's invitation because he believed it would be a waste of his and the president's time.¹³⁹

It became apparent to Wilson that his meetings with Republican senators were not giving him the results he desired. The weight Wilson bore became heavier when Hitchcock returned to his home state for a short vacation. With all eyes on him, Wilson became truly perplexed as he decided his course of action. Addressing a letter to his son-in-law, "My dear Mac:" Wilson told McAdoo of his struggles to decide "the method of action best calculated to bring about the right results in these difficult days." In another letter to Thomas Dixon, Jr., a former classmate at Johns Hopkins, Wilson expressed most eloquently his attempts to convince the Senate to ratify the Treaty of Versailles: "The weight of this weary, unintelligible world is great enough anyhow on those of us poor devils who have to take some part in straightening things out."¹⁴⁰ Clearly, Wilson understood that his strategy was not working and that he needed to attempt a different line of attack. Even more so than before, Wilson began seeing his own supporters pull away from his position.

According to Senator Key Pittman, Democrat from Nevada, the Republicans continued to gain support for treaty reservations. Additionally, Thomas Lamont, who served as a delegate to the peace conference from the United States Treasury, wrote to Wilson that the opposition was becoming more favorable among members of the public. However, Lamont cautioned Wilson not to make a trip across the country giving

¹³⁹ "Wilson Told League Cannot Pass Intact," *Washington Post*, July 19, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 61, 544 – 547. George William Norris to Woodrow Wilson, July 21, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 61, 570.

¹⁴⁰ "Leaves League Fight," *Washington Post*, July 12, 1919 in Link, *PWW* Vol. 61, 468 – 469; Woodrow Wilson to William Gibbs McAdoo, July 15, 1919 in Link, *PWW* Vol. 61, 480; Woodrow Wilson to Thomas Dixon Jr., August 2, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 62, 115.

speeches. Doing so, Lamont believed, would only increase the partisanship. Lamont advised Wilson to explain to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee the advantages of the Treaty and why their reservations toward the Treaty were unfounded.¹⁴¹

The greatest blow to Wilson, however, came from within his own camp. After he inquired from an international lawyer about the power of reservations, Secretary of State Robert Lansing encouraged Wilson to compromise with moderate Republicans and accept mild reservations. As Lansing recalled, Wilson's face took on a "stubborn and pugnacious expression" as he flatly rejected Lansing's proposal.¹⁴² To receive this advice from a cabinet member whom Wilson believed supported him in his endeavors was nothing short of betrayal.

Yet, Wilson continued to receive the same information from all sides. Again, on August 15, 1919, Senator Pittman wrote Wilson of the retracting support from within the Senate. As Pittman told Wilson, some supporting senators were willing to accept reservations just to ratify the Treaty.¹⁴³ Why Democrats began to defect from Wilson's position is puzzling. Did those who accepted reservations do so because they believed the Treaty to be good and righteous and wanted to see it ratified in any form possible? Or did they, too, begin to see issues in the Treaty that could only be rectified with reservations?

Regardless of why senators began supporting reservations, Wilson clearly knew he had a problem on his hands. Following Lamont's advice, Wilson invited the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to the White House for a luncheon conference on August

¹⁴¹ Joseph Patrick Tumulty to Woodrow Wilson, with Enclosure, July 25, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 61, 626. Thomas William Lamont to Woodrow Wilson, July 25, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 61, 641 – 643.

¹⁴² Jacob Allen Metzger to Robert Lansing, July 29, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 62, 35 – 40. A Memorandum by Robert Lansing, August 11, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 62, 258 – 259.

¹⁴³ Key Pittman to Woodrow Wilson, August 15, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 62, 310 – 312.

19, 1919. During this meeting, Wilson made perhaps his worst blunder: he indicated that he would accept “interpretations accompanying the act of ratification.” At the time, Wilson’s suggestion of interpretations was part of the Democrats’ offensive strategy. In an August 15 letter to Wilson, Tumulty suggested the president offer a “compromise by way of interpretative resolutions.” This proposal, Tumulty believed, would place the Republicans in a delicate position where they would be the ones to blame if they did not agree to a compromise.¹⁴⁴ In reality, this small admission gave Republicans the hope that Wilson might genuinely consider reservations in the Treaty. Instead of showing Wilson’s ability to compromise, this strategy actually set him up for failure because it demonstrated to members of the opposition that Wilson was willing to make concessions to the Treaty.

To make matters worse, Wilson went against the advice to not make a tour of the country speaking about the League, which he earnestly wished to do. Both he and his supporters believed that if the public would support the Treaty, then Americans would convince their elected senators to also support ratification of the Treaty without reservations or amendments.¹⁴⁵ Prior to embarking on this trip, Wilson gave Senator Hitchcock a memorandum outlining the interpretations that he would accept should members of the opposition decide to compromise while he toured the country. The four interpretations acceptable to Wilson included: “the right of a Member State to withdraw [from the League],” the ability of each country to not heed the advice of the League in regards to the “employment of armed force,” the League did not have jurisdiction over

¹⁴⁴ A Conversation with Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, August 19, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 62, 339 – 411; Joseph Patrick Tumulty to Woodrow Wilson, August 15, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 62, 309.

¹⁴⁵ Rudolph Forster to Joseph Patrick Tumulty, September 24, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 63, 483.

“immigration, naturalization, or tariffs” within individual member states, and the assurance that nothing in the League of Nations Covenant would affect the “application of the Monroe Doctrine in the American Hemisphere.”

