

TAFT'S EDITORIAL HURTS LODGE PLAN

Denunciation Has Deterrent Effect on Effort to Enlist Mild Reservationists

SEES PLOT TO KILL LEAGUE

By CLINTON W. GILBERT
Staff Correspondent of the Evening Public Ledger

Washington, Sept. 11.—Ex-President Taft's vigorous denunciation of the League reservations in the PUBLIC LEDGER this morning will have a big effect upon the effort to enlist the weaker of the mild reservationists for Mr. Lodge's program in any form.

Mr. Taft says what every friend of the League here knows, that the purpose of the League reservations is to kill the League, send the treaty back to Versailles and after that the deluge. But Mr. Lodge does not expect to achieve all this. He does not expect to have his reservations accepted unamended.

Mr. Lodge's purpose, then, is to do the League as much damage as he can morally, while attaching to its acceptance merely interventional resolutions. A man may accede to a proposition in such a way as to throw buckets of cold water all over it.

Hopes to Overcome League

Mr. Lodge hopes to do as much damage to the League by the way he accedes to it when he is forced to accept amendments to his reservations as if he refused to accede to it. As Mr. Taft says, this course is much less manly and courageous than that of Senators Borah and Johnson, who are honestly and openly for the defeat of the treaty.

The handling of the German treaty is a fair example of that favorite occupation of the United States Senate, "doing big things in a little way."

It is the biggest thing that has ever before the Senate and the way is the blitziest way. The issue now—all that is really left of it if you get down to the bottom unless of Senator Lodge and Senator Hitchcock—is, "Shall we enter the League of Nations, making a face cover it, or not?" If we make a face it is a great Republican victory. If we do not it is a great Democratic victory.

There are many words about "mild" and "wild" reservations, about "gutting" the treaty and passing it as it stands, but the real question is "Shall there or shall there not be a grimace?"

If one party does all that it is willing to do the United States will become a member of the League saying, "We enter the League, but we reserve clearly the right to withdraw from it. In our experience, our expectations are disappointed." If the other accomplishes the utmost it really expects to accomplish, the United States will become a member of the League saying, "We enter the League, but if we don't like it, we'll get out damn quick." That "damn quick" and the expression of contemptuous that goes with it is the height of statesmanship, as Washington goes now.

Would Modify Reservations

Senator Lodge is prepared to modify his reservations, offered in his report yesterday. He has said so, himself, publicly and privately. He will have to modify his reservations. Every one knows it. They have been carefully drawn, so that, with a slight change, they will become merely interventional—will avoid the danger of having to be passed on by foreign powers and that is the only question of importance, and when so changed, the public will notice the difference. There will be the victory.

I asked a Democratic leader yesterday whether, if so changed, the League reservations would not come within the administration description of reservations that merely interpreted the treaty. "Yes," he said, "but they still will be put in an offensive way." The "very face" that I spoke about! If the Democrats succeed, "the very face" will be smoothed and changed to a smile.

That is what we are going to spend weeks upon. It isn't any question of defeating the treaty, it isn't any question of amending the treaty; it isn't any serious question of passing reservations that invite action by foreign powers. This last is highly improbable. It is a question of the "very face" or not.

Gentle in Interpretations

Take Lodge's reservation Number 1, "the United States reserves to itself the unconditional right to withdraw from the League of Nations upon the notice provided in Article I of said treaty of peace with Germany." The "unconditional" in that article probably makes the reservation in effect an amendment. This is a nice question for constitutional lawyers. But it is to be observed that Mr. Lodge himself does not intend that it shall be an amendment. Mr. Lodge here in his adjectives and gentle in his interpretation. He writes the adjectives for Borah and Johnson and the interpretations for McComber and Kellogg. He writes explaining his reservation:

"It must be made perfectly clear that the United States alone is to determine as to the fulfillment of its obligations." Now the administration has no objection to just that very thing being said in the way of a reservation. No tribunal is provided, let it be said, and, with Mr. Wilson's cordial approval, that the United States is the tribunal for itself, the sole judge of its own actions.

No Change in Treaty

Now it may be taken for granted that much of the language of the League reservations will prevail. Three things may be done with reservation No. 1. It may be accepted as written, which will be a League victory and highly unlikely. Again the word "unconditional" may be stricken out and these words added: "Itself being the sole judge of whether or not its obligations have been fulfilled," so that the reservation as a whole will read: "The United States reserves to itself the right to withdraw from the League of Nations upon notice provided in Article I of said treaty of peace with Germany, itself being sole judge of whether or not its obligations have been fulfilled." a fair interpretation, not worded in the kindest language, but one in no way changing the instrument as the President protests he understands it.

