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TLS (WP, DLC).

<sup>1</sup> The material included excerpts from speeches by Asquith, Grey, Balfour, Frederick Edwin Smith, and Lloyd George, extracts from the *London Times*, and James Bryce, "America's Traditional Isolation." They all emphasized the need for a postwar international peacekeeping system in which the United States would participate.

### From Jessie Woodrow Wilson Sayre

Dearest Father, [Williamstown, Mass.] May 19, 1916.

The beautiful silver plate for Francis came today. We made him open it—with our help—and he loved it, as did we. It is such a particularly pretty one and, as Helen suggested, his wife can use it *forever and ever*. We are enchanted with it!

He is like a young lord, now, with an entire silver outfit of cup, porringer, and plate.

Do you suppose it would be possible in the next six or eight months, in our happiest dream moments, to plan to have you here at another Christening Party?

We don't want Eleanor to be less fortunate than Ellen<sup>1</sup> and Francis were but we feel very bold indeed to even suggest such a thing. We wouldn't want you to consider it unless it would mean something of a rest or change for you, dear Father, too. So I know you will tell us truthfully what you think of such a project.

Little Eleanor is slowly gaining again now and we are all very much relieved.

With deepest love and thanks to you both from us all.

Your ever loving daughter Jessie.

ALS (WC, NjP).

<sup>1</sup> Ellen Wilson McAdoo, born on May 21, 1915.

### Remarks from a Rear Platform at Salisbury, North Carolina

May 20, 1916.

My friends, I told the Senator<sup>1</sup> that I was loaded with only one cartridge this morning, which was to be exploded at Charlotte, but I am very glad, indeed, to give you my very cordial greetings and to say how very glad I am to find myself here in Senator Overman's old home. You have reason to be proud of your Senator, ladies and gentlemen, and I am very glad to give him the tribute of my praise and, if he will permit me to add it, of my friendship.

There are very serious things to be done nowadays, ladies and gentlemen, and it is a satisfaction to be associated with men who

know how serious they are, and with what spirit they must be approached. Because, whether we will or not, we are at the beginning of a new age for the world, and America will have to play a very great part in that new age. And we will have to be very sure not to encourage or to give countenance to the men who are trying to hold us back. There are some men—I do not believe they represent the great rank and file of the Republican party—but the men who now control the Republican party have their heads over their shoulders. They are looking backward, not forward. They do not know the problems of the new day. And whenever I, for example, try to show my sympathies for the forward looking men of their own party by nominating men of that sort, they at once try to block the process. They have no sympathy with the forward looking men of their own party. Now, I am for forward looking men, not for backward looking men. We have come down here to celebrate an historical episode, but we have not done it because we are looking backward. We have done it merely in order to give ourselves the excuse to get together and feel the thrill of being Americans and living in an age when it is worthwhile being Americans. (Train pulls out)

T MS (WP, DLC).

<sup>1</sup> That is, Lee Slater Overman, Democrat, from Salisbury, whom Wilson had invited to accompany him on his trip to North Carolina. Wilson had reluctantly agreed to Overman's request for a brief speech in the Senator's home town in order not to antagonize him any further in the fight over the Brandeis confirmation. See Josephus Daniels, *The Wilson Era: Years of Peace, 1910-1917* (Chapel Hill, N. C., 1944), pp. 545-47.

## An Address in Charlotte, North Carolina<sup>1</sup>

May 20, 1916

Your Excellency, ladies and gentlemen: It is with unaffected pleasure that I find myself in the presence of this interesting company today, for I have come back for a visit all too brief to a region very familiar to my heart, and the greeting of whose people is peculiarly welcome to me.

I do not know, my fellow citizens, whether I can interpret for you today the spirit of this occasion, but it is necessary, when we get together in celebrations like this, to take counsel together with regard to just what it is that we wish to celebrate. You will say we wish to celebrate the memories of that time to which we look back with such pride—when our fathers, with singular wisdom of counsel and stoutness of heart, undertook to set up an

<sup>1</sup> At the ceremony commemorating the one hundred and forty-first anniversary of the so-called Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. Governor Locke Craig introduced Wilson.

independent nation on this side of the water. But it is very much more important that we should remind ourselves of the elements with which our forefathers dealt. There were only three million citizens in that original republic of the United States of America. Now there are one hundred millions. It is a long cry back to those modest beginnings. A great period of time, not only, but a great period of profound change, separates us from that time, and yet I would remind you that the same elements were present then that are present now.

What interests my thought more than anything else about the United States is that it has always been in process of being made ever since that little beginning, and that there have always been the same elements in the process. At the outset, there was at the heart of the men who led the movement for independence a very high and handsome passion for human liberty and free institutions. And, yet, there lay before them a great continent which it was necessary to subdue to the uses of civilization if they were going to build upon it a great state among the family of nations. I heard a preacher once point out the very interesting circumstance that our Lord's prayer begins with the petition for "our daily bread," from which he drew the inference that it is very difficult to worship God on an empty stomach, and that the material foundations of our life are the first foundations. What I want to call your attention to is that this country, ever since that time, has devoted much of its attention, perhaps too much of its attention, to the material foundations of its life—to subduing this continent to the uses of the nation and to the building up of a great body of wealth and material power. I find some men who, when they think of America, do not think of anything else but that. But, my friends, there have been other nations just as rich and just as powerful, in comparison with the other nations of the world, as the United States is, and it is a great deal more important that we should determine what we are going to do with our power than that we should possess it.