Wilson’s interpretations would have a different effect than the Republican reservations because an interpretation defined exactly how the United States understood certain passages in the Treaty, whereas a reservation meant the rejection of a part in the Treaty. The president made it perfectly clear to Hitchcock that no one needed to know who developed these interpretations, and that Hitchcock could claim to have written them himself. Hitchcock’s problem, though, was that Wilson instructed him not to use the interpretations until it became absolutely necessary. It appears that Wilson wanted to provide Hitchcock with an alternate plan in the event that the Senate rejected the unaltered Treaty while he traveled the country.¹⁴⁶

While on his western trip in September 1919, Wilson often gave more than one speech each day to enormous crowds that gathered to hear him talk about the Treaty of Versailles. Both he and his supporters believed the large number of people who heard him speak correlated with a favorable opinion of the president. Yet, one incident demonstrated that not everybody who came to hear the president actually agreed with him or had an interest in his message. While giving a speech in Salt Lake City, Wilson received applause from the audience when he spoke of the Republican reservations. After rebuking the audience for supporting the Republican position and then stating his

¹⁴⁶ A Memorandum, September 3, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 62, 621; Thomas W. Ryley, *Gilbert Hitchcock of Nebraska: Wilson’s Floor Leader in the Fight for the Versailles Treaty* (Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellon press, 1998), 210; Margulies, *The Mild Reservationists*, 88.

rejection of reservations, the audience again erupted in applause.¹⁴⁷ It seems, in this one incident, the public was more interested in seeing the president than in showing support for either his or the Republican position.¹⁴⁸ Additionally, members of Wilson's opposition attempted to counteract the president's actions by following him on his western tour, giving speeches that criticized the League. Like Wilson, the Republicans also attracted large crowds.¹⁴⁹

Throughout his tour, Wilson defended himself by professing that he did not understand the Senate's refusal to ratify the treaty even after he had made such important concessions to them, namely, the Monroe Doctrine. Wilson also went so far as to claim that the Republican senators were unable to read. While speaking in St. Louis, Missouri about Republican opposition to the treaty, Wilson stated: "On this side is the English and on that side is the French, and since it is evident that some men do not understand English, I hope that they understand French."¹⁵⁰

On one of his first stops in Des Moines, Iowa, Wilson responded to his critics' question of what other "regional understandings" might be present with the following

¹⁴⁷ An Address in the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, September 23, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 63, 449 – 463.

¹⁴⁸ Hagedorn, *Savage Peace*, 139, 428. Americans were too focused on domestic issues and rebuilding their lives after the war to pay much attention to the League of Nations debate. Ray Stannard Baker, *What Wilson Did at Paris* (New York: Doubleday Page & Co., 1919). After sensing that the public's position towards the League was not too favorable, Ray Baker wrote a book that clarified Wilson's actions in Paris and make them more understandable to Americans.

¹⁴⁹ Cooper, *Breaking the Heart of the World*, 167 – 168.

¹⁵⁰ "Addresses of President Wilson. Addresses delivered by President Wilson on his western tour September 4 to September 25, 1919, on the League of Nations, treaty of peace with Germany, industrial conditions, high cost of living, race riots, etc.," September 5, 1919, *Congressional Serial Set*, Vol. No. 7606, Session Vol. No. 11, 66th Congress, 1st Session, (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1919), Sen. Doc. 120.

statement: “we do not know of any other regional understandings like it.”¹⁵¹ However, in making this statement, Wilson either outright lied, or due to the stress placed upon him which caused a strain on his already poor health, he may have simply forgotten the April 10 statement by Lord Robert Cecil that “So far as the British Empire is concerned there are other understandings. . . . the ancient understanding concerning Arabia.”¹⁵² Cecil did not specify as to what understanding he meant by this. However, it can be assumed that he referred to the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which further solidified the British influence in the Arab world by providing it control over Arabia and allowed the French to gain influence over Syria.

Day after day, Wilson continued to speak, often while enduring excruciating headaches. After experiencing what appeared to be a small stroke early in the morning of September 26, 1919, he was forced to return to the White House. Forty-eight hours later, Wilson’s train pulled into Union Station, where the president was photographed walking to his presidential limousine. Under Dr. Grayson’s orders to rest and recuperate from the strain of his trip across the United States, Wilson was confined to the White House. A few days after his return to the capital, Wilson



Figure 6: Wilson returning to Washington, D.C. after canceling his western tour. (Cooper, *Woodrow Wilson*, Image 19.)

¹⁵¹ “Addresses of President Wilson. Addresses delivered by President Wilson on his western tour September 4 to September 25, 1919, on the League of Nations, treaty of peace with Germany, industrial conditions, high cost of living, race riots, etc.,” September 6, 1919, *Congressional Serial Set*, Vol. No. 7606, Session Vol. No. 11, 66th Congress, 1st Session, (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1919), Sen. Doc. 120.

¹⁵² Miller, *The Drafting of the Covenant*, Vol. 1, 446.

suffered a major stroke on October 2, 1919. This stroke caused paralysis on his left side, leaving Wilson bedridden for the foreseeable future.¹⁵³ The severity of Wilson's medical emergency was not released to the public, or even to certain government officials. For the next few months, Mrs. Wilson, Dr. Grayson, and Tumulty served as the gatekeepers to the President of the United States. Not a single piece of information or person made it to Wilson without first making it past his wife, his doctor, or his private secretary.