The same words may be added to the League resolution with the word "unconditional" retained, the added words interpreting the "unconditional" as Mr. Lodge makes them interpret it in his explanation of the reservation. This

is to make an interpretation reservation with a very "very face." It is probably the most that Mr. Lodge hopes or expects. He is fighting for the very face that won't come off. It is a great fight. Take Article X, a much sharper source of dispute. Mr. Lodge's reservation reads: "The United States declines to assume, under the provisions of Article X, or under any other article, any obligation to guarantee the territorial integrity or political independence of any other country or to interfere in controversies between other nations, members of the League or not, or to employ the military or naval forces of the United States in such controversies, or to adopt economic measures for the protection of any other country, whether a member of the League or not, against external aggression or for the purpose of coercing any other country, or for the purpose of intervention in the internal conflicts or other controversies which may arise in any other country, and no mandate shall be accepted by the United States under Article XXII, Part 1, of the treaty of peace with Germany, except by action of the Congress of the United States."

Statement of Fact

Take out of it the words "or to adopt economic measures" and it is a statement of a fact which every signatory of the treaty knew, namely, that the United States can participate in no military or naval movement without approval by Congress. Thus changed, it becomes purely interpretive in reality.

But says my Democratic leader: "Look at the word 'declines.' It purposely goes at the thing from the wrong end. It is deliberately put in to produce the effect of great reluctance." The very face again! Like number one, this reservation may be changed, as I have already suggested, by striking out the words "or to adopt economic measures." It will then preserve an extremely "very face." Mr. Lodge will be happy. It may be turned the other end to, put into positive, instead of negative language—"the United States accepts, etc.—subject to the constitutional condition that no such action may be taken except without action by Congress, etc." and the "very face" will disappear. That is the issue, "very face" or no "very face"! The Republicans are very "bitter-enders" on this subject.

When the reservations are adopted, "very face" or no "very face," the Republicans will and surely will shout that they are not "mild" but "wild," and that through them the nation has been saved. And the Democrats, taking their cue from President Wilson's Dakota speech, will declare that they mean nothing, being just so much verbiage, adding nothing to the clarification of language already plain beyond dispute, and the people will pay no attention to either of them.

TAFT SCENTS PLAN TO DESTROY LEAGUE

By WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT
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Senator Lodge is reported to have said that the second reservation framed by the Senate foreign relations committee in respect to Article X only differs in phraseology and not in substance from the reservation in respect to the same article of the mild reservationists. Such a statement cannot be supported.

As Scientifically Constructed as the Human Body

The reservation of the foreign relations committee in effect is a declaration on the part of the United States to become bound in any way by the obligations of the League so far as it provides a union with other nations to secure the peace of the world. It is a notice to the world that we are willing to enjoy the benefits of the League for ourselves, but that we are not willing to obligate ourselves in any way to aid the rest of the world in securing those benefits. It is a reservation that no one of the other nations could accept with any sense of self-respect.

It is a reservation which, if it passes, will certainly require the reassembling of the conference at Paris and probably the negotiation of a separate peace with Germany. It is a reservation drawn in such a way as to take the heart out of the League, so far as the United States and its participation are concerned. Any senator who votes for it votes to defeat the League. He may just as well vote with Senator Knox and Senator Borah and Senator Johnson against the whole treaty as to vote for this reservation, and he would take a much more candid and courageous course in doing so.—From an editorial in this morning's PUBLIC LEDGER.

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HARDING SAYS PACT BETRAYS AMERICA

Ohio Senator Regards Covenant in Present Form a Peril to Republic

WILL VOTE TO AMEND IT

By the Associated Press

Washington, Sept. 11.—Declaring his intention to vote for amendments to the peace treaty, Senator Harding, Republican of Ohio, told the Senate today that every day of discussion, presidential utterance included, and every hour of study combined to persuade him that "the League of Nations venture, in the form in which the covenant has been negotiated, is one of peril to the republic."

To accept it unaltered, he argued, would be a betrayal of America.

"I can never vote to ratify without safeguards," said the senator, "and I mean to vote for the amendments proposed by the committee. If the President is correct in declaring the proposed amendments will not unduly delay, if the world is to start all over again, it ought to start with the square deal. The treaty has not written it; the square deal was reserved for informal promises."

Pointing out that this country had sought no territory, Senator Harding said it Europe "will barter its territories and peoples, we cannot hinder, but we need not approve and surely we need not guarantee."

"It is my deliberate conviction," he said, "that the League of Nations covenant, as negotiated at Paris, either created a supergovernment of the nations which enter it, or it will prove the colossal disappointment of the ages. I cannot believe this republic ought to sanction it in either case.

"It will not break the heart of the

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