You must remember, therefore, the elements with which we are dealing. Sometimes those of us who were born in this part of the country persuade ourselves that this is the characteristic part of America. Here, more than anywhere else, has been preserved a great part of the original stock which settled this country, particularly that portion of the stock which came from the British Isles. (I am not meaning to exclude Ireland.) And then I find a great many of my friends who live in New England imagining that the history of this country is merely the history of the expansion of New England, and that Plymouth Rock lies at the

foundation of our institutions. As a matter of fact, my fellow citizens, however mortifying it may be to them or to us, America did not come out of the South, and it did not come out of New England. The characteristic part of America originated in the middle states of New York and Pennsylvania and New Jersey, because there, from the first, was that mixture of populations, that mixture of racial stocks, that mixture of antecedents, which is the most singular and distinguishing mark of the United States. The most important single fact about this great nation, which we represent, is that it is made up out of all the nations of the world. I dare say that the men who came to America then, and the men who have come to America since, came with a single purpose, sharing some part of the passion for human liberty which characterized the men who founded the republic. But they came with all sorts of blood in their veins, all sorts of antecedents behind them, all sorts of traditions in their family and national life, and America has had to serve as a melting pot for all these diversified and contrasted elements. What kind of fire of pure passion are you going to keep burning under the pot in order that the mixture that comes out may be purged of its dross and may be the fine gold of untainted Americanism? That is the problem.

I want to call your attention to another picture. America has always been making and to be made, and, while we were in the midst of this process, apparently at the acme and crisis of this process, while this travail of soul and fermentation of elements was at its height, came this great cataclysm of European war, and almost every other nation in the world became involved in a tremendous struggle which was what, my fellow citizens? What are the elements in the struggle? Don't you see that, in this European war, is involved the very thing that has been going on in America? It is a competition of national standards, of national traditions, and of national polities—political systems. Europe has grappled in war, as we have grappled in peace, to see what is going to be done with these things when they come into hot contact with one another. For, do you not remember that, while these processes were going on in America, some very interesting things were happening? It was a very big world into which this nation came when it was born, but it is a very little world now. It used to take as many days to go from Washington to Charlotte in those days as it now takes hours. I heard an Irishman say that, if the power of steam continued to increase in the next fifty years as it had increased in the last, we would get to Charlotte two hours before we left Washington. And, as these processes of intercommunication have been developed and quickened, men of the same

nation, not only, have grown closer neighbors, but men of different nations have grown closer neighbors with each other. And, now that we have these invisible tongues that speak by the wireless through the trackless air to the ends of the world, every man can make every other man in the world his neighbor and speak to him upon the moment. While these processes of fermentation and travail were going on, men were learning about each other, nations were becoming more and more acquainted with each other, nations were more and more becoming interrelated, and intercommunication was being quickened in every possible way, so that now the melting pot is bigger than America. It is as big as the world. And what you see taking place on the other side of the water is the tremendous—I had about said final—process by which a contest of elements may, in God's Providence, be turned into a coordination and cooperation of elements. For it is an interesting circumstance that the processes of the war stand still. These hot things that are in contact with each other do not make very much progress against each other. When you cannot overcome, you must take counsel.

See, then, ladies and gentlemen, what a new age we have come into. I should think that it would quicken the imagination of every man, and quicken the patriotism of every man who cared for America. Here, in America, we have tried to set the example of bringing all the world together upon terms of liberty and cooperation and peace. And in that great experience that we have been going through, America has been a sort of prophetic sample of mankind. Now, the world outside of America has felt the forces of America—felt the forces of freedom, the forces of common aspiration, the forces that bring every man and every nation face to face with this question: "What are you going to do with your power? Are you going to translate it into force, or are you going to translate it into peace and the salvation of society?" Does it not interest you that America has run before the rest of the world in making trial of this great human experiment? And is it not the sign and dawn of a new age that the one thing upon which the world is now about to fall back is the moral judgment of mankind?

There is no finer sentence in the history of great nations than that sentence which occurs in the Declaration of Independence (I am now referring to the minor declaration at Philadelphia, not to the Mecklenburg Declaration) in which Mr. Jefferson said, "A decent respect for the opinion of mankind makes it necessary"—I am not now quoting the words exactly—"that we should state the grounds upon which we have taken the important step of assert-

ing our independence." "A decent respect for the opinion of mankind"—it is as if Jefferson knew that this was the way in which mankind itself was to struggle to realize its aspirations and that, standing in the presence of mankind, this little group of three million people should say: "Friends and fellow citizens of the great moral world, our reason for doing this thing we now intend to state to you in candid and complete terms, so that you will never think that we were merely throwing off a yoke out of impatience, but know that we were throwing off this thing in order that a great world of liberty should be open to man through our instrumentality."

I would like, therefore, to think that the spirit of this occasion could be expressed if we imagined ourselves lifting some sacred emblem of counsel and of peace, of accommodation and righteous judgment, before the nations of the world and reminding them of that passage in Scripture, "After the wind, after the earthquake, after the fire, the still small voice of humanity."<sup>2</sup>

T MS (WP, DLC).

<sup>2</sup> There are two WWT outlines of this address, each with the composition date of May 19, 1916, in WP, DLC.

## From Robert Lansing

PERSONAL AND PRIVATE:

My dear Mr. President:

Washington May 20, 1916.

I enclose a draft of a note to the British Ambassador on the subject of interference with the mails. I have been delayed in preparing this because it required considerable research and in addition I have not been to the Department for the past three days and may not be for two or three days to come.

I consider it very important that this note should be delivered as soon as possible because the mail detentions are becoming more and more irritating to our people. I believe a way can be found for Great Britain to modify her present practice, but such a consideration will come after the note is delivered.

I would be obliged for any suggestions or changes you may see fit to make in the draft, which you will oblige me by sending to my house after you have examined it.

Faithfully yours, Robert Lansing.

TLS (SDR, RG 59, 841.711/349, DNA).