Naturally, Wilson's massive stroke on October 2 caused a bit of a panic among leaders in Washington. Seizing control, Lansing called a cabinet meeting to discuss the president's acute medical situation and to contemplate the possibility of Vice-President Thomas Marshall serving as president. While nothing substantial resulted from this meeting, the fact that Lansing called a cabinet meeting demonstrates the severity of the situation. Due to being incapacitated, Wilson could no longer lead the fight for the Treaty. Now, it was up to the Democrats in the Senate to carry on Wilson's mission.¹⁵⁴

Ever loyal to the president, Hitchcock continued to lead Wilson's fight in the Senate. However, he, too, saw the need for reservations in order for the Treaty to pass. Ultimately, it came down to the logistics of voting. Forty-nine Republicans and six Democrats favored the Treaty with reservations, while only forty-one senators supported the Treaty without reservations. Clearly, members of the opposition outnumbered league supporters.¹⁵⁵

To combat the problem of overcoming the odds, Hitchcock concocted a plan he believed would make the Democrats successful in securing enough votes to ratify the

¹⁵³ Cooper, Jr., *Woodrow Wilson*, 533.

¹⁵⁴ Diary of Robert Lansing, October 3, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 63, 547.

¹⁵⁵ Diary of Henry Fountain Ashurst, October 21, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 63, 586.

Treaty. In a letter to former President Taft, Hitchcock proposed defeating the Lodge reservations and then offering suggestions for the Senate to consider. He believed the Democrats' suggestions would "become the basis of a compromise between 40-odd democrats who want the Treaty ratified and 25 or 30 republicans." In order to be successful though, Hitchcock knew the Lodge reservations needed to be defeated first so that "men now bound by promises to support the Lodge resolution are released by its defeat." In other words, Hitchcock wanted to get the Lodge reservation off the table to force those who supported the Treaty to vote for it with the Democrats' interpretations.¹⁵⁶

In a similar letter to Mrs. Wilson, which she read to the president, Hitchcock provided a slightly different plan. Perhaps Hitchcock erred in his letter to the First Lady, or maybe he wanted to discover the president's reaction to the possibility of the Treaty not being ratified at all. In his letter to Edith Wilson, Hitchcock confessed his belief that Wilson's treaty would be rejected as well as a version of the Treaty with substitute reservations offered by the Democrats. Then, Democrats would overwhelmingly reject the Lodge reservations as well. Essentially, Hitchcock proposed to kill the Treaty. However, he also inquired of Wilson whether his supporters should be instructed to vote for the Lodge reservations.¹⁵⁷ With Hitchcock's knowledge of the growing Republican support in the Senate, it is possible that he needed to know how willing Wilson would be to accept Lodge's changes to the Treaty.

¹⁵⁶ Gilbert Monell Hitchcock to William Howard Taft, November 12, 1919, in William H. Taft Papers, Series 3: General Correspondence and Related Material, Reel 214, Earl Gregg Swem Library, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA.

¹⁵⁷ Gilbert Monell Hitchcock to Edith Bolling Galt Wilson, November 13, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 64, 28 – 29.

A few days after sending his letter to Mrs. Wilson, Hitchcock met with the president at the White House in Wilson's bedroom, with Dr. Grayson present. The president demonstrated a keen mind and an adamant position that the Lodge reservations were unacceptable. However, it is clear that Wilson's wife and Dr. Grayson shielded him from much of the Treaty debate as Wilson told Hitchcock: "I have been kept in the dark to a certain extent except what Mrs. Wilson and Doctor Grayson have told me, and they have purposefully kept a good deal from me."¹⁵⁸ With Wilson literally on his back, it was now up to Hitchcock to marshal the Treaty through the Senate. Yet, from this meeting, it was also apparent to Hitchcock that Wilson retained his mental faculties, which prevented Hitchcock from acting entirely independent of the president.

In what seems to be an attempt to mask the president's illness and have Wilson appear to remain in control, Hitchcock drafted a letter to himself, which he sent to Mrs. Wilson for the president's approval. Once Wilson approved the letter stating his position that the Lodge reservations were equivalent to "nullification of the treaty," he then sent it back to Hitchcock to use as an official declaration of the president's position.¹⁵⁹ Again, it seems that Hitchcock wanted to please Wilson instead of acting on his own. By forming a letter to be sent back to him, Hitchcock trapped himself into arguing for the president's position even though he knew support for the unaltered Treaty continued to dwindle.

As time wore on, it appeared to Taft that in order to be successful, he would have to break from the League to Enforce Peace's official stance and join the Lodge camp by proposing his own reservations to the treaty. While this might seem like Taft turned his

¹⁵⁸ A Memorandum by Cary Travers Grayson, November 17, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 64, 43 – 45.

¹⁵⁹ Gilbert Monell Hitchcock to Edith Bolling Galt Wilson, with Enclosure, November 17, 1919, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 64, 50 – 51.

back on the League and Wilson, he did so to hopefully coerce the reservationists to accept the treaty, thereby becoming a member of the League of Nations. Taft's break with the official League to Enforce Peace position caused some confusion as to what the League supported. However, in November 1919, the League also threw its weight behind the Lodge reservations with the hope of saving the League of Nations. As history shows, Taft's flexibility did not advance the cause of the League of Nations and as Ruhl Bartlett argues, led to the demise of any possibility of having a league.¹⁶⁰

The results of the Democrats' lack of efficient leadership regarding the Treaty, as well as their reluctance to act independently of the president, shone through on November 19, 1919 when the Senate voted for both the Lodge resolution and the unconditional ratification of the Treaty. Both the Republicans' and the Democrats' resolutions failed to achieve a two-thirds vote. The Senate even rejected the interpretative reservations that Wilson provided to Hitchcock a few months prior.¹⁶¹ Still, the Democrats remained hopeful that the Senate would ratify the Treaty when Wilson returned it to the Senate for reconsideration.

Those supporting Wilson in his fight for the Treaty, however, were victims of wishful thinking. In the beginning of 1920, Wilson's private secretary told him, "in my opinion we cannot longer adhere to the position we have taken in the matter of the Treaty." Tumulty even suggested that Wilson offer an olive branch; doing so would cause the Republicans to be at fault for refusing to negotiate a compromise. Additionally, Hitchcock concurred with Tumulty, in his letter of January 5 to Mrs. Wilson, by stating:

¹⁶⁰ Burton, *Taft, Wilson, and World Order*, 119; Burton, *William Howard Taft*, 111; Cooper, Jr., *Breaking the Heart of the World*, 133; Bartlett, *League to Enforce Peace*, 159.

¹⁶¹ Cooper, Jr., *Breaking the Heart of the World*, 266 – 268.

“It seems to be our policy should be to do everything that will help increase that dozen [friendly Republican senators] to twenty.” Hitchcock believed the only way to do that though would be to offer a treaty with reservations.¹⁶²

Even as Wilson’s supporters attempted to work officially and unofficially with Republicans on a compromise, Wilson continued to grow more adamant in his position that the Democrats should not seek compromise – they should hold firm to their position. However, support for an unconditional ratification of the Treaty was “rapidly disintegrating” according to Tumulty. Democrats were ready to compromise with Republicans and accept reservations in order to secure ratification of the Treaty. Wilson even became unhappy with the reservations proposed by Democrats, believing they “would chill our relationship with the nations with which we expect to be associated in the great enterprise of maintaining the world’s peace.” The reluctance of the president to accept any compromise caused great distress among his supporters to the point that many decided to break from his position and yield to Republican reservations.¹⁶³

Eventually, William McAdoo planned to speak with his father-in-law and encourage him to agree with the Lodge reservations. This, however, was to no avail. Nothing would change the president’s mind. On March 19, 1920, exactly four months after the first vote on the Treaty, the Senate again took up the issue of ratifying the Treaty. This time, the Senate only considered the Lodge reservations. Again, both the

¹⁶² Joseph Patrick Tumulty to Woodrow Wilson, January 2, 1920, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 64, 238. Gilbert Monell Hitchcock to Edith Bolling Galt Wilson, January 5, 1920, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 64, 244.

¹⁶³ Edith Bolling Galt Wilson to Carter Glass, February 11, 1920, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 64, 405. Joseph Patrick Tumulty to Woodrow Wilson, February 27, 1920, in Link, *PWW* Vol. 64, 479 – 480. “Wilson Blocks Pact,” *Washington Post*, February 8, 1920, 1.

Democrats and the Republicans were split and the resolution failed to achieve the necessary two-thirds by a deficit of seven votes.¹⁶⁴

<u>Party</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
<i>Republicans</i>	26	11
<i>Democrats</i>	23	24

Table 1: Break-down of votes on March 19, 1920 regarding the Lodge reservations.
(Cooper, *Breaking the Heart of the World*, 367, 368)

For Wilson, his dream of the United States accepting the Treaty of Versailles was lost. He accepted what he believed to be God's decision for the Senate to reject the League of Nations.¹⁶⁵ The Democrats, on the other hand, continued to fight and made the League of Nations part of the 1920 presidential election by advocating for it within their platform. However, the election of the Republican candidate, Warren G. Harding, perished the thought that the United States might ever enter into the League of Nations. The dispute over the Treaty of Versailles provides evidence that demonstrates the shift in American foreign policy from an internationalist position, with the Roosevelt Corollary, to the rejection of a major position in the League of Nations.

While it is true that Wilson's health crisis served as a major factor in his inability to lead the fight for the League of Nations, an analysis of the relationship with his supporters in the Senate provides conclusive evidence that the Democrats were held back by Wilson's desire to pass the Treaty without reservations. Even more so, the reluctance of Hitchcock and other Democratic leaders to move forward with the Treaty became just as disastrous as Wilson's unwillingness to compromise. With historical events, it is only possible to speculate what could have happened. If Hitchcock had introduced his

¹⁶⁴ "Says M'Adoo Plans Appeal to President," *New York Times*, March 3, 1920; Cooper, Jr., *Breaking the Heart of the World*, 367.

¹⁶⁵ Cooper, Jr., *Woodrow Wilson*, 590.

interpretative resolutions earlier, before the moderate Republicans pledged their loyalty to Lodge, there is a chance that the Democrats could have garnered enough votes to ratify their version of the Treaty. In the end, Treaty supporters yearned not just to prevent all future wars, but also to end Wilson's war of attrition in the Senate.

A Transparent Veil of Isolation

A combination of Wilson's poor health, his reluctance to compromise with the Republicans, and the poor leadership skills of Gilbert Hitchcock contributed to the downfall of the Treaty within the Senate. Even if Wilson's health had not failed him and he was able to lead his supporters in their fight for the League, the Republican opposition was such that it would have been a divine miracle for the Treaty to have passed without reservations. Still, putting the power politics aside, there seems to be a fundamental difference between Wilson and Henry Cabot Lodge regarding their views toward the League. Their divergent opinions hark back to their perception of the United States as an international leader. Thus, the underlying reasoning for the Senate's rejection of the Treaty stemmed from the Republican expansionist position. To see all of these hidden connections, we must revisit America's entrance into the imperial age.

At the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898, Theodore Roosevelt left his cushy job as assistant secretary of the navy to lead a cavalry regiment, known as the Rough Riders.¹⁶⁶ His experiences as a sheriff and a police commissioner in New York City led him to believe his role as an American soldier in Cuba was to bring the light of humanity upon those oppressed and to spread democracy as well as establish law and order. In a letter to Henry Cabot Lodge, Roosevelt not only told the senator of his heroic deeds in battles, but also stressed the importance of fighting for Cuba's independence and the urgent need to acquire Spanish territories.

According to Roosevelt, the United States should not "make peace until we get Porto Rico [sic], while Cuba is made independent and the Philippines at any rate taken

¹⁶⁶ John Milton Cooper, Jr., *The Warrior and the Priest: Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983), 29 – 31, 38.

from the Spaniards.” In a later letter, dated June 12, 1898, Roosevelt again told his friend on the Foreign Relations Committee: “You must get Manila and Hawaii; you must prevent any talk of peace until we get Porto Rico [sic] and the Philippines as well as secure the independence of Cuba.” Unwilling to accept an armistice, Roosevelt embraced the notion that wars should be won, not ended. He believed that the United States should not only be victorious in the war, but should reap the spoils of war, as well.¹⁶⁷

In full agreement with his Harvard educated friend, Lodge noted that he was “in no hurry to see the war jammed through. We shall come out better if we take our time.” Anxious to see the United States expand its horizons, Lodge wrote that the United States “ought to take Porto Rico [sic] as we have taken the Philippines and then close in on Cuba. Let us get the outlying things first. The Administration [McKinley’s] I believe to be doing very well and to be following out a large policy.”¹⁶⁸ Lodge’s use of the term, “large policy” is comical because it served as his euphemism for American imperialism to the effect that the United States was enlarging its territory and sphere of influence.

The expansionist notions held by Roosevelt and Lodge did not dissipate as time wore on since both men continued to advocate that the United States should have an increased presence in the world. Both men were rooted in the belief that the United States should occupy a position of power and influence in the world. As Roosevelt once told an audience in Chicago, “We must strive in good faith to play a great part in the world.” In order to accomplish this, Roosevelt advised that the United States “cannot sit huddled

¹⁶⁷ In several of Roosevelt’s letters, he wrote of his heroic efforts in the war, including killing “a Spaniard with my own hand.” See Theodore Roosevelt to Henry Cabot Lodge, May 19, 1898; June 12, 1898; and July 19, 1898 in *Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, 1884 – 1918*, Vol. 1 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1925), 299, 309, 328.

¹⁶⁸ Henry Cabot Lodge to Theodore Roosevelt, May 31, 1898, in *Selections from the Correspondence*, Vol. 1, 302.

within our own borders.”¹⁶⁹ As he perceived it, Americans could not make an impact on the world if the country assumed a position of isolation. Therein laid his problem: the United States was hindered by its traditional policy of non-interference. Many attributed this policy to the Monroe Doctrine, which forbade European colonization of the Western Hemisphere. By this same token, Americans believed they should not interfere in matters beyond the Atlantic or Pacific.¹⁷⁰

For Roosevelt, to discount the Monroe Doctrine and say it was no longer applicable would have been unspeakable. Instead, he enlarged the Doctrine by increasing its scope. While his decision to enlarge the United States authority within the hemisphere stemmed from the 1902 Venezuelan financial crisis, the Roosevelt Corollary was much more than protecting Latin American countries from their investors. It was a way for him to reach out to the world. He did not wish the United States to be a beacon of light shining upon the world from its position of isolation, but rather he believed Americans should bring light to underdeveloped countries by establishing orderly governments using the United States as a model. According to Roosevelt, expanding the influence of the United States would do a “duty to civilization far greater and more important than could have been done by any stationary power.”¹⁷¹ In order to make great strides in the world, Roosevelt believed the United States needed to loosen the shackles of the Monroe Doctrine by enlarging it so it would be more flexible.

¹⁶⁹ Roosevelt, “The Strenuous Life,” *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, 322 – 323.

¹⁷⁰ Arnold Hall, *The Monroe Doctrine and the Great War* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1920), 135; “Speech of Henry Cabot Lodge in the Senate of the United States, August 12, 1919,” as reprinted in Appendix 5, Henry Cabot Lodge, *The Senate and the League of Nations*, 380 – 410.

¹⁷¹ Roosevelt, “Expansion and Peace,” *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, 336.

As author Jay Sexton elucidates, Roosevelt skillfully articulated the purpose of the Monroe Doctrine as defending less fortunate nations. The Doctrine already contained an air of imperialism as the United States reigned supreme over the Western Hemisphere, but the addition of Roosevelt's corollary augmented the implied imperialism. To combat this, Sexton asserts, Roosevelt shrouded his corollary in terms of assistance for less fortunate nations. For example, the American intervention into Columbia provided Panama its independence, while simultaneously propping up American enterprise and the world economy by securing the construction of the Panama Canal.¹⁷² This idea of assisting another nation, while also procuring benefits for the United States, highlights Roosevelt's thinking. In a speech titled, "National Duties", which he addressed to the crowd at the Minnesota State Fair in 1901, Roosevelt insisted, "our duty is twofold, that we must raise others while we are benefitting ourselves."¹⁷³ His blatant statement made clear his belief that the United States should engage only in activities that would be mutually beneficial to the country and the lesser power.

Insofar as Roosevelt wished the United States to "put down savagery and barbarism" throughout the world, he relied on the United States naval forces to accomplish this objective. As assistant secretary of the navy, Roosevelt oversaw the building of updated, modern war vessels. Later, as president of the United States, he sent the navy on a tour of the world as a show of strength and power. When the Great White Fleet returned to America's shores, Roosevelt wrote that the United States military was

¹⁷² Jay Sexton, *The Monroe Doctrine: Empire and Nation in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2011), 223. The United States provided assistance to Panama in their fight for independence from Columbia, with the proviso that the United States could create a canal through the Isthmus of Panama.

¹⁷³ Roosevelt, "National Duties," *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, Vol. 13, 478.

“in such shape that there was no people that would have ventured to wrong us.”¹⁷⁴

Pleased with the military that he helped to strengthen, Roosevelt was proud of placing the United States in a position of global prominence by building up the naval forces.

Roosevelt’s belief that the nation should have an adequate military went hand-in-hand with his belief in preparedness. For him, this preparedness was not just for defense, but also served as a tool for peace. Once, he wrote, “It is only the warlike power of a civilized people that can give peace to the world.”¹⁷⁵ From his assertion, Roosevelt believed that peace could only be attained by developed countries, but only after others who possessed superior military power tamed those nations.

On another level, though, Roosevelt’s statement implied his idea that a strong, adequate military could serve as insurance against war. Roosevelt thought the chances that a peaceful nation, such as the United States, would be attacked were less if the aggressor nation believed it would lose. This notion served as the basis of Roosevelt’s international peace plan, which he formally introduced within his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech in May 1910.¹⁷⁶ Like his opponent in the 1912 presidential election, Woodrow Wilson, Roosevelt developed his own peace plan. Unlike Wilson’s, his plan called for the threat of force to maintain peace throughout the world.

¹⁷⁴ Theodore Roosevelt, “Uncle Sam’s Only Friend,” *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, National Edition, Vol. 18 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1926), 333.

¹⁷⁵ Theodore Roosevelt, “National Duties,” *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, Vol. 13, 478; Zimmermann, *First Great Triumph*, 3 – 6; Roosevelt, “Expansion and Peace,” *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, Vol. 13, 339 – 340.

¹⁷⁶ Roosevelt won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1906 for his role in mediating the Russo-Japanese War of 1905. He did not accept the award in person, but had State Department member, Herbert H. D. Peirce accept the award on his behalf. Roosevelt then traveled to Norway in 1910 and delivered a speech to the Nobel committee. “Theodore Roosevelt – Acceptance Speech,” *Nobelprize.org*, accessed April 22, 2015, http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1906/roosevelt-acceptance.html.

As historian John Milton Cooper, Jr. points out, both Wilson and Roosevelt were alike in their idealism regarding peace, but each differed regarding how to attain that peaceful coexistence between nations. In fact, as Wilson called for a League of Nations, Roosevelt advocated for a League of Peace. Both leagues were comprised of nations dedicated to ensuring peace throughout the world. Wilson's league, however, was based mainly on a discussion of peace, whereas Roosevelt's idea of a league was founded on the threat of force.¹⁷⁷

As Europe erupted into war during the summer of 1914, Roosevelt began advocating for preparedness on the part of the United States. True to his belief in military readiness, the ex-commander-in-chief insisted the country begin to prepare for war. While pacifists, such as Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan, cried isolation, Roosevelt issued a call for the United States to be ready to defend the vital interests of the United States – namely, its possessions and the Panama Canal. As a Republican leader, Roosevelt was not the only to urge preparedness.

In February 1915, the House of Representatives defeated an amendment to the Naval Appropriation Bill, which would have reduced the navy from two additional battleships to one. Of the 155 members who voted against an increase in the navy, 139 were Democrats. This vote provides evidence that a majority of Republicans followed Roosevelt's line of thinking in regards to preparedness and increasing America's naval strength. Additionally, Lodge recognized the United States was no longer in a state of isolation as he declared: "The ocean barrier which defended us in 1776 and 1812 no

¹⁷⁷ Cooper, Jr., *The Warrior and the Priest*, 271.

longer exists.”¹⁷⁸ Clearly, Roosevelt and Lodge understood the need for the United States to be ready to fight.

Even more so, both Republican leaders confessed their desire not only for an Allied victory, but also for the United States to enter on the side of the Allies. In a letter to Lodge on February 18, 1915, Roosevelt expressed his disgust with the president. Believing Wilson’s administration to be the “very worst and most disgraceful we have ever known,” Roosevelt complained of what he believed to be Wilson’s inability to face reality by failing to adequately prepare the country’s military for the possibility of war. Criticizing Wilson’s reluctance to do anything but write letters to Germany condemning the use of unrestricted submarine warfare, Roosevelt wrote, “The deaths of these men and women are primarily due to President Wilson’s policy of timidity and weakness.” A year after the *Lusitania* sunk, Roosevelt told Lodge: “I would have accepted war” after the invasion of Belgium and the sinking of the *Lusitania*. His statement demonstrates his willingness to commit military forces outside of the Western Hemisphere not only to avenge the deaths of “innocent American women and children” on board the British passenger ship, but to also defend the honor of a neutral country.¹⁷⁹

Concurring with Roosevelt’s belief about the need to declare war, Lodge found himself embroiled in a fist fight with German pacifists in the halls of Congress after one of the peace advocates called him “a damned coward.” To this, Lodge replied by hitting the man and saying, “You are a damned liar.” According to a *Washington Post* article, the

¹⁷⁸ Quote by Henry Cabot Lodge, found in Cooper, Jr., *The Vanity of Power*, 24.

¹⁷⁹ Theodore Roosevelt to Henry Cabot Lodge, February 18, 1915, *Selections from the Correspondence*, Vol. 2, 456; Roosevelt, “America First – A Phrase or a Fact?” *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, Vol. 18, 260. Theodore Roosevelt to Henry Cabot Lodge, February 4, 1916, *Selections from the Correspondence*, Vol. 2, 480.

fight between Lodge and the German pacifist was not the only excitement that day as 1,000 peace supporters protested on the steps of the Capitol. This incident illustrates that as the United States inched closer toward the war, many in the country harbored deep feelings either toward joining the fight or remaining in isolation. However, the political party that sought to become embroiled in the Great War became the party that cried isolation after the war.¹⁸⁰

Lodge's fear that the United States would lose its isolationist identity and become entangled in a web of European wars prompted him to propose a number of reservations to the Treaty of Versailles. Of the reservations Lodge proposed, one focused exclusively on the ability of the United States to define the Monroe Doctrine. This ability would allow the country to continue its spheres of influence by claiming it had jurisdiction through the Doctrine as it had done in previous years. An examination of this topic over a period of several decades indicates that the mainstream Republican Party, led by Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, switched from being the international, interventionist party to recoiling back into the Western Hemisphere and returning to its isolationist shell by the end of World War One.

Acknowledging a noticeable shift in Republican foreign policy, historian John Milton Cooper, Jr. credits this change to politics. He argues that because the Democrats controlled the White House, Republicans opposed Wilson's position.¹⁸¹ This is not necessarily the case. While politics and drama certainly played a role in the Senate's

¹⁸⁰ Henry Cabot Lodge to Theodore Roosevelt, April 4, 1917, *Selections from the Correspondence*, Vol. 2, 506; "Pacifists in Riots; Lodge is Assaulted," *Washington Post*, April 3, 1917.

¹⁸¹ Cooper, Jr., *The Vanity of Power*, 158.

defeat of the Treaty of Versailles, long-standing Republican foreign policy from Roosevelt's administration rose to the surface.

Throughout World War One, Theodore Roosevelt denounced Wilson's League of Nations. His belief in a peace-keeping organization, such as the one he introduced in May 1910, was founded on the ability to use force to maintain peace. In his book, *America and the World War*, written in 1915, Roosevelt wished the United States to "become one of the joint guarantors of world peace" by being "willing to act as a member of the international posse comitatus to enforce the peace of righteousness as against any offender big or small."¹⁸² In that quote, Roosevelt stated his conviction that the United States *should* become involved in military engagements within the international community to defend those countries who were in the wrong. At a bare minimum, Roosevelt suggested nothing more than a worldwide defense treaty, or collective security, but he certainly did not advocate isolationism.

Since Roosevelt advocated not only for preparedness and eventually military intervention into the Great War, he was also willing to commit the United States armed forces as part of an international body of nations dedicated to preserving peace through force. Yet, once the League of Nations Covenant reached the United States Senate, with the clause that member states would defend other nations' territorial integrity, Republicans balked at overseas commitments. One of the reservations Lodge proposed stated: "The United States assumes no obligation to preserve the territorial integrity or political independence of any other country or to interfere in controversies between

¹⁸² Roosevelt, "International Posse Comitatus," *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, Vol. 18, 83.

nations.”¹⁸³ The peace organization’s authority to use the militaries of League members cannot be the true reason why Lodge refused to join without reservations. It was, however, a piece of the larger puzzle.

Lodge and other mainstream Republicans claimed isolation for the United States, not from their supposed fear of military intervention, but rather due to their reliance on the Monroe Doctrine to keep European states on their side of the Atlantic and allow the United States to retain control over the Americas. In 1920, Arnold Hall, a political science professor, wrote that critics derided the League of Nations for supposedly nullifying the foreign policy established by Monroe in 1823. Becoming a member of the League would force the United States to give up its suzerainty of the Western Hemisphere.

Yet, just as Lodge declared prior to entering the war that the Atlantic did not protect America from European events, Hall recognized that the United States was no longer in isolation and Republican attacks were nothing but a farce. Agreeing with Wilson’s argument during the League fight, Hall asserted that the Covenant served as a Monroe Doctrine for the world as it would seek justice on behalf of a member if its land were attacked by an aggressor nation.¹⁸⁴ Since the Doctrine was inserted into the League of Nations Covenant, the question becomes: why did Republicans disapprove of it as written? For Republicans, Article XXI of the Covenant was not strong enough and did not provide the United States the sole discretion over interpretation of the American policy. Even more so, Republicans were not just seeking to protect the Monroe Doctrine,

¹⁸³ Lodge, *The Senate and the League of Nations*, 201.

¹⁸⁴ Hall, *The Monroe Doctrine and the Great War*, 141 – 142.

but they also sought to maintain supremacy in the hemisphere through the Roosevelt Corollary.

In an attempt to claim the United States as an isolationist nation and build support for his position against Wilson's League, Lodge wrote: "the Americas shall be separated from Europe and from the interference of Europe in purely American questions." Lodge based this assertion on the Monroe Doctrine, which he stated, "exists solely for the protection of the American Hemisphere, and to that hemisphere it was limited." Along with this, Lodge confessed that the United States did not seek "acquisition or conquest of territory." While he appeared to scale back his imperialist rhetoric which he proudly professed twenty years earlier, Lodge wanted to ensure the United States retained what it already controlled, such as the Panama Canal.¹⁸⁵

One of the strongest pieces of evidence that demonstrates Republican imperialism in their refusal to accept the League stems from the Lodge-Lowell Debate. This debate was held in Boston at Symphony Hall on March 19, 1919 between Senator Lodge and a prominent leader of the League to Enforce Peace, Abbott Lawrence Lowell. During the debate, Lodge compared the Monroe Doctrine to a fence, used to keep Europeans out of America. If the Senate ratified the Treaty, Lodge concluded, the Doctrine would be null and void because questions arising out of the American Hemisphere would be subject to discussion within the League of Nations. Lodge's opponent, however, charged that the senator's "only object is expansion of the United States."¹⁸⁶ Lowell identified Lodge's

¹⁸⁵ Lodge, *The Senate and the League of Nations*, 233, 257.

¹⁸⁶ "Brief and Analyses of the Lodge-Lowell Debate," March 19, 1919, Henry Cabot Lodge Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Microfilm Reel 55, Boston, MA.

ultimate goal as the guarantee that the United States would retain its possessions and its authority within the Western Hemisphere.

In concurrence with Lowell, Arnold Hall described the traditional American foreign policy as: “this indefinite power to wield a strong arm in American affairs that some of our statesmen are trying to preserve by the amendment to the League of Nations that expressly preserves the Monroe Doctrine.”¹⁸⁷ Approximately a year before the Senate first defeated the Treaty of Versailles, Lodge wrote a letter to Roosevelt in which he characterized Wilson’s League as a “very dangerous thing.” He expressed his belief that acceptance and membership of the peace organization would allow it to “control the Monroe Doctrine or our actions in our own hemisphere.”¹⁸⁸ Unwilling to relinquish any control over the Americas, Lodge fought for the Monroe Doctrine reservation.

This, however, was not the first time Lodge argued for the Monroe Doctrine’s inclusion in a treaty. After Olney’s diplomatic squabble with Britain in the 1890s, a treaty between Britain and the United States was presented to the Senate for ratification. Because this particular treaty would have brought the United States and its mother country closer together regarding issues in the Western Hemisphere, Lodge wished to ensure the treaty did not negate the Monroe Doctrine’s authority. When told that no issue arising under the Monroe Doctrine would fall under the jurisdiction of this treaty, Lodge wanted to make sure by inserting an amendment to that effect.¹⁸⁹ The parallels between Lodge’s argument in the 1890s controversy and the League of Nations debate in 1919 are

¹⁸⁷ Hall, *The Monroe Doctrine and the Great War*, 149.

¹⁸⁸ Henry Cabot Lodge to Theodore Roosevelt, November 26, 1918, in *Selections of Correspondence*, Vol. 2, 547. The Senate first defeated the Treaty of Versailles on November 19, 1919 and President Wilson resubmitted it to the Senate where it failed a second time on March 19, 1920.

¹⁸⁹ Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America*, 90; Widenor, *Henry Cabot Lodge*, 105 – 106.

so strikingly similar that one would be loath to retreat to the political argument that many historians have belabored throughout the years regarding the Treaty of Versailles rejection by Republicans.

The issue of America's possessions in the Pacific presents an intriguing question because the Philippines and Guam are technically in Asia, and not within the confines of the Western Hemisphere. Lodge hinted at the prospect of advocating for isolation in order to also protect America's possessions in the Pacific. Referring to the Philippines and Guam, Lodge wrote in his book, *The Senate and the League of Nations*, that the United States had "interests of our own in Asia and the Pacific." Since he described the "real essence of the Monroe Doctrine" to be that "American questions shall be settled by Americans alone," it appears he believed the Doctrine had the capability of extending its reach outside of the hemisphere. Due to the possession of islands in the Pacific, any question that would arise of those possessions would be an American question, even though it was outside of the Western Hemisphere.¹⁹⁰ This most likely led Lodge to claim a moral position toward not awarding Japan the Shandong Province in China. As Lodge saw it, allowing the Japanese to take the province would equal the "building up of Japan." This, Lodge contended, "will be the coming danger to the world."¹⁹¹ Lodge was afraid that if Japan were allowed to retain control over the Shandong Province, it would seek to control other vulnerable areas as well – including the Philippines, an American possession.

¹⁹⁰ Henry Cabot Lodge, *The Senate and the League of Nations*, 407, 232.

¹⁹¹ Henry Cabot Lodge to Cameron Forbes, August 9, 1919, Henry Cabot Lodge Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Microfilm Reel 55.

Unable to speak for all Republicans, Lodge led a majority in the defeat of the Treaty of Versailles.¹⁹² By claiming isolation, Lodge and the rest of the mainstream Republicans attempted to hide their true reasons for refusing to ratify the Treaty of Versailles without reservations. In all reality, Lodge was not truly isolationist. He cloaked his speeches and policies in terms of isolation in order to achieve his main objective, which was to continue expansionist policies instituted by President Roosevelt approximately twenty years earlier.

Lodge's call for isolation did not result from America's refusal to commit its forces to overseas engagements, but rather this reasoning formed part of a larger policy. America was to be its own nation in the world. In order to do this, Republicans needed to accept a position of isolation. While it seems that Lodge's party changed its foreign policy during World War One, in truth, party members continued to carry out their imperialistic notions advanced during Roosevelt's presidency. To achieve this objective, Republicans needed to appear isolationist in order to remain free from any unwanted interference from European states.

The philosophical difference between the Republican leaders' and Wilson's view of the role the United States should play in the world resulted in the Senate's defeat of the Treaty. Clearly, neither party commanded a support system strong enough to ratify the Treaty since it failed both with and without the Lodge reservations. Not only does this demonstrate that divisions erupted within both camps, but that the issue deeply concerned Americans from both sides of the aisle. Senators knew that the decision they made would

¹⁹² Some Republicans, such as Senator William E. Borah were true isolationists and found no way to agree with the League of Nations. Senators such as Borah were known as irreconcilables. On the other hand, a delegation of senators, led by Porter J. McCumber supported President Wilson's peace plan. McCumber was part of a group known as the mild-reservationists, who eventually voted with Lodge in an attempt to at least pass the Treaty with reservations.

affect America's destiny. Those who held Wilson's belief that the United States should lead by example lost the fight, as did those who sided with Lodge's idea that the country should continue to be its own leader.

While politics played a role in the League's defeat, the desire to remain an imperial power, at least within the Western Hemisphere, propelled Republicans to defend an isolationist position and argue for the preservation of the Monroe Doctrine. One wonders, though, if the outcome would have been different had the Treaty of Versailles included an expressed recognition of America's right to define the Monroe Doctrine. A skillful politician, Lodge used Monroe's foreign policy as a transparent veil of isolation. This position allowed the United States to continue shining light from the Roosevelt Corollary over the American Hemisphere.

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